

Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting with President Skorton
Tuesday, July 22, 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, Janice Simmons-Welburn, Michelle Wichman

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

1. President Skorton's comments

- a. President Skorton offered some of his thoughts as a result of the recent Board of Regents (BOR) meeting. With regard to a possible moratorium on new construction, it was decided that a set of rules should be established that would be considered whenever new construction is planned. President Skorton is comfortable with this idea. He believes that we should push ahead, however, with improvements to existing buildings with the understanding that any and all capital improvements will receive additional evaluation.
- b. President Skorton mentioned again his interest in having shared governance going to local units. He believes this is an idea worth exploring. He also mentioned a current faculty issue that involves a pilot project that is being considered by the College of Medicine. The College will be exploring the idea of incentive-based compensation for basic science faculty. President Skorton wondered if down-sizing might be one risk with this plan. He asked Sue Buckley for her thoughts regarding the pilot project. Sue believes there are positives and negatives with the plan. It could have a ripple effect across campus. It would primarily target acquisition of grants. Sue reported hearing concerns that the plan's measures aren't qualitative but mostly quantitative.
- c. President Skorton discussed the circumstances of the departure of Professor Mary Hendrix from the University. There has been some thought that the departure was due in part to state laws regarding stem cell research. President Skorton said that nothing currently outlaws ongoing research and that current research on campus is not affected by state or federal laws. It is possible, however, that if laws are enacted limiting such research, the investigators may not have many options. One option would be to quit academics and move to private research. Another would be to move to another country.
- d. President Skorton also briefly discussed cultural outreach. Primarily, staff would benefit by boosting morale and through efforts of recognition.

2. Staff Council President's comments:

Charlie mentioned reports of salary changes for the Athletic Department, including an increase of \$72,000 for a head coach. President Skorton said (and asked Sue to confirm) that non-contract employees would not get more than others on campus. Senior administration received a 1% increase in salary. Three additional coaches received above average increases. President Skorton noted that the increase that Coach Ferentz received was due in part to a mid-year phenomenon and is part of a retention package. President Skorton said that funds for coaching increases do not come from the General Fund.

President Skorton also mentioned the 5% of general funds, or \$2.5 million, that goes to the Athletic Department. He intends to continue providing these funds to the department, fully aware that there is a lot of concern about this practice, especially by faculty.

3. Updates and discussion topics

Discussion of state laws regarding stem cell research and the effect this had on Professor Mary Hendrix's decision to move to Northwestern was reported earlier.

4. Sue Buckley's comments

- a. Sue mentioned that the mass email regarding the posting of salary letters to the self-service web site was staggered. Faculty were first to receive their notice, then merit employees, and finally Professional & Scientific. Sue said that one reason for this approach, was to prevent the server from crashing.
- b. Sue provided an update on the Skill Soft program. She again encouraged Charlie to have a discussion with Maureen McCormick and perhaps have her as a guest for a Staff Council meeting to present information regarding the program. The program will be available on September 1st. It will offer 200 courses; 80 will be IT-based and 120 will deal with work-place effectiveness. All university employees are eligible to participate in the program and are able to access the program from home, as well as at work.

5. President Skorton had an additional comment:

He has decided to have the focus of the University Convocation totally on the award recipients. There will be further discussion as to when and where the President's State of the University address should take place.

6. Adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Future Executive Committee Meetings:	Future Meetings with President Skorton:
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