

**Kansas State University Faculty Senate
Professional Staff Affairs Committee
Minutes
December 17, 2013
3:30 pm – Room 208, K-State Union**

Present: Mary Anne Andrews (Co-Chair), Kelly Briggs, Danielle Brown (Chair), Kelli Cox, Lisa Duer, Jim Hohenbary, Cathie Lavis, Livia Olsen (Secretary), Stacey Warner

Guests: Jennifer Gehrt; Director, John Hanes; Compensation & Classification Manager, and Gary Leitnaker; Associate Vice President

Call to Order

Minutes Approved

Discussion with representatives from the Division of Human Resources

- ***Where does the distinction lie between professional staff versus classified staff?***

The classified system was created as a result of state civil service law. The law talks specifically about positions given to Board of Regents institutions which fall outside of the classified system, these are the unclassified positions. Classified employees' employment is governed by the state and the Department of Administration for their benefits, etc. The Associate Vice President for the Division of Human Resources is the appointing authority and is responsible for hiring. With the recent vote they will come out of the state civil service system but they maintain their civil service benefits. The law specifically says the types of positions that are classified, if a position doesn't fit into that classification system but is not faculty, then it is unclassified. Whether or not a bachelor's degree is required is irrelevant. Most, but not all, classified positions do not require one a bachelor degree. Most, but not all, unclassified positions do require a bachelor's. Exempt and not exempt is not the same thing as classified and unclassified. The State looks at level of complexity, not the volume of work in classifying positions.

- ***What is the process by which professional staff titles are selected and approved?***

Job families are assessed to see where positions fall. Peer institutions (in the community & at other universities) and similar titles on campus are used in evaluation of positions. Efforts is made to create as much equity as possible. The Task Force report says that there needs to be more of a title structure but HR is not authorized to create that at this time. Right now the structure for unclassified positions is too loose. Title and salary are determined at the same time looking at local and national data. Some salary inconsistencies between departments and colleges are due to budgets. Not everyone has a position description now and supervisors need training on writing them, they tend to be written very generally. Position descriptions on

campus need reviewed and updated. This task takes time and adequate staff. Human Resources only have position descriptions for people hired in the last few years.

- ***Is there a process surrounding regular versus term contracts? Can you clarify the following: there is speculation that term contracts are for those positions on grant funding. There have been concerns brought to our group about long term employees as term rather than regular if their positions are not grant funded?***

Human Resource's does not control those decisions and cannot speak on the topic definitively.

- ***What is the rationale behind making some professional staff position hourly rather than salaried? Are decisions about hourly/salary being made because of regulations? Is the move to hourly a result of regulations like the Fair Labor Standards Act or the new Health Care Law?***

KSU recently went through a state audit. It was determined positions coded as exempt should be nonexempt. Adjustments were made accordingly. It is federal law to correctly compensate staff under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Most reclassifications were CPA level doing professional accounting work.

- ***What is the conversation in Human Resources about the Unclassified Professional Task Force Report? Have any changes been made as a result of the report?***

Human Resource's supports the reports that have been published. HR received approval to hire a full-time trainer that will focus on professional development.

- ***What are the current retention efforts for professional staff employees?***

This is a part of the titles discussion.

- ***Is there any consistency between colleges or departments in evaluation procedures for professional staff? Who monitors if the evaluations are taking place?***

There are departments that do not complete evaluations for professional staff. Classified evaluations must be done, it is the law. There is not a current tracking method to know if unclassified evaluations are taking place since evaluations are not sent to Human Resources. Professional staff is required to have evaluations for merit increases. Human Resource's is working on a standard evaluation form to pilot with Administration and Finance professional staff.

- ***Other***
 - Does the PSA Committee want an ex officio HR representative on the committee?

- The committee should put together a memorandum to take to faculty senate to get things started. We can talk about this again at another meeting or have a conversation through email.

Welcome Provost Liaison

- Our Provost liaison will be Lynn Carlin

Retention Raise Policy

- There will be a working group or task force formed to examine this policy.
- PSA will be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed policy.

Unclassified Council Meeting with the Kansas Board of Regents

- Background information – At most KBOR institutions there is a separate professional staff senate. Representatives from these groups go every few months and give a report to the Regents. It would be beneficial for somebody from this committee to attend.
- Approved the General Caucus response of:
A major goal this year was to establish a Professional Staff Affairs standing committee in faculty senate, which we accomplished this fall. The new committee together with our unclassified staff caucus strengthens our voice substantially in the senate and on campus. We will now focus on other recommendations for unclassified professional development, evaluation and promotion standards.
- Danielle Brown will attend the KBOR meeting with General Caucus chair Dave Stewart on January 15th.

Announcements

- We will meet on January 7

Adjourned