

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON RETIREMENT, INSURANCE AND BENEFITS**

The Faculty Council on Retirement, Insurance, and Benefits met on Monday, November 3, 2003, at 10:30 a.m. Chair Patti Brandt called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

PRESENT: *Professors:* Bliquez, Brandt, Demorest, Dugdale, Johnson, Kochin, Martin, Waaland, Whittaker

Ex-officio: Constantine, Dougherty, Dwyer

ABSENT: *Professors:* Boxx, Haley

Ex-officio: McKenzie, Olswang, Henley

Synopsis:

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes
3. Announcements
4. Establish priorities for Council issues, form subcommittees
5. Gail Stygall re Legislative Issues

Agenda/Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes were approved.

Announcements/General Discussion

Patti Brandt described a workshop on lobbying that she attended. At the UW, the faculty voice in the legislature is Gail Stygall, our half-time faculty legislative rep. The faculty cannot send a strong message as a body, because faculty are not an active constituency. However, faculty councils can be nurtured to become a constituency. Perhaps the former Faculty Legislative Council, now defunct, could be re-instituted.

Katy Dwyer asked what the position and function of the Faculty Senate is with regard to being a voice in Olympia. Bob Waaland pointed out that state employees are restricted from lobbying. But ALUW and the UWRA have hired lobbyists. At universities in other states, however, faculty do manage to make their views known. Perhaps the answer is to partner with other Washington State schools, in order to have a stronger voice.

Jim Whittaker said he would like the Council to continue putting its energies into improving benefits. The Council has influenced the administration in the past; Whittaker would like to continue using existing structures to do this.

Priorities for Council issues/subcommittees

Council work divides itself into the functions of policy-shaping and education. Some topics the Council has identified to work on this year are health care benefits, long-term care, expansion of the tuition-waiver benefit to include family members, and data collection on benefits at peer institutions. Subcommittees are needed to focus on each of these areas.

Dwyer said that extensive work has been done on the tuition waiver benefit by another committee. This work is a good resource for the Tuition Waiver subcommittee. The Long-term Care group has already created a Website and will continue to work on the issue.

Subcommittee members for 2003-2004:

Long Term Care: Jim Whittaker, Larry Bliquez, Pat Dougherty, Katy Dwyer.

Benchmarking and Benefits Comparison: David Dugdale, Diane Martin, Bob Waaland, Ernest Henley, Karen Boxx, (Katy Dwyer will consult).

Tuition Waiver Benefit Expansion: Steve Demorest, Paul Constantine, Glen Johnson.

FCRIB members who are not on a subcommittee should identify their interest area and volunteer to help.

Gail Stygall re Legislative Issues

Brandt introduced Gail Stygall, Faculty Legislative Representative to the Washington State Legislature. Stygall is an English Department faculty member whose position as legislative rep is half-time, and is supported by release time and by a small amount of Faculty Senate funds provided by the Provost's Office. These funds cover limited travel reimbursement, which is essential if Stygall is to maintain even a limited presence in Olympia. Stygall said she has on occasion personally funded such things as copying costs and routinely uses her own vehicle to avoid high UW Motor Pool charges.

Stygall said that next year's Faculty Senate Chair, Ross Heath, is enthused about re-instituting the Faculty Legislative Committee. This should help her a great deal. She tries to meet at least once with each Faculty Council that deals with legislative issues. She is working on advising Faculty Councils of new bills that are filed each year so they can weigh in on those that affect the UW, before the bills are passed. Faculty can often see the import of some of these measures, personally and professionally, before administrators do. It's important to get the impact in front of the legislature as early as possible.

Brandt asked whether there are major health or retirement issues at present. Stygall said she needs one-page information to put in front of legislators, and to keep Faculty Senate Website links to peer schools updated.

Stygall praised Representative Helen Sommers for her good work on behalf of the UW. There is good reason to understand and support Sommers' positions, which have always been friendly to the University.

Martin asked whether faculty could do a fundraiser to support Stygall's work. If this is legal, it would be helpful. Stygall will check with Lea Vaughn, Secretary of the Faculty. Perhaps a letter, from all Faculty Council Chairs to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, would encourage adequate funds to be allocated to Stygall's legislative work.

It was MSP to draft a letter asking the Senate Executive Committee to allocate more money to support the legislative rep's function.

Steve Demorest asked Stygall for her opinion of how the legislature might view an expansion of the tuition waiver benefit to include children of faculty and staff. Stygall said that good data is essential, and it would be important that the expanded benefit not exceed the current cap on waivers.

Stygall said she would be back to update the Council at the end of the legislative session.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*