Faculty Representative's Report
UWEC University Senate
10 November 2009

The Faculty Representatives Council last met on Friday, October 30th, in Madison. We met as a group in the morning and then met in the afternoon with the academic staff representatives and various officials from UW System. Among the major issues discussed were the following:

1. **Competitive Compensation Task Force.** The faculty reps discussed the Competitive Compensation Task Force proposed by UW System, the mission of which is to advocate for increased salaries in light of the UW System’s Growth Agenda. The numerical make up of the task force is still unsettled, but it is likely to include faculty reps, academic staff reps, regents, a chancellor, a provost, and business and community leaders. The reps thought that having more business and community leaders would increase the likelihood of success and, even if this meant having fewer faculty reps on the task force, and we communicated this to Rebecca Martin (UW System Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs). We discussed how collective bargaining might complicate the task force’s work — since bargaining units will negotiate with the Board of Regents via UW System, the System may face a conflict in advocating for higher faculty salaries.

2. **Collective Bargaining.** We discussed the status of collective bargaining on various campuses. The reps from Madison and Milwaukee shared their senses that collective bargaining was unlikely to be approved on their campuses; the reps from the comprehensives tended to tentatively share the opposite view.

   I followed up with Al Crist, UW System Associate Vice President for Human Resources & Workforce Diversity, on a question that came up after our recent open forum on collective bargaining concerning the status of deans and department chairs in faculty bargaining units. Though chairs are supervisors in an obvious sense, they are not supervisors as defined in §111.96(20). No one with a limited appointment (§36.17)—deans, provosts, etc.—will count as faculty for the purpose of collective bargaining, even when they also hold a faculty appointment.

3. **Other HR Issues.** Al Crist presented us with drafts of several proposed changes to current policies: (a) changing the non-medical leaves of absence policy to give greater local control over granting non-medical leaves for up to five years; (b) changing the sick leave reinstatement policy to increase the reinstatement period for unclassified staff who return to the UW System from three to five years; and (c) reinstating and modifying the vacation payout upon retirement policy to allow unclassified staff to cash-out up to 40 hours of vacation per year once they’ve completed 15 years of service, down from 25 years (the policy was suspended with the 2003-2005 unclassified pay plan).

4. **Chancellor Searches.** The reps discussed concerns brought by one of our number about Regent policy regarding chancellor searches. In particular, the reps discussed (i) whether the faculty on the search committees should be elected by the faculty of the searching institution, rather than being appointed by the system president with input from local governance (as is currently policy) and (ii) whether the search committee chair should be elected by its members rather than being appointed by the system president (as is currently policy). Rebecca Martin was sympathetic, but suggested that faculty have more to lose than to gain by pushing for this, since the regents (i) already think that 10 faculty members on search committees is too many and (ii) desire to have greater control over the search process and thus would not look favorably on greater faculty control.

5. **Recruitment and Retention Fund.** The reps once again discussed “the star fund,” an issue that seems more nettlesome at some campuses than at others. Per our request, the system will provide us with data about how the funds are distributed system-wide.

6. **Making Textbooks Affordable.** We discussed the latest draft of the UW System policy for making textbooks affordable, which should have much great impact on campuses without rental programs. We will be providing feedback from our campuses at our February meeting; I will bring this to the Executive Committee to determine how to garner the feedback System is requesting.

The Faculty Representatives Council will next meet in Madison on December 4th; please let me know (mcalees@uwec.edu) if you have questions or concerns that you would like me to raise.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean McAleer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Philosophy and Religious Studies
UWEC Faculty Representative