



2003-04 University of Wisconsin System Council of Academic Staff Representatives Conference Call Minutes

Thursday, December 18, 2003 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Human Resource Issues

George Brooks, Associate Vice President for Human Resources

Charles McConnell, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources

On Thursday, December 18, the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) approved labor contracts, which includes contracts for Teaching Assistants at UW-Milwaukee.

The Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) will be adding provisions to the classified, non-represented employees' contracts for parity. These include a 10-cent-an-hour adjustment and a \$250 lump sum payment effective this summer. OSER has declined to say how these increases will be funded.

OSER has asked the UW System if it wants to go forward with a parity plan for faculty and academic staff. George Brooks indicated to OSER director Karen Timberlake that the System governance process requires that the compensation advisory committee make recommendations and the Board of Regents approve any such proposal.

OSER has made some changes to its health insurance premiums beginning on January 1, 2004:

Tier One Single Coverage was \$25; it will be lowered to \$18

Tier One Family Coverage was \$62.50; it will be lowered to \$45

Tier Two Single Coverage was \$50; it may change to \$47

Tier Two Family Coverage was \$125; it may change to \$117.50

Tier Three premiums of \$100 for single coverage and \$250 for family coverage will remain unchanged.

It is unclear whether the lower-than-budgeted employee share of health premiums will be covered by the compensation reserve or by the individual agencies.

For classified employees, the state is not taking out the insurance premiums yet. These employees may face lump sum deductions from their paychecks for back payment of several months' of health insurance premiums once all the labor contracts are approved.

For January 1, 2005, premiums, OSER is proposing:

Tier One Single coverage increase to \$22

Tier One Family coverage increase to \$55

Tier Two and Three single and family coverages remain unchanged.

The Council of Academic Staff Representatives earlier this month issued a statement to President Katharine Lyall and Regent President Toby Marcovich asking that UW System institutions not use employment practices that unfairly target academic staff. (See attached memo and issue statement)

George Brooks and Chuck McConnell indicated a reminder will be sent to the chancellors regarding the need to carefully follow rules that the Board of Regents have approved. If institution academic staff rules require rolling horizon contracts, Chancellors may not unilaterally discontinue granting those contracts. Additionally, granting of indefinite status to UW employees is a decision by the institution. UW System supports academic staff job security rules and does not oppose the granting of indefinite status by the institutions to employees.

Position reductions that were taken in 2003-04 due to budget cuts are:

1. Faculty are 25% of the workforce, and took 24% of the cuts.
2. Classified staff are 37% of the workforce, and took 36% of the cuts.
3. Academic staff are 38% of the workforce, and took 40% of the cuts.

Brooks and McConnell indicated that System Administration continue to monitor these reductions. Additionally, these vacancies reflect both non-renewals and layoffs.

Legislative Update

Margaret Lewis, Associate Vice President for University Relations

The Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) is close to completing its audit of the UW System's Administrative Costs begun last February. The LAB audit will be made public within the next month.

It is important to connect with the chief budget office and public information office at your institution to understand what is included in the definition of administrative costs, institutional administrative cost trends, and share examples of efficiencies achieved and the impact of recent budget reductions on these costs. Often the public, media and legislators will equate any non-instructional costs with non-essential activity. It is important that university constituencies understand the critical work of academic staff (non-instructional costs) to student success, including financial aid administration, advising, library services, payroll, purchasing, safety and risk management to name a few.

Please review the draft Administrative Cost Fact Sheet/Q & A and send comments to Kerry Niemcek at kniemcek@uwsa.edu.

Regents Awards for Excellence Reminder

Kerry Niemcek, Office of the Senior Vice President for Administration

Nominations are due February 12, 2004 to Kerry Niemcek at kniemcek@uwsa.edu. For more information, go to: <http://www.uwsa.edu/srvpadm/asreps/award.htm>

Forum and Discussion among Academic Staff Representatives

Mark Skutley, Convener