

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON RETIREMENT, INSURANCE AND BENEFITS

The Faculty Council on Retirement, Insurance, and Benefits met on October 7, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. Chair Karen Boxx called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Synopsis:

1. Announcements, updates
2. Tuition Benefit Expansion
3. Form Subcommittees

Announcements, updates, agenda, minutes

It was MSP to approve the minutes and the agenda. It was MSP to grant voting rights to eligible ex officio members.

Last year, the Council voted to change its name from the Faculty Council on Retirement, Insurance and Benefits (FCRIB) to the Faculty Council on Benefits and Retirement (FCBR). The name change can be included by Lea Vaughn with the "housekeeping" changes to the Code now in process, and will not require legislative action.

Boxx introduced Brian Turner, UW Daily reporter, who is interested in the Tuition Benefit Expansion discussion. Council members introduced themselves.

Tuition Benefit Expansion

This proposal, which the Council worked on last year, would extend a 50% tuition benefit to spouses and children of UW faculty and staff. This is not legislation, but would be presented to SEC and then become a matter for the President, the Regents and the Budget Office.

Steve Demorest, with substantial help from Carol Dean of Planning and Budgeting, has estimated the costs of the proposal and has met with the UW Human Resources Committee. The UWHRC showed definite interest in the proposal, and wanted to reduce or eliminate the qualifying period that is now part of the proposal. UWHRC pointed out that the proposed child/spouse benefit cannot be tied to the present 6-credit benefit for faculty and staff; changing this benefit would require approval from the State legislature.

The current five-year cost of the benefit is estimated at \$1.5 million, assuming a 25-50% tuition increase. No preferential treatment will be allowed in the admissions process.

Demorest looked at eight peer state-funded institutions and discovered that 60% of the HEC Board peer list allow such a benefit, and that none of them offer less than a 50% tuition waiver. Those family members eligible for the benefit would be identical to those that are eligible as dependents according to the Public Employees Benefits Board rules.

In general discussion, Council members raised questions about the eligibility of part-time faculty and staff and whether there is a time limit on the benefit. The time limit for children would be as long as they are PEBB-defined dependents, a five-year maximum. For spouses, the limits are not as clear.

It was MSP to amend the proposal to include the natural limit on children of 23 years, and/or to consider specifying a total quarter limit for dependent students and a total benefit per beneficiary.

There was great concern as to whether the use of money for this proposed benefit would consume the money earmarked for recruitment and retention of faculty – it appears that the money would come out of the same pool.

It was decided to seek buy-in from the Board of Deans, and to determine whether there will be a wider pool of money because professional staff and librarians are to be included. The proposal does not have a tidy path, and as many groups should be on board as possible. Boxx will put the proposal before the PSO, Paul Constantine will take it to ALUW. Copies will be given to David Thorud and Harlan Patterson before being taken to the Board of Deans.

It was MSP to accept the proposal as amended and to move it along through the appropriate groups. The Council thanked Demorest for his hard work on this proposal.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees were formed as follows:

Retirement Financial Planning: Patti Brandt, Anna Kartsonis, Paul Constantine, and either Ernest Henley or Pat Dougherty.

Possible issues: Should there be financial Planners in the Benefits Office? Should there be financial planning engines or software on the Benefits Office Website? What help do people want?

Data Committee: David Dugdale, Diane Martin, Bob Waaland

Possible issues: What data should the subcommittee look at, what can be gathered, what should be on the Website?

Next meeting, November 2

Randy Hodgins re the legislative agenda. Broader FCRIB agenda to be deferred until after next meeting.

Larry Bliquez re retiree interviews.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*

PRESENT: Professors: Boxx, Brandt, Demorest, Kartsonis, Waaland

Ex-officio: Constantine, Dwyer, Henley, Cameron

ABSENT: Professors: Breidenthal, Johnson, Kochin, Martin

Ex-officio: Dougherty, McKenzie, Parks

Guest: Brian Turner, UW Daily