

Date: March 22, 2007

To: Administrative Professional Council, Faculty Council and
Vice President for Administrative Services

From: Vickie Bajtelsmit and Robert Liebler (co-chairs) University Benefits Committee

Subject: Spring 2007 Report of the University Benefits Committee

The following summarizes the work of the benefits committee since the last report.

Benefits Survey Analysis: The UBC evaluated the results of the Spring 2006 benefits survey for faculty and administrative professionals. Despite some technical difficulties experienced by respondents, and attrition due to the length of the survey (109 questions, including demographic information), the total number of respondents was 1,384, with 1,001 completing all the substantive questions and 970 (28% faculty, 72% APs) completing the entire survey, including demographic information. The survey results provide extensive insight into our constituents' opinions about both present benefits and possible future changes in benefits.

Members of the UBC staffed a table at the CSU Benefits Fair and answered questions about the committee and its role, as well as displaying key results from the survey mentioned above.

Evaluation of Possible Benefits Changes: With HRS the UBC hosted a presentation by the university's benefits consultant. This included an informal comparison of the preventative care and prescription drug benefit offerings of nearby public employers for which data was easily available. There was also a lengthy analysis of the possible benefits/impact of a "health savings account" option. The possibility of reducing the number of medical procedures that are automatically excluded from coverage was also briefly discussed.

Leave Bank: In cooperation with HRS, the UBC investigated and ultimately opposed a leave bank proposal for faculty and APs which was circulated in various other committees as a potential future budget item. It was the UBC's opinion that, in view of the mandatory disability insurance, such a program would only benefit a very small number of employees and that its cost would preempt addressing issues strongly supported by the survey results.

Retirement Program Comparison: One member prepared a detailed analysis and comparison of the expected benefits to PERA vs DCP current participants. In the end, the many differences, made it impossible for the committee to draw any strong conclusion. All of this will become even more complicated, when PERA again becomes an option for new employees. We are following the efforts of HRS to implement this legislative mandate with great interest.

FAQ: The UBC has spent a great deal of time addressing how to best answer the many questions put to us by our constituents. After a careful analysis of what we can do without incurring inappropriate legal liability and/or duplicating HRS resources, it was decided to post a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on benefits topics on the web that are linked directly to the exact part of the online Faculty and Staff manual or to other web-based resources. Together with HRS we have been developing this project and hope to soon have it as a part of the HRS-web-site that is devoted to our committee.

Role in Planning Benefits Changes: The committee hosted a meeting with interim vice-president Schweigert with the goal of insuring a continuing faculty and staff voice in the planning as well as implementation of future benefits program changes.