

**P&A Consultative Committee (PACC)
December 6, 2018
Minutes of the Meeting**

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Chair/Chair-Elect's Report; Subcommittee Reports; Civil Service Consultative Committee Report; Report on Potential Reorganization of Subcommittees; Discussion on the *Non-Renewal of Appointment for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees Policy* and the *Early and Select Appointment Terminations for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees Policy*; *Unpaid Personal Leave and Bereavement Leave Policy Review*; PACC Bylaws Review]

PRESENT: Ian Ringgenberg (chair), Noelle Noonan (chair-elect), Mia Boos, Fran Fabrizio, Ann Hagen, Erin Heath, Rahfat Hussain, Jeremy Jenkins, Corinne Komor

REGRETS: Julie Rashid

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Jean Otto, chair-elect, Civil Service Consultative Committee

1. Chair/Chair-Elect's Report

Ian Ringgenberg, chair, welcomed committee members and began his report. He said that he and Noelle Noonan, chair-elect, would be visiting the University of Minnesota Duluth campus on December 7, 2018, and would be joined by Ingrid Nuttall, chair, Social Concerns Committee, and Jean Otto, chair-elect, Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC). They will meet with P&A governance members and constituents while there.

The [Joint Compensation Commission](#) (JCC) met for the first time on November 29, 2018, continued Ringgenberg. Civil Services appointees to the committee are Sara Howard, Missy Juliette, Ray Muno, and Maggie O'Neill. JCC members agreed that the way merit pool impacts individual departments was a topic that needed further discussion and better comprehension. The JCC set a goal of meeting with Brian Burnett, senior vice president for finance and operations, Office of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations, once it had better clarified its mission by researching past merit pay white papers and resolutions.

Ringgenberg then noted that in the presidential search, one finalist, Joan Gabel, had been named and she would be meeting with the Board of Regents (BOR) the following week. Noonan shared that the two other finalists, who would not agree to being named publicly unless they were named the sole finalist, have agreed to stay "in reserve" in the event that Gabel does not move forward in the search process.

2. Subcommittee Reports

Benefits and Compensation

Co-chair of the Benefits and Compensation Subcommittee, Corinne Komor, said the subcommittee is working on:

- The Regents Scholarship
- Gathering parental leave data
- Gathering information about where former University of Minnesota employees go when they leave the University
- Vacation banking - researching last year's competitive data, hoping to increase bankable vacation hours
- Researching a possible change in policy that would allow P&A staff to take time off in increments of less than four hours
- Looking at the discrepancies between P&A staff and faculty-like P&A in how much time faculty can be "absent" from campus in comparison to P&A staff, even though the two groups are listed as having the same benefits
- Discussing P&A staff work hours, work time, and the difficulty of being salaried in terms of overtime. Researching if there is policy and framework in place to support the actual number of worked hours
- Discussing using more open-ended questions when surveying P&A employees regarding their employment at the University

Communications

Co-chairs Ann Hagen and Mia Boos, Communications Subcommittee, reported on the following activities:

- November newsletter was sent out to all P&A employees
- A December newsletter was being prepared
- Offered to add a survey question from the Benefits and Compensation Subcommittee to the December newsletter
- Discussed using the P&A Blog more often, and asked committee members if they had news from subcommittees they would like to post on the blog
- Working on standardizing the sections of the newsletter, and invited committee members to share ideas about what sections they would like to see
- Preparing a written version of the subcommittee's strategic plan that would be shared with PACC and the P&A Senate in the near future
- Working on increasing traffic to the P&A Senate Blog

Ringgenberg mentioned he'd like to see a talk-back segment in the newsletter, featuring a question or an idea that readers could respond to, thereby increasing engagement with the P&A Senate.

Outreach

Erin Heath, co-chair of the Outreach Subcommittee, reported the following:

- Last meeting was November 8, 2018; next meeting will be February 6, 2019
- The New Employee Welcome events are fully staffed for the academic year
- Waiting to hear next steps regarding bylaws review/revision

Professional Development and Recognition

No one from the Professional Development and Recognition (PD&R) Subcommittee was present at the meeting, but the co-chairs had submitted the following written information prior to the meeting:

- Held second Brown Bag session on December 3, 2018, in Duluth. Attendance was 120 participants (100 online, 10 in the Twin Cities and 10 in Morris)
- Next Brown Bag slated for February
- Upcoming PD&R Meeting will be December 13, 2018

3. Civil Service Consultative Committee Report

Jean Otto, chair-elect, Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC), started by saying that the Civil Service Senate met December 6, 2018, and there were six new senators who attended the meeting. She reported that the Civil Service Senate approved the [Civil Service Employment Rules](#) changes to reflect the new [Parental Leave Policy](#). This policy change will go before the BOR in February 2019.

