The Academic Staff Representatives met on Friday, May 3, 2013 in Madison. Below is a summary of what was discussed.

The Academic Staff Representatives discussed pay plans, equity adjustments, and salary concerns in our group meeting. We also discussed the upcoming Academic Staff Leadership Conference, which will take place in Madison on July 25-26 at the Concourse Hotel. The conference planning committee shared a tentative agenda, including 3 tracks: 1) New instructional perspectives, 2) Professional development, and 3) Changing needs in student services. Conference registration fee will be $50. [UW-Eau Claire has funding available from the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact Katie Wilson at wilsonk@uwec.edu.]

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Academic Staff Representatives joined the Faculty Representatives and UW System administrators

UW System Reserves

The LAB yearly audits the UW System, and the reserve balance is clearly laid out on reports to legislators.

When President Reilly found out that the reserve had grown and learned that the press and legislators were likely to become concerned about it, Reilly announced that the UW System would keep tuition increases at 2% rather than the planned increase of 5.5%. Additionally, he announced that some of the reserve monies would be allocated to student financial aid. Shortly after, the story about the UW System reserves hit the papers, and legislators and the public were upset.

It was shared that the debate has likely surfaced because other entities want to divert the $181 million funding that was proposed for the UW System in the Wisconsin state budget to other agencies.

90% of the UW System’s reserves are in individual campuses’ accounts. Only 10% of the reserves are in UW System accounts. Of the 90% in individual campuses’ accounts, the monies are spread out over departmental and programmatic budgets in over 130,000 different accounts. This is contrary to the misunderstanding that the UW System solely has the reserves.

It is likely that tuition will not increase in the next budget cycle. UW System personnel, along with advocates from individual campuses, are now focusing on advocating for keeping the $181 million block grant to the UW System intact in the proposed Wisconsin state budget. Individual citizens have also been contacting their legislators to advocate for keeping this intact.

There is a possibility of a state pay plan, of which UW System employees would be a part. Some of the pay plan would likely need to be funded internally by individual campuses.
**Overpayments**

Administrators updated the representatives on the issue of overpayments of health premiums. The UW System is attempting to reconcile the differences and recuperate some of the overpayments.

**University Personnel Structure Implementation**

For the full implementation of the new UPS, the only approval needed is that of the Joint Committee on Employment Relations, not the approval of the entire state budget. The UW System is continuing to prepare for an implementation date of July 1.

**Paycheck Distribution**

One of the representatives asked about the issue of paycheck distributions. In the past, faculty and staff with 9 month academic year contracts had requested to be paid over 12 months. UW System administrators stated that they have not considered that issue recently due to larger issues that have surfaced. The question was also asked about why academic year employees could not be paid after 2 weeks of work (on September 1) instead of waiting until they had worked 6 weeks (October 1). Administrators were not sure why this was not in practice but did not share any possible solutions to the situation.

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Academic Staff Representatives met with Stephen Kolison from UW System Administration. Reps discussed the group’s accomplishments from this year’s meetings, including planning the academic staff leadership conference for the coming summer. Reps shared that others would like to see more representatives from the academic staff at Board of Regents meetings. Funding surfaced as an issue for attending BOR meetings. It was decided that reps would consider trying to coordinate attendance at BOR meetings to ensure that at least 2 or 3 academic staff members are at each meeting.

Reps also discussed the structure for reps’ meetings. Some reps asserted the idea of replacing some in-person meetings with virtual meetings using technology. Reps agreed that they would want to continue to meet in person if the Faculty Reps were meeting in person.