

Faculty Welfare Committee Friday, April 4, 2014, noon to 1pm, Science Center, Room 207

Present: Mirari Elcoro (Chair), Brenda Logan, Emily Grundstad-Hall and Caroline Hopkinson (Secr). Absent: Linda Tuck (schedule conflict), Richard Wallace, Gracia Roldan and Jane Blackwell (schedule conflict).

1. Elcoro announced that *Faculty Senate Bill to create a taskforce on Part Time Faculty Compensation, 2014* passed the Faculty Senate, awaiting signature by President Bleicken. Bill as sent from Committee to Senate added as appendix 1, fyi.

2. Elcoro announced that Jane Blackwell, our liaison to the Senate, said she could not meet on Fridays and was going to ask the Senate to our committee a different Senate liaison next year.

3. Committee reviewed progress with Domestic Partners Benefits Bill:

Elcoro and Grundstad-Hall met with Dr. Amy Heaston at the end of February to formulate a plan to address Dr. Bleicken's concerns about the bill. I'll put them in appendix 2.

Enthusiastic support from Human Resources. Advancement was positive but more measured in their response/support, needed an estimate of need/cost for the benefits.

Survey of faculty & staff regarding awareness, willingness to contribute financially and most importantly, estimate of potential demand for/cost of domestic partner benefits. Laura Mills helped construct the survey, which was distributed via e-mail by Human Resources on March 24th, 2014. Preliminary results are that 37.5% of faculty/staff responded to the survey, 80% of respondents indicate they were NOT aware of the benefits currently available to domestic partners. On the question of how many would take advantage of the domestic partner health insurance benefits if available, the number of potential users (NOT percentage) was about 25-35.

The Office of the Provost and Student Government Association endorse the Bill.

Next steps: Elcoro will share survey information with Office of Advancement, a meeting with President Bleicken is scheduled for April 10th, Elcoro, Grundstad-Hall and Rebecca Carroll from Human Relations are planning to attend, all committee invited. And, send a bill to the senate before April 21st meeting.

4. Committee discussed latest draft of bill, based on this draft:

The Bill (as presented to the Faculty Senate and as included in their Agenda for the meeting of October 21, 2013)- link to the corresponding Agenda

: http://www.armstrong.edu/images/faculty_senate/documents_2013-2014/FacultySenateAgendaforOctober212013.pdf

Domestic Partners Benefits Bill

Whereas Armstrong Atlantic State University embraces the values of inclusion and diversity: "we value and respect an environment of mutual trust and collegiality that builds an inclusive as well as a diverse community"¹, and

Whereas the administration of Armstrong recently highlighted the importance of the value of diversity during the Convocation of Fall 2013, and

Whereas the University System of Georgia Faculty Council resolved on February 25th, 2012 that, "In the interest of equity and in order to attract and retain all of the best qualified faculty and staff, the USGFC recommends that university system benefits be extended to domestic partners,"² and

Whereas as of January 1, 2014 all colleges and universities of the University System of Georgia will extend voluntary benefits such as vision, dental, and optional additional life insurance to domestic partners of employees who are benefits eligible³ and recently (February 15, 2013) the University of Georgia Council approved the Proposal for Implementation of Full Domestic Partner Benefits^{4,5}, and

Whereas full medical benefits are still not extended to domestic partners of employees of colleges and universities of the University System of Georgia because current State of Georgia law and policy prevent the use of state funds for persons not recognized as dependents,

The Faculty Senate requests that Armstrong Atlantic State University petitions to the University System of Georgia to allow institutional policy to include that corresponding employee portions be paid with foundation funds.

¹Armstrong Atlantic State University Catalog 2013-2014. Retrieved from: http://www.armstrong.edu/images/academic_affairs/current_undergraduate_catalog.pdf

²University System of Georgia Faculty Council Meeting, February 25, 2012. Retrieved from: http://www.usg.edu/faculty_council/documents/resolutions/USGFC_Resolutions_-_Feb_25.pdf

³University of Georgia, Proposal for Implementation of Full Domestic Partner Benefits August 2012, Retrieved from: <https://apps.reg.uga.edu/UniversityCouncil/publicCommitteeMeeting/showAgenda/105>

⁴UGA Council Approves domestic partner benefits for employees, The Red and Black. Retrieved from: http://m.redandblack.com/news/uga-council-approves-domestic-partner-benefits-for-employees/article_726d9efa-08e5-11e2-b0b5-001a4bcf6878.html?mode=ijm

⁵UGA committee approves domestic partner benefits. The GA Voice. Retrieved from: <http://www.thegavoice.com/news/georgia-news/5200-uga-committee-approves-domestic-partner-benefits-next-vote-set-for-sept-27>

The Committee decided to keep the first part of the Bill essentially the same and modify the last paragraph to reflect, hopefully, Advancement's funding and also Human Resources support. Mirari will share a final draft of the bill with the Committee.