Otto noted that the committee had received a response from the Office of Human Resources (OHR) regarding some issues the Civil Service Senate had with the Job Family Study, and had scheduled a meeting with Patti Dion, senior director, Employee Relations, OHR, for the following week to discuss the issues.

4. Report on Potential Reorganization of Subcommittees

Next, Hagen talked about the survey results she had gathered from the November 2018 P&A Senate meeting, and, based on the survey results, proposed a set of questions for focus groups. After compiling the data, Hagen noted that the most frequently used word (by P&A Senate members) to describe an ideal P&A Senate was “effective.” Additional information gathered from the survey, Hagen said, was that the current structure of the P&A Senate was *not* effective, and the senators felt they did not have power or influence. The results of the survey also indicated, Hagen said, that improvements in communication with constituents and within the senate itself would have a major impact on the efficacy of the P&A Senate.

Lastly, Hagen noted that the survey results clarified themes that P&A senators felt *should* be addressed, but were currently *not* being addressed:

- social concerns/campus climate/equity/diversity/inclusion

- advocacy/empowerment/leadership.

Hagen then listed the possible questions for focus groups to undertake:

- What are some things the P&A Senate does well?
- If you invited a friend to participate in the senate, what would you say in the invitation?
- What is the most important function of the P&A Senate?
- Do the current subcommittees support that important function? How do they do so or not do so?
- How could the subcommittees more effectively support that function?
- Is the workload evenly distributed?
- Of all the things talked about, what is the most important?
- What has been missed?

Hagen laid out a proposed timeline, with focus groups working during the latter half of January 2019 so there would be a preliminary report to share at the February 2019 senate meeting.

Ringgenberg asked Hagen who she envisioned as members of the focus groups, and Hagen suggested current and former senators and alternates, and one group that would be made up of just former senate chairs. Hagen then asked for feedback from committee members regarding the timeline and proposed questions.

Noonan said she thought the timeline was appropriate. She then asked the committee if it thought some possible responses would be missed, with focus groups made up of only currently or formerly participating senators. Was there a need, she wondered, to widen the scope of who the questions were being asked of. Hagen said committee members had previously decided to focus on former and current senate members because there was a large portion of the constituency that most likely wouldn't know what the P&A Senate was. She then suggested that perhaps the question in the January P&A Senate newsletter could be "What is the most important function of the P&A Senate to you?"

Boos added that at some point sharing the surveys with the P&A employee class as a whole could be helpful in raising the awareness among constituents of the P&A Senate. She added that she thought it was important not to appear insular. Noonan then asked at what point would the Communications Subcommittee consider engaging the broader P&A community in the focus group questions. Hagen explained that in delivering the preliminary report at the February 2019 P&A Senate, it would then become a public document and senators should be encouraged to have P&A staff in their units study the report and respond with questions and input. A proposal would then be presented in April 2019 if action was merited, said Hagen, but it would not come up for action in the senate until May 2019, which would allow time for making necessary changes in response to constituent input.

Ringgenberg noted that he favored the idea of allowing the constituency at large to respond. While the senators and alternates were well positioned to provide feedback and criticism on what

was and wasn't working in the P&A Senate, he said, constituency input was vital; especially when considering changes that may have a lasting impact.

Those who volunteered to help with the focus groups were Noonan, Rigggenberg, Hagen, and Heath. Hagen then explained that the intention was to send out a Doodle Poll to see who from PACC could help with moderating, and then begin scheduling and sending invitations to prospective participants.

5. Discussion of Non-Renewal of Appointment for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees Policy and the Early and Select Appointment Terminations for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees Policy

Noonan said that she and Ringgenberg attended a meeting with Patti Dion (OHR) regarding the [Non-Renewal of Appointment for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees](#) Policy as well as the [Early and Select Appointment Terminations for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees](#) Policy. They found that the data on non-renewal for P&A employees was not robust, Noonan stated. There was only one situation of a P&A employee leaving the University in which data is fully captured in the PeopleSoft system: the employee must go through the entire non-renewal process/period and then leave the University at the end of that time, under the non-renewal policy. There is no data connected to non-renewal at all if an employee resigns or moves to another unit. Noonan explained some of the data and numbers that Dion shared with them, and made the point that additional, helpful, information pertaining to why an employee left, and where that employee landed, *could* be collected though it was not currently being collected at this time.

