

# **Staff Advisory Council Policy, Benefits, & Budget Committee 2003-2004 Annual Report**

## **Committee Members:**

Leslie Miller (Chair), Jane Carpenter, Liz Condit, Tara Gladden, Dell Livsey, Juanita Phelan, Becky Rogers, Joan Sanmann

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The following were issues addressed by the SAC Policy, Benefits, and Budget Committee from July 2003 – May 2004:

### **Staff Union/Physical Plant Employee Complaints**

OSU Employees approached SAC members about the possibility of forming a staff union. PB&B looked into whether or not state workers can legally unionize, and members found a website for the OPEA, Oklahoma Public Employees Association. Based on the existence of this organization, the assumption was that it is legal. However, rather than invite union representatives to campus, PB&B decided that it might be better to act as a liaison between unhappy workers and their management, as SAC is the closest thing to a union OSU employees currently have. In particular, Physical plant employees provided PB&B with a list of grievances that PB&B presented to Physical Plant Administration. Physical Plant Administration requested ideas on how to solve issues such as communication from the bottom up. Leslie Miller, Juanita Phelan, and Dave Ford presented the idea of a Physical Plant staff council (or staff representative organization) based on the model used by the College of Veterinary Medicine.

### **Performance Evaluation Forms**

PB&B Committee designed three new evaluation forms that are now available for use from the Human Resources web page.

### **Worker's Compensation**

The PB&B committee proposed a recommendation for the formation of a university committee dedicated to finding ways to reduce Worker's Compensation costs at OSU. This recommendation was withdrawn, and committee members instead met with Human Resources representatives to discuss the issue. Human Resources and EHS are supposedly working together on this matter.

## **Whistleblower Protection Policy/Guidelines**

An OSU staff member asked PB&B to look into recommending that OSU develop a whistleblower protection policy and/or official guidelines to be followed by whistleblowers at OSU. PB&B made a recommendation that OSU develop a whistleblower policy. This recommendation was voted upon by SAC and passed on to Administration.

## **Affirmative Action Policy Amendment**

Based upon a PB&B recommendation, SAC passed a recommendation to Administration that “sexual orientation” be included in OSU’s Affirmative Action/Non-Discrimination Policy 1-0101.

## **Bus Policy**

PB&B’s was asked to look into reports that new transit buses were charging faculty and staff \$.75 to ride from point A to point B on campus. Dr. Bosserman spoke to SAC and alleviated the concerns that PB&B (and SAC) had about these reports.

## **Definition of Continuous Service (Policies 3-0705 and 3-0725)**

A staff member asked us if we could look into OSU’s definition of continuous service. Policies 3-0705 (Classified Staff) and 3-0725 (A/P Staff) essentially say that if you leave employment at OSU for any reason other than an “authorized leave of absence” or “a reduction in workforce” (layoff), it is considered a break in continuous service. That impacts the tally for service pins as well as leave accumulations, etc. The committee made a recommendation that these policies be amended to give a 30-day window before a “break in service” is considered to be a break in “continuous service.” This recommendation was approved by SAC and passed to Administration. These changes have been made to policy.

## **TIAA-CREF Access**

PB&B recommended that SAC pass the same recommendation made by both Flex Benefit Committee and Faculty Council that OSU should drop the internal rule requiring separation of the employee from the university for release of TIAA-CREF funds. SAC approved this recommendation, and it was passed to Administration.

## **Extended Sick Leave Accounts**

A constituent contacted PB&B committee with several concerns about changes to OSU's Sick Leave Policy, specifically section 4.01, Extended Sick Leave Accounts. PB&B discussed the issues with Human Resources and was assured that reporting of hours in extended sick leave accounts would be done in such a way that it would be clear what they were, how they could be used, and who could use them. PB&B decided that no further action was needed.

## **Social Security Number Security**

A new employee at OSU brought to our attention that the Bursar's Office had SSNs printed on the sheet used when employees sign to pick up their checks. This employee rightfully pointed out that this might present an opportunity for SSN theft. This problem was corrected quickly, and from now on, only the last four digits of the SSN will be printed on the sheet (xxx-xx-5555).

## **Family Leave Recommendation Policy Changes and Comparison**

Some time ago, SAC made a recommendation that Administration allow the use of some sick leave for purposes of paternity leave and adoption. As a result the Attendance and Leave policy was rewritten to allow for the use of 5 days of sick leave for paternity leave and adoption. PB&B was asked to look at the changes to the policy, and we did not have any problems with the proposed changes. We also looked at the changes to the FMLA policy, and did not have any problems with those changes.

## **Dismissal Policy**

PB&B essentially wrote a new version of a dismissal policy for Classified and A&P staff. This draft policy is titled "Disciplinary Actions and Dismissals for Staff," and replaces the dismissal and suspension sections of policy 3-0726 (Employment, Resignation, Suspensions, and Dismissals for A&P Staff) and policy 3-0710 (Resignations and Dismissals for Classified Staff). PB&B committee believed that policy 3-0710 (Resignations and Dismissals for Classified Staff) did not provide adequate instructions for an acceptable dismissal procedure for either Classified or A/P staff. While OSU Human Resources already encourages departments to follow the steps provided in the revised policy (or something very similar), these steps were not spelled out in the policy itself. PB&B believes that the steps should be spelled out in the policy, and that they should apply to A/P Staff as well as to Classified. The policy was approved by SAC and passed to Administration.

## **Employment Policies**

Because of the changes made to the Dismissal Policy, it was also necessary to revise policies 3-0706 (Employment etc. of Classified Staff) and 3-0726 (Employment etc. of A&P Staff). Changes included making the employment policies of 3-0706 and 3-0726 more parallel with each other as well as consistent with information in 3-0740, Uniform Position Classification and Pay for A&P and Classified Staff. These policies were approved by SAC and passed to Administration.

## **Combining Classified and A&P Attendance and Leave policies**

Anne Matoy asked about combining the Classified and A&P policies on Attendance and Leave, as well as adding the state provisions for voting. PB&B thought that these were good ideas. Later, PB&B was asked to review the revised policy.