Major Items Of Interest

-Regent Meeting: The faculty representatives met with student Regent Katherine Pointer for about forty-five minutes. Regent Pointer was most interested in gathering information about faculty that are leaving UW campuses due to retirements and, more importantly, those that have left for better offers in other states. She feels the primary way students will become aware of the impact of the budget cuts is when their favorite faculty leave due to other offers or retire.

-Supplemental Pay Plan: If the new lapse numbers hold up, it seems pretty certain that there will not really be an option.

-Pay Checks Over 12 Months: Several campuses (including UWEC) have passed motions asking for system HR to work on options regarding either providing a choice of 12 month contracts or finding a way "spread out" the 12-month health care payments over the normal 9-month contract. All of the comprehensives that have not yet don this will likely do so in the next few weeks. The doctorals seem less convinced.

-Budget Lapses: There was a lot of discussion about the severity and disproportional nature of the lapses from the Department of Administration. There was little consensus about what, if anything, can be to limit the damage.

-Program Review: System is developing a working group to design a new structure for the System's role in evaluating new programs & evaluating existing programs. Calls will be going out to campuses for nominations soon.

-System Response To Lapses: System appears to be making some reasonably hard-hitting public arguments regarding how the Department of Administration allocated the recent lapses. Essentially they are pointing out that DoA exempted many of the "critical" functions in corrections, K-12, etc. and System is arguing that we should have similar exemptions. Whether this works or not remains to be seen. There is also clear concern that if this becomes too overtly political, the end result would be to create more long-term damage. Whether this is true or simply another case of "Battered System" syndrome at work is unclear.

-HR Update: All minimum & maximum salary ranges will go up by 2% for faculty, academic staff, and administrators. A variety of these changes are due to the decertifying of several unions. Final approval of the pay plans may devolve to Regents for final approval starting in 2013 or 2015, depending on what happens with the legislative task force examining the structure of the UW system.
It appears System HR has finally realized that they need address the "May Multiples" issue more quickly than they planned based upon the number of resolutions they received from the campus senates. They are trying to find a way to spread out the multiples for the 2011-12 year if possible, and they claim they will certainly have something in place by 2012-13.

-9/12 Contract Issue: It is now possible to have payroll split your check right from system and deposit your paycheck into two separate accounts. They are also trying to develop a calculator to assist people with 9-month contracts to figure out how much money to put into a "separate" individual account to self-fund over the summer. Apparently a decision was made in 2008 not to do the 9/12 split option based on the cost, but now the System personnel are claiming there are new issues regarding federal tax issues.

The tax explanation is, for purposes of record, at least the fourth different reason we have heard for not implementing this in the past three months, along with the "it is too expensive" reason, the "we can all do it on our own" reason, and the "we don't have any information to indicate the faculty actually want this option" reason.

System is also indicating that it would cost less to implement if we require it of all of the 9-month contract employee rather than making it an option. Madison and Milwaukee seem less inclined to support mandatory 12-month checks, and it appears System is leaning towards supporting the doctorals rather than gathering data on the preferences of the UW faculty as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,

Faculty Representative Geoff Peterson