

Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting with President Skorton
Wednesday, June 25, 2003, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
101 JH Conference Room

Present: Christine Annicella, Ella Born, Vicki Brown, Charlie Eastham, Hazel Kerr, Dave Martin, Michelle Wichman

Administrative Liaison: Sue Buckley, AVP of FUS and Director of Human Resources

1. President Skorton's comments

President Skorton discussed the change in governance at the Health Sciences Center with the recent resignation of VP Kelch. President Skorton explained that this would be the sixth system of governance and gave a brief history of previous governances. President Skorton has decided to not have an interim Vice President for the Health Sciences Center and to not begin a search for this position at this time. His reasoning is three-fold:

- 1) He has some concern about another "layer" of administration.
- 2) There are some financial concerns especially with the University and state budgets as they are and have been the past few years.
- 3) He thinks that it might be better to have more contact between the Board of Regents (BOR), acting as the Board of Trustees, and the hospital administration.

President Skorton said that the Dean of the College of Medicine and the CEO of the hospital would report directly to him. VP True and General Counsel Mark Schantz will meet monthly with them, along with President Skorton.

2. Staff Council President's comments: None at this time.

3. Updates and discussion topics

- a. Hazel Kerr discussed briefly the Committee on Interinstitutional Cooperation (CIC) Professional and Academic Staff conference that she and Michelle Wichman attended recently. She said that there was some discussion at the meeting regarding staff benchmarking and staff tuition remission. Hazel also asked President Skorton about the possibility of Iowa serving as hosts for the CIC meeting in Chicago in 2005. President Skorton supported the idea and asked Sue Buckley for her opinion. Sue also supported the idea.
- b. Dave Martin asked President Skorton for an update on his recent organizational decisions. President Skorton mentioned that Athletics would now be reporting directly to him rather than through the General Counsel's office. He mentioned again the plans for the Health Sciences Center. And he discussed briefly the decision to have the Provost along with the VP of Finance responsible for ITS. President Skorton said that this is the most common model at peer institutions and that a very large portion of ITS is administrative. He also pointed out that conceptual financial planning most generally falls under the purview of the Provost.

President Skorton mentioned that the budget for FY05 will be an even bigger issue and he would like to see some discussion start early in the fall of budget issues such as restoring faculty lines, libraries acquisitions, the College of Public Health, and regulatory compliance in the research arena. President Skorton said that he was pleased with recent efforts in the College of Engineering to control costs by combining two administrative departments. The change in administration did not affect any curricular or academic programs.

- c. Dave Martin also asked President Skorton for an update on the Provost search. President Skorton said that he has recently sent out 211 letters to university presidents across the country and that advertisements have been placed in publications. He continues to think that the University should not hire a search firm for this endeavor. He asked Sue for her opinion regarding hiring a search firm. She seemed to think that it would be all right to go without a search firm as long as there are a sufficient number of quality applicants. President Skorton agreed that he would like to see a pool of a lot more than twenty candidates.

President Skorton also mentioned that he would like to have a search committee for vice president of research to commence in the fall.

- d. Hazel asked how the discussion went at the recent BOR meeting regarding the suggestion of a building and construction moratorium. President Skorton said that the initial idea was somewhat modified. All new construction and opening of buildings will need to be justified. Ongoing projects will continue. President Skorton also said that he challenged a premise that tuition increases could be linked to improvements in, and new construction of, classroom buildings.

4. Sue Buckley's comments

Sue mentioned a proposal that the Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee (FRIC) has brought forward. The committee believes that health insurance should be mandatory for everyone who is eligible for flex benefits. Some investigation reveals that there are approximately 1000 employees who are not signed up for a university health plan. Of this number, 983 are married and perhaps obtain health insurance through their spouse. There are 17 single employees that seem to not have any health insurance. The proposal has been discussed with the vice presidents' group. They suggested that it should be presented to the faculty and staff governance groups.

Sue said that the budget process at the unit level ended on Monday, June 23rd. Some units may be starting to let their employees know what their salary increase will be, however, nothing is official until the BOR meets on July 16th and 17th.

5. President Skorton had some additional comments.

- a. President Skorton wanted to mention that about eleven employees have been displaced due to the reorganization efforts, however, none will be laid off.

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- b. President Skorton said that there has been some discussion to change the focus of Convocation. Some believe that it should be more about the people receiving their awards. This is what family and friends come to see. It has been suggested that there should be a separate occasion for the State of the University address. President Skorton asked for input on this idea and suggested letting him know our thoughts in the next few weeks.

6. Adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Future Executive Committee Meetings:	Future Meetings with President Skorton:
Wednesday, 7/16/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Tuesday, 7/22/03, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, 8/20/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Tuesday, 8/26/03, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, 9/17/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	
Wednesday, 10/15/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	
Wednesday, 11/19/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	
Wednesday, 12/17/03, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.	

Respectfully submitted,
Ella Born, Staff Council Secretary