

Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities

Faculty Senate Committee Agendas, AY 2024-2025

Present: Stephanie Riehn- chair (CHHS), Dan Clark (OCSE), Peggy Otto (PCAL), Xingang Fan (At Large), Brandon Barber (At Large), Sungjin Im (CEBS), Rob Hale (AA), Todd Seguin (Lib.)

Absent: Pinky Rusli (GFCB), Larry Owens (Reg)

Agenda: October 25, 2024

1. Availability of WKU Childcare for Faculty and Staff

WKU's daycare includes ages 0-3 and 3-5 year olds. Ages 0-3 has 32 slots total, and 3-5 has 68 slots. Only 13 of those slots are reserved for families of 3 that make more than \$26k. Head Start programs are meant for families who need it, and even other slots reserved for families making more than \$26k are often given to low income families. Currently the waiting list is over 50 children, and it is not uncommon for these children to age out before an available slot opens. Discussion included exploring the need for childcare options on the annual FWL survey, and re-visit if the masses express need, as well as, reaching out to benefits to see how many faculty members have children in this age range.

2. Salaries and Merit Raises

Discussion was raised about how department chairs are evaluating the new activity report documents. The concern for COLA raises was expressed prior to instituting merit raises. Additionally, concern was also expressed at how department heads will be trained or qualify to make appropriate decisions. One suggestion was to have a committee of peers to aid in the evaluation of the documents, and other institutions have compensation committees to aid in the decision-making process.

3. Aid with moving offices for displaced faculty during building renovations.

Solutions included contacting Jessica Steenbergen to explore the plan for storage in the interim and explore if there is space in other buildings. We will continue to work on finding solutions moving forward.

4. Application fee waiver for faculty and staff wanting to take courses.

The committee is gathering information and speaking to the appropriate individuals to see if an application waiver is possible for faculty and staff wanting to take courses.

5. Dependent tuition portability

More information is needed to have further discussion on this topic.

6. Emeritus policy revision

The current policy is in need of potential revision for who would be eligible for emeritus status. The suggestion was to take the definition in the dependent tuition policy and put it into the emeritus policy. The concern is that mid-career individuals may leave the university. Eligibility may depend on the retirement system the individual is enrolled in, so this may be viewed as an inequitable benefit.

7. Insurance:

At the previous Faculty Senate meeting a suggestion was presented to lower the cost of insurance was to potentially explore denying coverage to spouses of employees with the benefit of insurance with their current employer. The question addressed was: Can HR let us know the number of people who cover spouses who could opt out and have other insurance? The committee discussed various views on this topic and more information of how many faculty and staff members this affects and is it a viable option without creating a sense of moving backwards with regards to faculty benefit packages. More information needs to be gathered on the topic moving forward.