Committee discussed final format, how to present the Bill. Agreed to simple statement of the final version of the bill, but add background, such as endorsements, other supporting material, and gathered in a notebook.

5. Committee agreed to also put forward a resolution stating our support for extending health benefits to domestic partners, so the Senate has that option as well as the bill.

Meeting ended at 1pm.

Submitted by Caroline Hopkinson

Appendix 1

Final version of Part Time Faculty Salary Bill sent to Faculty Senate March 7, 2014, fyi

Faculty Senate Bill to create a taskforce on Part Time Faculty Compensation, 2014

Background

During November 2013 the President of the Faculty Senate William Baird, in response to general concern over the issue, asked the Faculty Welfare Committee review with a view to revisiting it as a Bill the *Faculty Senate Resolution 017.10/11: The Part time Salary Study*, approved by the Faculty Senate on May 2,

2011. <http://www.armstrong.edu/images/FSR%20017.pdf?AASUSTID=e0604e8dc512181c4550d6b8a18f47f5>

After consulting the Office of Institutional Research and reviewing previous salary studies for full time faculty, the Faculty Welfare Committee found that no study of part time faculty salaries has been made since 2011.

Part time salaries at Armstrong have not changed since 2010, except that in 2014 part time instructors who teach fully online courses are compensated at a rate higher than all others, \$3,600 per course.

Georgia Southern University continues to offer \$1,000 per credit hour as their mode for part time faculty, according to Virginia Samiratedu, Academic Fiscal Affairs Officer at Georgia Southern (personal communication, February 2014.) . At University of South Carolina at Beaufort, \$2,000 per course is advertised as their minimum for all positions (Website). Armstrong's top pay rate, for faculty with 29-36 years of experience, is \$2,800 per course at present.

The Committee conducted an informal survey of Department Heads in Biology, Mathematics, Languages, Literature and Philosophy, History, and Fine Arts during February 2014. All Department Heads surveyed stated that they believed the compensation rate for part time faculty is too low. Department Heads in Mathematics and Biology responded "Yes" to the question, "In your experience/opinion has Armstrong's salary for part time faculty has caused your department difficulty recruiting part time faculty?" Specialists in the humanities are more available. Dept Head David Wheeler added, "Hiring them in foreign languages or philosophy, however, is much more difficult. Other universities pay better, and so do private high schools. Retaining part-timers in all fields is difficult. When they get something better, they jump ship here." (e-mail, 2/25/2014).

Bill

Based on the persistence of compensation problems discussed in the 2011 resolution and the difficulty Armstrong Department Heads face recruiting and retaining part time faculty in some disciplines, the Faculty Welfare Committee recommends the following to the Faculty Senate:

It is the belief of this faculty, in fairness to our colleagues and to better recruit faculty to teach part time at Armstrong, that the salary rate for part time faculty should be increased and competitive with that of peer institutions. To that end, the Office of the Provost will form a taskforce comprised of appropriate administrators, representatives from the Faculty Senate and representatives from Armstrong's part time faculty. Their charge, to recommend a competitive and fair rate of compensation for part time faculty and to make

any other recommendations necessary in order to achieve that rate of compensation for Armstrong's part time faculty.

Appendix 2

Response to the Bill from Dr. Bleicken (extracted from Minutes from the Faculty Senate from November 18, 2013)- link to the corresponding Minutes:

http://www.armstrong.edu/images/faculty_senate/documents_2013-2014/FacultySenateMinutesforNovember182013.pdf

2. Regarding [FSB-2013-10-21-03](#): Domestic Partners Benefits Bill
 - i. Believes strongly in the importance of partner benefits for all. However, cannot approve bill until consultation and approval of the Armstrong Foundation Board occurs. The University System of Georgia would then be petitioned to approve the bill.
 - ii. Secondly, the cost to extend benefits to domestic partners needs to be determined.
 - iii. Thirdly, foundation funds are often restricted for specific uses by donors (e.g, specific departments, scholarships, etc).
 - iv. Finally, the University of Ga Foundation did not ultimately approve the domestic partners benefits proposal since it "did not fit their mission".
3. We should continue to try to have conversations before bills are sent up to find common ground and improve the likelihood of bills being approved.