

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

The Faculty Council on Retirement, Insurance and Benefits met on June 6, 2002, at 1 p.m. Chair Diane Martin presided.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	<i>Professors:</i>	Bliquez, Frey, Kochin, Martin, Whittaker, Waaland
	<i>Other members:</i>	Chamberlin, Dwyer, Henley
<b>ABSENT:</b>	<i>Professors:</i>	Boxx, Brandt (sabbatical), Dugdale
	<i>Other members:</i>	Baylor, Dougherty, Hamilton, Olswang

**Synopsis:**

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes
3. Report on FSA (Dwyer)
4. Report on UWRP and VIP Review (Chamberlin)
5. Review of Peer Benefits (Martin)
6. Priorities for offering 'Other Benefits' (Martin and Dwyer)
7. Year end FCRI report and plans for summer and next year (Martin)
8. University Councils, Rose Committee

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes**

With minor corrections, the April and May minutes were approved.

**Flexible Spending Accounts**

Katie Dwyer reported that the proposal for Flexible Spending Accounts is with the Health Care Authority. There will be a formal presentation to PEBB for their stamp of approval. Implementing the program will take extensive programming support, but Weldon Ihrig is very much in favor of FSAs and Dwyer thinks it will be approved. The program does not take any additional money, and will be a way for the UW to offer a cost saving to employees in the face of rising health care premiums. The program is on track for January 1, 2003. Other institutions can participate, but they take on the liability for themselves.

Employees can save money by putting aside pre-tax dollars up to UW-established limits to pay for unreimbursed medical expenses, but must use all the money they set aside or they lose it. It would be possible to save \$500 in withholding taxes for \$2500 set aside, Levis Kochin estimated.

**Report on UWRP and VIP Review Committee**

Charles Chamberlin presented what he hopes will be the final draft of the Review Committee proposal, which has now been reviewed by the Benefits Office attorney. The Committee is being proposed to oversee the quality and quantity of investment funds offered to UW employees.

In this draft, said Chamberlin, the Membership is expanded to include one or more members of the Faculty Senate and a Classified Staff member. The Committee reviews would begin within the year, and would occur every six months thereafter. Chamberlin drew the Council's attention to a paragraph added by the attorney, which clarifies the duties, responsibilities, and authority of the Review Committee. The

attorney added the phrase "and serves at the pleasure of" to ensure that a member could be removed, if need be, by the Executive Vice President to whom the Board reports.

The UW Benefits Office has agreed to provide administrative support for the Review Committee, and the Committee is authorized to bring in experts to consult with them in their deliberations.

The next step for the proposal is to send it to the Professional Staff Organization for their review, and to the Faculty Senate. It will then go to Weldon Ihrig for review and approval, before it goes to the Regents.

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed to approve the Fund Review Committee proposal as presented. Chamberlin will draft a cover letter for submission to the Senate Executive Committee. Diane Martin will email Brad Holt and Lea Vaughn to see if other approvals need to be obtained.

### **University Council Reorganization, Rose Committee**

Martin reported that the Rose Committee, which is working on restructuring Faculty Senate Councils, is recommending that the Councils be abolished in their present form in favor of joint faculty/administration councils. The Rose Committee hopes this will promote shared governance, which now seems to be weakening. After the difficult budget and salary issues, a meeting has been scheduled between President McCormick, Lee Huntsman, Brad Holt, Sandy Silberstein, and the Regents, to discuss shared governance and how it is working or not working.

The recommendation for joint councils will go to the administration to see how they respond. As joint councils, it is possible that there would be more resources available, though the issue of unionization might be an obstacle to joint governance. It is envisioned that the Vice President in charge of a particular area would co-chair a council with a faculty member. Everyone would have an equal vote; classified staff and students would be included.

At the last meeting of the Rose Committee, FCRIB was preserved as a council but would have joint membership. This plan could not take place until the 2003-2004 academic year at the earliest, but the process is moving ahead.

Whittaker expressed concern that joint councils would blur the lines of responsibility and authority, and dilute the effectiveness of the councils' work. Dwyer agreed that it would be "a little sticky" to discuss some issues in a shared setting - she is not sure how, or even whether, it would work.

### **Review of Peer Benefits**

Martin showed the Council last year's report on peer benefits, which compared more than 50 institutions across the country in terms of salaries and benefits. This year's report is not ready, but is being prepared and will be ready in Fall Quarter. FCRIB will then be able to compare salaries and benefits, and do some work on the data. It appears that the UW is still falling behind, so it is important to have good data each year to be able to arrive at some benchmarks.

### **Priorities for offering 'Other Benefits'**

Katy Dwyer reported that the HEPPS payroll system still needs to be upgraded to accommodate increased needs for data, but Computing and Communications' budget is being cut, so upgrades are not likely to happen any time soon. Some of the new deductions that need to be accommodated are Long Term Care, Flexible Spending Accounts, deferred compensation, and other voluntary benefits. If no other Faculty Council sees IT upgrades to the payroll system as its role, FCRIB should take it up. Someone needs to advocate with Computing and Communications for administrative support issues.

Charles Frey suggested that the list of other benefits be continued on email over the summer, and added to the minutes in Fall Quarter. Chamberlin agreed, and added that this would be a good way to reach members not in attendance today.

Martin will send her list to Katy for additions or deletions, and the list will be sent out to everyone to add their ideas for other benefits that might be pursued.

The Council was kind enough to thank the Recorder for her help this past year, and the Recorder returns the compliment.

Martin thanked Katy Dwyer for the extra work she has done this year, which has been a great help and often on short notice.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*