The Academic Staff Representatives to the UW System met on April 4, 2014. Below is a summary of what was discussed.

**Academic Staff Reps Discussion with UW System administrators Al Crist and Margo Lessard**

**Academic Staff Contracts**

Discussion was held on renewable/nonrenewable academic staff appointments. **Crist said that an FTE = FTE regardless of whether the employee is on a nonrenewable or renewable contract.** What DOES matter is the ability to move FTEs between departments. The main difference between the nonrenewable and renewable contracts is the issue notice of termination – for nonrenewable contracts, no notice is required; for renewable contracts, notice is required.

Mike Pagel from Stevens Point shared that at SP they did an audit of contracts to see that the need was not going away for instructors in English.

**UPS, Title and Compensation Study, and Compensation issues**

JOCER has not yet approved University Personnel Structure. JOCER will look at it in the next few weeks and possibly approve UPS to start in July of 2015.

Title and compensation study – System administrators are waiting until JOCER approves the UPS until they undertake a study. What is the purpose of such a study? What would we be doing with the data? -- Would realign all our titles appropriately. It could create a clearer path for progression for all academic staff. A title and compensation study would also reveal market data to compare academic staff compensation to the regional and national market. It could also provide opportunities to make appropriate reclassifications.

Lessard said that since the 1980s the salary floor for instructional academic staff has been calculated as a percentage of the floor for faculty salaries.

Compensation – Al Crist shared that the Board of Regents will not have pay plan authority for UW System institutions. He expected that UW employees would receive the state employee pay plan. Above that, individual institutions would have to determine how they would adjust compensation to market forces. He does not expect any “catch-up” allotments from the state. A consequence could possibly be the breaking of academic staff from faculty in compensation plans. This process is known as “decoupling”.

Administrative code – UPG 3.05 addresses job security. Al Crist will share some historical documents on this.

**Academic Staff Reps Discussion**

**Distinguished Prefix for Academic Staff**

Discussion was held on the fact that the distinguished opportunity is not practically available to many staff members.

UW-Madison has changed their handbook guidelines for Distinguished. They are seeing an increase in applications for that prefix.
Academic Staff Orientation

Some campuses have a Staff Orientation committee. Provost’s Office coordinate at Stevens Point – 70% attendance. They orientate on Monday 8am weekly for first semester with speakers to assimilate them to campus.

Leadership Conference

This will be held on Thursday, July 24, 9:00am – 2:00pm (virtual).

Discussion was held on ideas for topics for keynote speaker, who is the Interim Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance for UW Colleges and UW Extension. Conference planners will ask the speaker what he would like to speak on. Ideas shared - increasing partnerships and showcasing those partnerships; how to balance autonomy along with interdependence within the institutions. Also, budget and forward momentum with UW System.

Blackboard Collaborate will be used for the conference.

Campus Program Prioritization

UW-Stevens Point is going through the process of realigning priorities with strategic planning and long-term goals. They are doing this in advance of UW System requiring them to do so. UW-Stout is on a regular seven- to ten-year cycle of evaluation. UW-Parkside is retroactively evaluating programs, including faculty and academic staff workloads.

The question was raised - how many students do you lose before needing to lay off employees? In an environment where budgets are increasingly dependent on tuition dollars, this is an important issue.

Some campuses reported that any vacated positions are returned centrally and departments and units must apply to get those positions back.

Layoff Policies

What are they? Is anyone redefining them before the time comes to lay off employees?

UW System Chapter 12 addresses layoffs – campus policies must be in line with Chapter 12. “Layoffs of Academic Staff for Budget”.

Joint Session with Faculty and Administrators

Teaching (faculty/IAS) workload discussion

Nook passed out drafts of an outline of how they will address the workload issue. The open records request on teaching load and compensation is only for comprehensive UW institutions, not for UW-Madison or the Colleges. On the issue of compensation, only faculty are included in the discussion. The Board of Regents might consider a policy on teaching loads.

April Board of Regents Meeting

The April BOR meeting will include discussions of the biennial budget.
Enrollment

Nook said that almost all institutions are seeing a decrease of 2-10% in student enrollment. He said that we have bottomed out on the high school graduation demographic. UW System is looking at an enrollment management system.

The number of individuals with bachelor degrees per state affects employment income and is an important issue. We are currently exporting bachelor degrees to state like Minnesota where more individuals hold bachelor degrees. About 31-32% of students who graduate from a Wisconsin high school enroll in a UW System institution. The majority of our growth is coming from out-of-state and international students.

Academic Staff Reps Discussion with UW System administrators Stephen Kolison and Mark Nook

Chancellor Search and Screen Process

There is a possibility of changing the search process so that candidates are not announced publically. The HR policy requires a search committee; interim hires do not require a full search.

Remedial Education Committee and 30-Credit Transfer Committee

The committees are continuing to work on these issues.

Institutional Reserves

If reserves are below 15%, there is no need to report, but must explain everything.

Academic Staff Morale

Administrators asked how academic staff morale was. Several campus representatives reported that it was not good and that they knew of academic staff employees leaving for better paying jobs outside the UW System.

FTE and Benefit Issues

The question was raised as to whether FTEs can be reevaluated to allow for more positions. Administrators said that this is not possible, unless an institution has new money or a pool of vacant positions. At the state level, you can create more positions on the fee side (tuition-funded) but the institution must pay for salaries and benefits. Using 131 funds is currently the easiest way to create new positions.

Fringe benefits are reallocated each year to institutions. Some institutions have higher fringe benefit costs related to higher costs of health insurance regionally.