Next, Noonan said that she asked Dion if OHR would be willing to share data on departure of employees from the University for other employee groups, and how that is coded. Noonan emphasized that she is hoping to focus attention with OHR on reconsidering the language of the non-renewal policy which essentially says an employee can be terminated “for no reason or for any reason at all.” Noonan said that Dion explained that OHR’s perspective is that most of the time there is a clear and understood reason for non-renewal - both by the employee and by the supervisor/unit. Based on anecdotal evidence shared by Rigggenberg and Noonan, it seems that some P&A employees have not understood the reason for their non-renewals. Noonan suggested that such “reason for non-renewal” information be shared directly with employees and also be captured in the PeopleSoft system as it could be important information to have in order to assist employees in finding future employment options. Noonan said she felt that was a minimal, reasonable change that OHR could consider. She added that she and Ringgenberg would meet with Dion again in January 2019 to try and continue the conversation.

Ringgenberg said he was looking for input from the committee members on these questions: “What do we want the non-renewal process to look like when we’re done?” and “What role does non-renewal play versus early termination?” He noted that something difficult to grapple with was the fact that non-renewal is slightly more generous to the employee than early termination, save for the fact that it is not grievable. Rigggenberg then stated that if the non-renewal were simply eliminated as an option to terminate an employee, many employees would be worse off than with the non-renewal option still in place. He summed up by asking the committee members

to consider how to have a more accountable system without removing possible benefits that might be associated with non-renewal.

Fran Fabrizio, co-chair, PD&R, reminded the committee that one of the things PACC wanted to achieve by having this conversation was to foster a non-renewal system that doesn't allow supervisors to use non-renewal in place of managing employee performance. There was a lengthy discussion about which of the two options was fiscally more favorable for the University, given that early termination is grievable, and that could carry significant costs. Fabrizio noted that, in some cases, it *would* be appropriate for a terminated employee whose dismissal was performance-based to leave the University without a set of non-renewal benefits. He added that there is a formal process to invoke non-renewal (aka "early termination"), so there would be a clear opportunity to flag an employee in PeopleSoft as to the reason for the non-renewal; then much more thorough data could be collected on the reasons for non-renewals.

Noonan added that Dion said she believed employees generally did not want "non-renewal" associated with their employee record. Noonan countered that if non-renewal rationale was shared and tracked, that may not be the case in all situations.

Komor suggested that in further talks with Dion, perhaps reframing the situation from a management viewpoint could be advantageous. Perhaps, Komor said, there has to be a clearer incentive for a supervisor to manage and improve an employee's performance, rather than just opting for non-renewal. Noonan agreed, and added that she then asked Dion what training and education was provided for P&A supervisors. Dion indicated that she would explore the question, but thought that supervisors receive some training on P&A employee management, supervision and non-renewal, though perhaps it could be improved.

Committee members discussed at length, given the responses from Dion, whether or not this was an item to which the P&A Senate should devote its time and energy. Ringgenberg felt strongly that there needed to be changes in the current procedure of documenting (or lack of documenting) an employee being non-renewed for this to be a worthwhile commitment for the P&A Senate. He and Noonan agreed that it should not be simply a minor word change in the policy, but should demand accountability from, and an explanation on the part of, the supervisor or manager requesting the non-renewal.

Ringgenberg then noted that perhaps there were stronger allies than OHR at the University for addressing changes and improving the policy, which ultimately could result in cost efficiencies for the University. He finished by saying he and Noonan would follow up with Dion to request further data on early termination and resignation.

6. Request to Endorse Proposed Changes in Policy

Per a request from Nicole Salm, human resources consultant, OHR, the committee reviewed the proposed changes in the [Unpaid Personal Leave for Faculty and Academic Professional and Administrative Employees](#) Policy and the [Bereavement Leave for Faculty and Academic](#)

[*Professional and Administrative Employees*](#) Policy. A vote to approve the policy as revised was approved by the committee members.

7. Bylaw Review

Committee members briefly reviewed those sections of the [P&A Senate Bylaws](#) which had not been reviewed earlier in the year. It was then decided that the bylaws were ready to be forwarded to the Outreach Subcommittee, which had offered to do a final review.

Geanette Poole
University Senate Office