

CIVIL SERVICE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE RETREAT NOTES  
AUGUST 23, 2012

[In these notes: Expectations for CSCC Members, Ideas for 2012-2013 CSCC Agenda Items, CSCC Subcommittees, Governance Presentation, Fifteen Questions, Continued Discussion about 2012 – 2013 Agenda Items]

[These notes reflect discussion and debate at a retreat of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these notes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Amy L. Olson, chair, Thomas Sondreal, vice chair, Adam Hauge, Sharon Van Eps, Don Cavalier, Teresa Schicker, Bill O'Neill, Carolyn Davidson, John Paton, Lisa Mason, Alethea Oertwich, Terri Wallace

REGRETS: Susan Rafferty, Chris Stevens, Susan Cable-Morrison

I). Amy Olson convened the retreat, welcomed those present, and called for introductions.

II). Ms. Olson began by outlining expectations for members and emphasized the importance of regularly attending meetings. She further requested that members give Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, sufficient advance notice if they are going to be unable to attend a meeting because she intends to cancel meetings if no more than four members and the chair are able to attend.

Ms. Olson went on to highlight additional member expectations contained in the Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC) Operations Manual as well as some of her ideas for possible agenda items for the 2012 – 2013 academic year:

- Ensure that CSCC subcommittees are active, and preparing regular reports.
- Study and thoroughly understand the Civil Service Employment Rules. Ms. Olson reviewed the CSCC mission statement with members.
- Continue to look at equitable rules and policies across the P&A and Civil Service (CS) employee groups, focusing on family leave and transplantation.
- Continue to look into the number one issue identified in the 2011 Civil Service Survey, benefits and compensation.
- Find someone who is willing to chair the Legislative Network Subcommittee and work with Government and Community Relations Office to explore organizing a “Day on the Hill,” similar to AFSCME’s annual “Day on the Hill.”
- Continue to look into seniority issues. Ms. Olson reported that there is a link on the Office of Human Resources website dealing with civil service seniority - <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/er/csseniorityunits/index.html> (the link to the primer is in the box on the right side of the same page).
- Promote staff development opportunities.
- Identify a chair for the Communications Subcommittee. Regarding the Civil Service newsletter, e-Intouch, Ms. Olson suggested changing the format slightly and having the CSCC chair write a letter that would highlight noteworthy items of interest to CS employees. In terms of frequency of distribution, it was suggested that regular distribution would serve to maintain the committee’s presence in front of its constituents. Ms. Olson added that the committee should also consider other ways to publicize and promote CSCC at various University- wide events.

- Invite Mary Luther, compensation director, to provide an update on the job family classification redesign initiative - <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/toolkit/compensation/jobfamily/>. Ms. Olson stated that it will be important to raise the exempt versus non-exempt issue with Ms. Luther. She added that she and Tom Sondreal, CSCC vice chair, plan to meet with Vice President of Human Resources Kathy Brown to discuss job classification changes.
- Discuss the lack of adequate advancement and promotional opportunities. Members agreed that while there are some opportunities for lateral moves for CS employees, there are not a lot promotional opportunities.
- Hear more about the concept of work/life balance and what the University is doing for employees in this area.

III). Next, the discussion turned to the CSCC subcommittees (Compensation-Benefits, Communications, Staff Development, Advocacy Employment Rules and Legislative Network). Action items and conclusions from the discussion included:

- Bill O'Neill volunteered to serve on the Compensation-Benefits Subcommittee.
- A Communications Subcommittee chair still needs to be found.
- The Communications Subcommittee should survey Civil Service employees every three years, which gives the committee time in between surveys to act on the issues that have been identified.
- The Staff Development Subcommittee should work with OHR to develop additional professional development opportunities for CS staff.
- Consider dissolving the Advocacy Subcommittee, or at least changing its focus and/or name. The current name does not accurately reflect what the subcommittee actually does, which is more along the lines of information and referral to other resources within the University, e.g., Office of Conflict Resolution - <http://www1.umn.edu/ocr/>. No final decisions were made about the status of the Advocacy Subcommittee. Ms. Olson agreed to talk with Susan Cable Morrison, Advocacy Subcommittee chair, to solicit her thoughts. She also requested that members give this matter more thought and be prepared to discuss and vote on it at a future meeting.
- Hear about the status of the proposed changes to the Job Evaluation Questionnaires (JEQ) process. Where is this project at?

IV). Ms. Olson welcomed today's guests from the University Senate Office, Vickie Courtney, director, and Becky Hippert, executive assistant. She noted that Ms. Courtney and Ms. Hippert were invited to provide information about how the CSCC and the CS Senate fit into the University's governance structure. A PowerPoint handout to supplement their presentation was distributed.

At the conclusion of their presentation, Ms. Olson thanked Ms. Courtney and Ms. Hippert for the information they provided and indicated that it was very informative.

V). Next, Tom Sondreal, CSCC vice chair, provided a brief overview of the CS Subcommittees (Compensation-Benefits, Communications, Staff Development, Advocacy Employment Rules and Legislative Network).

Following the overview of the CSCC subcommittees, Mr. Sondreal asked members "15 questions," the purpose of which was to review and reinforce information covered at today's retreat and information contained in the Civil Service Employment Rules, and CSCC Operations Manual.

VI). Members spent the remainder of the meeting talking about issues and topics that they want to take up this year, some of which were raised in earlier discussions:

- Look into the issue of salary/pay compression, which results from new hires being brought in at a higher salary levels than incumbents.
- Explore offering the Strengths Finder assessment again to CS employees.
- Request the administration reconsider raising the Regents Scholarship support above the current 75% of the tuition cost for those who already hold degrees.
- Ask OHR to offer New Employee Orientation (NEO) more frequently and encourage OHR to make sure managers are aware that NEO is mandatory for new employees.
- Investigate why there is a discrepancy in the personal holiday benefit between CS employees on the coordinate campuses and the Twin Cities campus. (Alethea Oertwich volunteered to look into this matter and report back.)
- Look into benefit equity between P&A and CS employees.
- Review and consider rewriting the definitions for flex time and comp time.
- Receive an update on proposed changes to the JEQ process. Invite Vice President Brown to a meeting to discuss this initiative further.
- Explore with OHR requiring all new supervisors to take supervisor training.
- Learn more about the vacation donation program given that an increasing number of employees are losing their vacation time because they do not have the time to take it and/or because departments do not have the resources to pay them out.
- Learn more about the review process for a merit-based salary increases. The evaluation forms used by some schools for merit-based increases are actually the same forms that were used for across the board increases, and are not conducive to the merit-based review process.
- Consider changing the focus of the Advocacy Subcommittee or even dissolving the subcommittee altogether. The amount of time spent on advocacy cases should be tracked as well as the type of cases and whether a referral was given.

In light of time, Ms. Olson thanked everyone for their suggestions for topics for the upcoming year. She also reminded members that subcommittee chairs for the Compensation-Benefits, Legislative Action and Communications subcommittees still need to be found. Hearing no further business, she adjourned the retreat.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate