

Staff Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 10, 2003, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
S401, PBB

Present: Christine Annicella, Cheri Arneson, Ella Born, Vicki Brown, Kimberly Chamberlin, Jan Christensen, Charlie Eastham, David Fitzgerald, Wendy Ford, Jo Ann Franklin, Donna Hirst, Kathy Klein, Joy Kross, Mark Long, Dave Martin, Mary Lee Neuberger, Sara Nichols, Deb Pfab, Cheryl Reardon, Sandra Reed, Rebecca Stamy, Duncan Stewart, Rachelle Stewart, Jennifer Tucker, Jeffrey Wasson, Rhonda Weaver, Amy Welter, Michelle Wichman, Kathryn Wynes, Al Young

Absent: Matthew Anderson, Julee Darner, Julie Gilmore, Pamela Kacena, Hazel Kerr, Karon Kolek, Dongwang Liu, Bonnie McIntosh, Donna Muller, Christine Remmert, Mary Maher Sturm, Jan Waterhouse

Administrative Liaison: Kevin Ward, Interim Associate Director of Human Resources (HR) and Director of Employee and Labor Relations

1. **The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m.** Charlie Eastham extended a welcome to new Councilor, Kimberly Chamberlin, who was appointed to complete Jeanette Wigim's term.
2. **Review/approval of minutes**
 - a. 11/12/03 Staff Council meeting minutes were approved as presented.
 - b. Reviewed minutes from the 11/19/03 Executive Committee meeting. There was a question regarding the items to be discussed with President Skorton during the Executive Committee meeting with him. Charlie briefly went over the agenda that was followed at the meeting that took place earlier today.
3. **Comments/Regents report—Kevin Ward**
 - a. The Board of Regents (BOR) will meet next Monday and Tuesday in Ames. No specific highlights of that meeting were mentioned.
 - b. Kevin mentioned concerns that have been expressed by parents whose children attend Alice's Rainbow Child Care Centers. The annual contract will soon be up for renewal. During this past year there has been some discussion about relocating. The contract obligates the University to put forth good faith efforts to find another location to house the daycare, should relocation be imminent. Kevin believes, however, that there are no immediate plans to relocate at this time.
 - c. Kevin quickly reviewed a list of name changes for various departments and/or services: Office of Affirmative Action is now Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity; UI Staff Development and Training is now UI Learning and Development; WorkLife Services is now Organizational

Effectiveness; and IMFO, Information Management-Finance and Operations, is a unit of Finance and Operations headed by Elaine Haddy and Larry Meyer, and has formerly been called HRIM, HRIS, and FUSIM.

- d. Kevin said that the report and recommendations on Professional & Scientific (P&S) temporary appointments is to be presented to the HR unit representatives and to the vice presidents group.
- e. Kevin said that the work on classification descriptions is continuing. Bob Millsap is working with senior HR leadership in each college or unit, to update these descriptions.
- f. Kevin reported that HR plans to keep the pilot wellness program going for two more years. HR believes that they can demonstrate the effectiveness of the program and thus, warrant extending the pilot.

4. **Open position representing Health Care/Nursing**

Charlie offered to read the Bylaws section with regard to filling vacancies on Council mid-term, if anyone so indicated. He then called for nominations from the floor for candidates to fill the vacancy that resulted with Anna Beadle's resignation from Council. There was one nomination. Charlie said that the Executive Committee (EC) would discuss this candidate and/or appointment at the next EC meeting.

5. **Joint Faculty/Staff Budget Committee report—Dave Martin**

Dave mentioned that the last Budget Committee meeting was the end of November. Richard Saunders was present to discuss health care premiums and costs. Richard and Sue also mentioned that some effort has been made to increase the employer's share of health care costs.

Dave also mentioned that Mark Braun was present to discuss the impact of the latest information released by the Revenue Estimating Conference. The Conference met this past Monday and predicted revenue numbers for 2004-2005. These are the numbers that the legislative session will use to develop the next state budget. There was a brief discussion.

