



2002-03 University of Wisconsin System Academic Staff Representatives Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 20, 2003
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Human Resources and Personnel Issues

George Brooks, Associate Vice President of Human Resources

Classified Represented Contracts

The union leaders are currently trying to get the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) to reconsider the contracts. There is no effort to date by the Department of Employment Relations (DER) or union leaders to renegotiate the agreements. It is possible that JCOER may reconsider the contracts the first week in April and if JCOER approves the contracts, the full legislature needs to pass them when they return for the next floor period that begins April 29.

Strategies for working with budget reductions

A number of employees are discussing voluntary furloughs and voluntary reduction of appointments. Very few state agencies are accepting voluntary furloughs because the savings is directly transferred to the Department of Administration, not at the source. Therefore, Human Resources personnel recommend taking a leave of absence instead. The voluntary reduction of appointment seems to be an appropriate savings measure. In the upcoming weeks, the Human Resource directors are going to be discussing layoffs and preferences for hiring.

APBS Update

APBS staff are working to ensure the software does what it should, despite two small setbacks. The first setback was with the student payroll incorporation, which appears unable to be functional by the internal deadline. Another is the Chronos software -- utilized for classified and student staff -- will be available well after the proposed deadline. The APBS is moving forward, however, with the project.

Legislative Update

Margaret Lewis, Associate Vice President for University Relations

On Monday, President Katharine Lyall and Regent President Guy Gottschalk appeared before the Joint Finance Committee. Information was distributed to the academic staff representatives and will be mailed to those not in attendance.

A number of cost-savings measures have been mentioned by legislators, including further cuts of administration or merging of campuses. Administration was cut last year by \$50 million and in the first part of the year by \$8.3 million. Further cuts to administration will have devastating effects. Also, if another campus merger is considered (either intra-institutional or with the technical college system), it would either decrease opportunity for a geographic area of the state or muddle the missions of the university and tech college systems. Lobbying positions have been a target as well with some legislators claiming the UW System hires 76 lobbyists. In fact, the employees registered with the Ethics Board as legislative liaisons spend only a fraction of their time initiating conversation with the Legislature; more often, they field questions and/or have a myriad other responsibilities that consume most of their time. In essence, the total time spent lobbying may account for only six FTE.

Letters to your legislators describing your "success story" and how it is important to preserve the funding for quality public higher education in Wisconsin would be greatly appreciated.

Legal Update

Pat Brady, General Counsel

The protections for academic staff are not as generous as the faculty, and it is the reality that layoffs may occur at some campuses. Many agencies have given layoff notices already. Currently, Legal Counsel is reviewing the institutional language that governs the layoff procedure.

Discussion on Campus Budget Cut Issues

Mark Skutley, UW-Stout

Mark Skutley assembled a campus-by-campus chart on issues pertaining to increased workloads for academic staff and for appointment length. The chart will be posted to the web as soon as it is available.

Discussion on Academic Staff Leadership Conference

Debra Duncan, UW-Oshkosh

The 2003 conference will be held July 17-18 at UW-Oshkosh and the theme is "Building a Shared Purpose." Information will soon be available on the web at:

http://www.uwosh.edu/acadstaff_senate/conference/

This link will appear on the UW System Administration site for Senior Vice President David Olien under the Academic Staff Representatives section.