

To Classified Employees and the K-State community:

This communication concludes the summary of the Alternative Service Committee's visit to the University of Kansas with Part II, employment safeguards and other topics. Both, Part I and Part II are available on the Alternative Service Committee's website: <http://www.k-state.edu/altservcomm>.

PART II SUMMARY

Disciplinary Action Board Replaced the Civil Service Board

KU was required to develop an appeal board to replace the State Civil Service Board to hear cases involving disciplinary actions of suspension, demotion or dismissal involving any USS. K-State would need to do the same and would keep the highly-respected Peer Review Committee, which KU does not have.

This was not brought up in the meeting, but we feel it is important information to share. In any given fiscal year, over 95% of disciplinary action cases are handled by the PRC at K-State. Only a very small number of cases are forwarded to the State Civil Service Board for review (last case was in April 2011). Of those cases, the State Civil Service Board usually affirms PRC's decision. It is a common misconception that the State Civil Service Board "protects" K-State's classified employees. That perceived protection is actually provided by K-State's Peer Review Committee. State Civil Service Board quarterly reports can be found at: <http://da.ks.gov/ps/subject/arc/memos/default.htm>.

Collective Bargaining Organizations (aka Unions) at KU

K.S.A. 76-715a mandates, "Nothing in this act shall affect the representation rights of collective bargaining organizations that represent the employees of a state institution of higher education, nor shall the provisions of this act affect any term or condition of any collective bargaining agreement in effect on the effective date of this act." USS cannot change established memorandum of agreements with collective bargaining organizations (CBO).

Re-Organization Issues at KU NOT Due to USS Option

There are a lot of rumors that many people were laid off at KU after they adopted the USS system. KU panel members confirmed these rumors are 100% false. Re-organization did occur, but it was the result of implementing recommendations of an outside consultant firm, not due to USS. In fact, KU had undergone a significant re-organization in their Housing & Dining Division when KU was still under the civil service system. Re-organization can happen under either system. Ola Faucher, KU Director of Human Resources, clearly stated, "Being a classified (civil service) employee will not help you if your agency decides it is necessary to re-organize or lay off employees."

KBOR Enhanced Leave Option

KU is not currently eligible for the KBOR Enhanced Leave Program for vacation leave accrual. When the Enhanced Leave Program was originally approved, it only applied to classified employees. KU adopted the USS system *before* the KBOR Enhanced Leave Program was approved. KBOR's legal opinion was it excluded KU's USS due to the timing and wording of the legislation. There was some discussion that the legislation may have been amended to include KU's USS. KU is asking KBOR to revisit that issue.

Update: ASC asked K-State's administration to request an opinion from the Kansas Board of Regents on this topic. It was reported by Cindy Bontrager, Interim VP for Administration & Finance, during the 01/09/13 ASC meeting that KU Med Center classified employees recently approved the USS option.

She confirmed with KBOR's Office of General Counsel that the new KU Med Center USS employees kept the enhanced leave benefit. KBOR is checking statute information to see if they can offer the Enhanced Leave Program for all other KU USS. If K-State were to approve the USS option by majority vote, we would be doing so after K-State had implemented the KBOR Enhanced Leave Program; therefore, K-State USS employees would earn the same amount of vacation leave as they currently do.

USS Work Group for Implementation

Once KU voted to move to USS, they established a work group to create their new USS policies and procedures handbook. The work group membership includes USS and KU administration. For years, the work group was a university committee that was independent from their USS Senate (similar to K-State's Classified Senate). It was recently moved to the USS Senate. Some in attendance thought that move was a mistake and could weaken the work group's influence with KU administration.

Administrative-Level Decision Making at KU

Compensation issues are determined (and funded) directly by KU. The Kansas legislature no longer has a say on how KU financially compensates its USS.

Furlough Program

When furloughs were being discussed after the financial crisis of 2008, KU USS provided input into a furlough plan that gives their highest paid employees a greater proportion of any financial impact from a furlough than those making lower salaries..

KBOR USS Handbook Requirement

After they received a majority vote in support of USS, they were required to submit a USS Handbook to KBOR for final approval. The handbook contained more details than the initial white papers they voted on. It was developed by a work group of USS & key KU administration.

Town Hall Meeting Opportunities

KU held numerous town hall meetings to inform and seek feedback from their classified employees. Feedback was used to revise their white papers (aka proposals). These meetings were quite spirited with emotional comments from employees on both sides of the issue.

If you have any questions regarding this KU trip summary information, feel free to contact any ASC member, <http://www.k-state.edu/altservcomm/committee.html>.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alternative Service Committee