Dave said that the next Budget Committee meeting would be December 19th.

6. **Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee (FRIC) update—Dan Holub**

Dan reported on several highlights from this past semester.

- a. An issue came up with regard to CREF, internationally, and the possibility of converting it from an individual to a group contract. FRIC is not favoring this change. For various reasons, this issue seems to have died.
- b. Early retirement was discussed. FRIC proposed a much scaled-back program that basically would give health care coverage based on an employee's age and years of service. University administration's response to FRIC's recommendation was that they are not interested in adopting a policy of early retirement at this time. There was some discussion of this issue.
- c. Health care coverage for domestic partners has been discussed. The current policy addresses domestic partners of the same sex. FRIC is recommending extending the coverage to domestic partners of the opposite sex. It is likely that this recommendation will pass through UI

administration because this issue has already been approved at the state level. The committee is finalizing the criteria one would have to meet to be eligible for this coverage.

- d. FRIC also discussed expanding the CHIP plans to include coverage for acupuncture. A motion was made to add coverage for acupuncture that would be similar to that allowed for chiropractic care. The motion was approved.
- e. Dan said that UI Select would likely become more attractive to Iowa Citizens because Mercy will be joining the Blues plans.
- f. Dan mentioned that a trend that is becoming more appealing country-wide is consumer-driven health care plans. He said this would be a defined contributions health plan. FRIC is not favoring this trend due to various drawbacks.
- g. Dan said that he would appreciate any feedback with regard to the computer-based enrollment for health coverage.
- h. Dan mentioned that health care premium increases were very low this year. FRIC will continue to encourage UI administration to increase their contributions to flex dollars for health care costs. He said that the UI had planned a larger increase in their portion this year, but due to the budget reduction, the increased amount was less than hoped for.
- i. Dan discussed an issue that FRIC began working on last year. There are approximately 200 persons now on long-term disability and they have to pay the premiums for this coverage. FRIC has asked UI administration to cover this cost. UI administration suggested the possibility of a \$2.00 surcharge on flex credits. FRIC will continue to pursue this issue and if not the full premium payment, then perhaps a payment equal to the level that a retiree would receive.
- j. FRIC would like to develop some sort of staff survey. Possible ideas for the theme of the survey would be: satisfaction with the type of health plans offered, satisfaction with the quality of care received, or try to determine a sense of priorities such as salaries versus benefits.

Dan asked for any questions or concerns. There was a brief discussion. Dave Martin thanked Dan and the committee for their work on behalf of staff.

7. Report from Financial Aid Advisory Committee—Kathy Keasler

Kathy gave a report on the activities of this University charter committee. Students, faculty, and staff comprise the committee and Kathy believes the presence of staff on the committee is vital. The committee has close ties with enrollment management and acts in an advisory role for Mark Warner, Director of the Office of Student Financial Aid. Kathy provided the number of funds provided by the federal government, the state government, and the University toward student financial assistance; and the number of awards these dollars represent. Kathy mentioned that the committee has developed three recommendations based on very real constraints. They are suggesting that for 2004-2005 there should be a different mix in the funds, with a greater portion coming from University departments. The committee is suggesting a review of the application process and how the University communicates with the students. This means moving toward email contacts perhaps, versus postcards, with the goal of not having a student lose out on financial aid due to missing a deadline. And a final recommendation by the committee is to have some tuition funds set aside with the intention to raise the percentage of funds used to enhance diversity.

Some ongoing activities or planned activities for the committee are reviewing the distribution of funds, the number of awards, how the funds are awarded, and the dollar amounts of the awards; increasing diversity on campus; and reviewing the process of balancing funds used for merit awards versus need-based awards.

A question was raised as to the University's ability to continue offering financial aid packages in light of the budgetary constraints and tuition increases. Kathy mentioned that approximately 60% of students who have been identified as merit-worthy, also have demonstrated need of financial support.

8. Adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ella Born, Staff Council Secretary