
Faculty Representative's Report
UWEC University Senate
13 October 2009

The Faculty Representatives Council last met on Friday, September 25th, 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. *Furloughs*. The faculty reps discussed how their campuses are responding to furloughs. Some strategies include some departments closing one Friday afternoon a month; suspending post-tenure review; and reducing the number of committees faculty are expected to serve on. The reps also discussed the difficulties of quantifying the reduction in productivity that should correspond to furloughs. One campus's senate is considering a resolution criticizing the policy and those responsible for it, no other campuses appear to be doing this, and few if any reps seemed to think this was a good idea.
2. *Making Opportunity Affordable*. Lynn Paulson, Assistant Vice President for Budget and Planning, informed us that we should hear in November whether UWS is one of the five recipients of \$2M grants from the Lumina Foundation to improve access to higher education (we are among eleven finalists). The Foundation's goal is that by 2025, 55% of all adults have a bachelor's degree. (According to Lumina, in 2005, 37.4% of Wisconsin adults (aged 25-64) had a bachelor's degree; this is the national average. By contrast, 44.2% of adult Minnesotans have a bachelor's degree.)
3. *Human Resource Issues*. Al Crist, Associate Vice President for Human Resources & Workforce Diversity, discussed human resource issues, especially those related to collective bargaining, though he noted that regarding the latter there were more questions than answers at this time.
 - a. Things will move slowly; it will be the next biennium at the soonest before a collectively bargained contract could be in place.
 - b. Governance rights, tenure, and academic freedom will not be negotiable.
 - c. UW System is currently seeking a consultant to help it develop a training program on collective bargaining for faculty and academic staff for senior executives.
 - d. A governance body, e.g., a senate, could represent faculty and staff for the purposes of collective bargaining, that we needn't unionize to collectively bargain.
 - e. Any collectively bargained contract must be approved by the legislature's Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER).
 - f. More information is available at www.uwsa.edu/hr/barglegis.html, which is also reachable through our senate website.
 - g. In the brief discussion of the Human Resources System it became clear that faculty on 9-month contracts will *not* have an option to be paid over 12 months, faculty interest in this notwithstanding.
 - h. Domestic partner benefits, set to begin on January 1, 2010, should *not* be affected by the lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the domestic partner registry. Coverage is. More information is available at www.uwsa.edu/hr/benefits/dpbenefits.html.
4. *Legislative Update*. David Giroux, Executive Director of Communications and External Relations, informed us that a bill to ensure geographic diversity on the Board of Regents (SB 223) had cleared the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Higher Education. As the bill would reduce the governor's power, it was not clear whether he would sign it if it passes both houses.

The Faculty Representatives Council will next meet in Madison on October 30th; please let me know if you have questions or concerns that you would like me to raise.

Respectfully submitted,

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UWEC Faculty Representative