



# 2003-04 University of Wisconsin System Council of Academic Staff Representatives Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 18, 2004 from 9:00 -1:30 p.m.

## Human Resource Issues

*George Brooks*, Associate Vice President for Human Resources  
Dr. Alan Crist, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources

UW System Administration has a new Assistant Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Academic Personnel Officer. Dr. Alan Crist was introduced to the CASR.

Over the past few weeks, both the Fringe Benefits Advisory Council (FBAC) and the Compensation Advisory Council (CAC) met with President Katharine Lyall.

The Board of Regents will take up a potential change in policy and consider granting UW System employees an extra holiday in recognition of Veteran's Day at the meeting in April.

The FBAC reaffirmed its support for domestic partner benefits and continue to request that the state provide funding.

The CAC supports lowering the health insurance premiums to reflect what the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) has negotiated with unions. In addition, CAC supports the additional personal holiday as well as an increased pay plan. OSER has negotiated salary increases for the classified staff, and Associate Vice President Brooks will ask that the academic staff and faculty receive the same increase in compensation -- roughly 1.35%. Also, the UW System wants the unclassified staff and faculty to receive the same \$250 lump sum payment that classified staff received. The CAC and FBAC recommendations will go to the Board on April 2. If the Board adopts the increase in pay plan, the recommendation will go back to OSER and then to the Joint Committee on Employee Relations (JCOER), where it will receive a vote. If the proposal is supported by JCOER, UW System HR departments will receive budget instructions on how to distribute pay plan increases.

The open enrollment is still open for domestic partner benefits for dental coverage and for certain life insurance plans.

Refunds for overpayment for health insurance premiums will be distributed in June or July with separate checks. The majority of state employees take the tier one family coverage, which cost \$62.50 per month. The revised figure will be \$45 per month and employees will receive a refund of the overage.

AS Rep. Kathleen McGinnis from Stevens Point raised concern (as she has in many of the past meetings, although this was not recorded in the minutes) about the SMP health coverage for Portage County and how employees are being adversely affected. Esther Olson mentioned that the Group Insurance Board -- of which she is a member -- is aware of the problem and that Employee Trust Funds (ETF) is working on providing uniform benefits.

UW-Milwaukee's Chancellor Search and Screen is complete and Carlos Santiago will lead the campus. Information on Santiago is available at:

<http://www.wisconsin.edu/news/2004/r040305c.htm>

Final interviews for UW-Stevens Point's Chancellor Search and Screen will be Monday, March 22, 2004. Finalists are listed at:

<http://www.wisconsin.edu/news/2004/r040227a.htm>

## **Legislative Update**

*Margaret Lewis*, Associate Vice President for University Relations

The session is almost over -- there are a few bills that remain outstanding in the Legislature. A large number of bills are awaiting the Governor's signature, but will be held until his return from his trade mission in China.

University Relations will forward an end of session report after the final action on legislation.

The Legislature will go into special session on unfinished and limited business April 27 - 29. One of the items that may be taken up includes Assembly Joint Resolution 55 -- or TABOR (Taxpayer's Bill of Rights).

CASR members are encouraged to write to their legislators or to local newspapers and attend town meetings and forums to bring up higher education concerns with TABOR. TABOR negatively affected higher education in Colorado (and continues to do so) -- elected officials and the general public should be concerned about its effects in Wisconsin.

Here are a number of organizations who have publicly opposed TABOR:

Alliance of Cities <http://www.wiscities.org/>

Wisconsin Counties Association <http://www.wicounties.org/>

Fall elections are quickly approaching. Ask your elected officials where they stand on higher education issues.

The budget situation still faces deficits. Recently, the state refinanced debt to address a Medicare funding issue. A more than \$170 million shortfall remains, however, and must be addressed.

## **Presidential Search and Screen**

*David Olien*, Senior Vice President for Administration

The UW System President's Search and Screen committee has named its members:

<http://www.wisconsin.edu/news/2004/r040305a.htm>

Some of the representatives relayed their concerns that a current or past academic staff representative was not appointed to the committee. AS Rep Therese Kennedy from Whitewater indicated that Debra Bowen was in the Assembly. Additionally, AS Rep Mike Schmitt stated that Kathy Plechter was in the governance structure and now she is an Associate Provost.

The CASR discussed either inviting the academic staff members of the Search and Screen in to speak to the group, or drafting a position statement on what the members of the Search and Screen should seek for qualities of the new UW System President.

Olien said that Bill Funk, of Korn/Ferry International, was retained to recruit a new President. Funk has warned the Regents that an increase in the salary for the President is imminent and that currently, her \$300,000 position is paid under market value for peer systems.

## **Update on Academic Staff Representative Leadership Conference**

UW-River Falls has agreed to host the 2005 Academic Staff Leadership Conference.

Thanks, Emily!