

Faculty Staff Benefits Committee Minutes 10-12-2010

1. Members:

Present

Carol Bernhard

C. Randall Truman

Nissane Capps

Christee King

Sharon Scaltrito

Frances Wilkinson

Vera Norwood

Harjit Ahluwalia

Hans Frederick Barsun

Excused

Karin Retskin

Absent

Marsha Baum

Richard Goshorn

Ex-Officio

Josie Ruybal Abeyta

Elaine Phelps

Raqui Martinez

Guests

Jane Slaughter

Richard Holder

2. Minutes of the Sept. 14, 2010 meeting were approved.

3. Faculty Parental Leave Policy.

A new Parental Leave Policy for faculty was referred to the committee by the Senate Policy Committee. Deputy Provost Richard Holder and Senate Policy Committee member, M. Jane Slaughter, answered committee questions about the proposed policy. Holder noted that the policy was being used by the Provost's Office as a "best practices" model when academic units asked how to handle parental leave, but it was important to get the policy formally approved through the Senate. Committee members asked how common this approach was in comparable institutions and were informed that this is now standard practice and an important benefit for recruiting and retaining faculty. The Committee unanimously supported the new policy. In discussion afterward, Capps asked Phelps if the University might not consider adding a short term disability benefit, as this would help address parental leave issues for staff. Phelps said this benefit was being including in the bid this year.

4. Budget Committee Update

Fran Wilkinson, who serves on both our committee and the Budget committee, presented an update on the challenges faced by the 3.2445% rescission this year and the expected budget rebase for FY 2012 that could lead to a permanent reduction of 8.2445%. Of

relevance to our committee are issues of benefits. Wilkinson reported that, thus far, there is general agreement that pooled fringe benefits, insurance and utilities cannot be subject to across the board cuts. However, it is conceivable that the administration could look at cuts to specific benefits. HR Vice President, Helen Gonzales, has not yet made a presentation to the Budget committee in regard to benefits. Although the President's Advisory Task Force on cost cutting measures has mentioned benefits, there has not yet been serious discussion of this. Wilkinson will keep our committee informed if benefits do arise as a target of cuts in any of these discussions.

5. Retiree Health Care Task Force

Elaine Phelps reported that our committee recommendations for members on this committee had been included in the make-up of the committee and HR is now working on a committee charge and first meeting. Norwood requested a copy of the charge to share with the committee.

6. Dependent Audit

Phelps reported that the audit is proceeding successfully. Seventy-five percent of the target population had responded by October 10. Another letter is going out to remind those who have not yet completed the audit. HR also worked with PPD and Housing to make sure that all affected employees have an appropriate, adequate way to respond, including those who require a language other than English. They have also worked to get the request to faculty/staff on lwop and sabbatical, as well as the 20 employees who do not have email.

7. November agenda items

The committee felt it was important to keep the budget on the agenda. For next meeting, we will ask Karen Retskin for a report on the state level Retirement Solvency Task Force. We will also invite a faculty member and a staff member of the President's Advisory Task Force to give a report to the committee on their deliberations in regard to benefits. We also asked Elaine Phelps to present a long term schedule of the bidding process for the year and to give an update on how the self-funded health insurance plan is working.