

Senate Welfare Committee report for the March 6, 2006 meeting

The welfare committee has been working on several issues and offers the following report:

Much of our time in recent weeks has been devoted to our participation on the university benefits committee as we worked with Human Resources on securing a new contract for health care. Following lengthy presentations by the three finalist vendors, the university benefits committee recommended the following three vendors for administering our university self-funded health care insurance:

Medical Insurance Coverage-----Anthem our current administrator

Pharmacy Prescriptions-----Express-Script

Mental Health Coverage-----Behavioral Medicine Network (formerly known as St. Joseph's)

The health care plan design and level of benefits will not change. There is a possibility that another tier of coverage (Parent(s) and one child may be added).

The exact cost of the plan to the institution and the participants has not been determined at this time. The vendors anticipate that the total cost of providing the health care benefit will increase. The university benefits committee recognizes that because our plan is self-funded, everyone at ECU will have to be involved if we desire to minimize the cost to everyone. Anyone interested in more information as to what ECU employees can do to help keep health care costs down please contact a member of the Senate Welfare Committee or the University Benefits Committee. The university benefits committee will continue to be involved and make recommendations to the administration regarding the health care coverage.

Follow-up on the original six charges to the senate welfare committee:

- 1) **Committee charge one re: the faculty recognition awards program:**
This issue has been resolved by action of the full senate
- 2) **Committee charge two re: the need for a faculty Ombudsperson:**
This welfare committee previously reported the position has the potential to place the Ombudsperson in a delicate position and recommended against establishing an Ombudsperson.

At our last meeting the welfare committee discussed this again and agreed that a “faculty resource person” who would help faculty find answers or direct them to other resources could be of value, particularly to junior faculty. With the addition of a senate vice chair who ideally would be learning more about the senate and faculty concerns, the committee felt this might be an appropriate role for the senate vice-chair to undertake. In any case, we believe the person who serves in this capacity should not be bound by confidentiality if they are presented with issues that appear to be in violation of any university policy, or civil and/or criminal law. In these instances and any other issues concerning the safety, health and welfare of EKU faculty, staff or students, we believe it would be the responsibility of the “faculty resource person” to notify the appropriate person(s) to enable the university to take actions to minimize the risk and/or correct the violations.

3) **Committee charge number three re: salary equity distribution:**

The Provost previously reported concerning the number and manner of equity distribution.

4) **Committee charge four re: role of academic coordinators at EKU:**

The welfare committee surveyed benchmark institutions and found there is little or no consistency in the manner that coordinators are selected, compensated and/or released from teaching responsibilities to perform their duties. In the process of collecting information from the EKU department chairs, the welfare committee became aware of a survey being conducted by the office of university programs on many of the same issues. We contacted Jennifer Goins and she is in the process of obtaining permission and then providing the welfare committee with data from that survey to assist us in our analysis of coordinators at EKU.

5) **Committee charge five re: polices for temporary, short-term suspensions of the tenure clock:**

This matter is in the hands of the full senate for resolution.

6) **Committee charge six re: junior faculty mentoring programs:**

The senate welfare committee is contacting the Deans for a copy of all mentoring programs in their colleges. These will be analyzed with the idea of looking for best practices and sharing those with the university community. A report of our findings will be delivered to the senate.