University of Nevada, Reno  
Staff Employees’ Council  

Benjamin & Compensation Committee  

2013-2014 Annual Report  

Committee Members: Pamela Terango, Carla Geib  
Submitted By: Carla Geib  
March 18, 2014  

Purpose of committee  
• “The committee and a non-voting advisory member from Human Resources shall search for and recommend to the Council any improvement that staff feel is needed to classified employee compensation, benefits and any other special interests. Capacity: 3+ members.”  

Annual and standing charges  
• Fee waiver for family members – the # of staff currently using the program, the process and the funding, then once completed poll staff Liaison with Ron Zurek’s Office as this is going forward to BOR for all NSHE.  
• Investigate Peer Institutions to see how their system works as far as Classified Employees (are they state workers or institution only?)  
• Investigate changing payroll to every two weeks  
• Investigate furlough dates, hours and pay  
• Appoint a liaison to the Faculty Senate Salary and Benefits Committee  
• Annual Report due March 2014
Previous Recommendations Regarding Classified Education Benefits

- In 2009, the SEC BCC recommended a transfer of the current classified GIA waiver or to extend the faculty education benefit which includes dependents and spouses to classified staff.
- In 2010, an Ad hoc committee comprised of classified representatives from each of the eight NSHE institutions, noted that “there is a benefit gap with relation to the grant-in-aid benefit, which only classified staff themselves can use at present. It is also the recommendation of this committee that, when economic times improve, classified staff within NSHE petition the board of regents to extend the grant-in-aid benefit to classified employee spouse and dependents.” Nevada vs. State Employment Report 10/11/2010

Action taken on charges

- On the charge of Fee Waiver for family members
  - According to Lisbette Lanuza-Alfaro, Personnel Technician in HR, the number of classified staff currently using the program for themselves are as follows:
    - 2013 – 199 non-med school staff, 10 med school staff
    - 2012 – 229 non-med school staff, 18 med school staff
    - 2011 – 255 non-med school staff, 28 med school staff
  - The process for using Grant-In-Aid as a classified employee is found at [http://www.unr.edu/hr/benefits/educational-benefits/classified-staff](http://www.unr.edu/hr/benefits/educational-benefits/classified-staff)
    - In short, classified staff at .53FTE or more are allowed to take up to 6 credits per semester (including Wintermester, Fall, Spring or Summer) with a maximum of 12 credits per fiscal year at no charge. Classified Grant-In-Aid (GIA) covers all mandatory fees.
    - Kim Beers would like everyone to know that classified GIA covers nearly all tuition and fees related to a course and the faculty GIA only covers 2/3 of tuition and no fees.

- On the charge of Investigating Peer Institutions
  - California, Oregon & Idaho have all confirmed that their “Classified” employees are “State” Employees.
  - Arizona stated, “For the purpose of Employee Reduced Tuition, ASU employees are considered University employees” however, they are listed as “Classified”.
  - Utah has not responded
It appears to be a standard amongst all surrounding peer institutions to offer an education benefit that is equal amongst faculty and classified staff with no discrepancy of benefits. In research of Peer Institutions surrounding Nevada (California, Oregon, Utah, Idaho & Arizona) each of the University systems offer a tuition benefit to classified employees, dependents and/or their spouse/partner.

- **University of California** - Offers 2/3 tuition reduction to faculty and classified staff of both registration & educational fees to employee, spouse, domestic partner and dependent children to a maximum of 9 units or 3 courses per semester.

- **California State University** - Offers full fee waiver to faculty and classified staff. This can be transferred to a spouse, domestic partner or dependent children to a maximum of 6 credits or 2 courses per semester.

- **University of Oregon** - Offers tuition reduction assessed at 30% of tuition rates to faculty and classified staff. This can be transferred to a spouse, domestic partner or dependent children to a maximum of 12 credits per term.

- **Oregon State University** - Offers tuition reduction assessed at 30% of tuition rates to faculty and classified staff. This can be transferred to a spouse, domestic partner or dependent children to a maximum of 12 credits per term.

- **Idaho State University** - Offers a fee waiver to faculty and classified staff of all fees & tuition except for a $20. Registration fee ea. semester and a $5. Per credit hr. charge. Dependent children have a 50% tuition & general fees reduction to a maximum of 18 credits per semester.

- **University of Utah** - Offers tuition reduction of 50% waiver to faculty and staff for employee, spouse, dependent children.

- **Utah State University** - Offers tuition reduction of 50% waiver to faculty and staff for employee, spouse, dependent children.

- **University of Arizona** - Offers tuition reduction to faculty and classified staff of all fees & tuition except for a $25. Registration fee ea. semester to employee & spouse with a limit of 1-6 credits. Dependent children have a 75% tuition reduction with no limitation on # of credits.

- **Arizona State University** - Offers tuition reduction to faculty and classified staff of all fees & tuition except for a $25. Registration fee ea. semester to employee & spouse with a limit of 1-6 credits. Dependent children have a 75% tuition reduction with no limitation on # of credits.

  Ron Zurek reported to Linda Kuchenbecker on Feb. 5, 2014 that a “system-wide” proposal to ask for budget enhancements from most of the institutions will not be going forward to the Board of Regents for Grant-In-Aid for spouses and dependents of classified employees. However, they are looking at the possibility of doing something on this campus.
**Recommendations**

- The committee recommends an educational benefit for family members of classified staff. Based on data collected from each of the surrounding state university systems we would like to propose three possible options at this time:
  - Transfer of the current classified Grant-In-Aid fee waiver of 6 credits per semester to one dependent or spouse/domestic partner
    - This would allow utilization of a benefit that Classified Staff already have
    - Does not increase any financial liability to the University
  - Tuition Reduction equal to the UNR faculty benefit, or similar to that of Peer institutions of 50-75%, with the option to transfer to dependents or spouse/domestic partner
    - Both of the above options offer benefits which would:
      - Bring University of Nevada, Reno classified staff in line with Peer Institutions
      - Allow the University to utilize this benefit without any obligation to other state agencies
      - Aid in retention & recruitment of staff
  - Tuition Reduction for classified staff, dependents and spouse/domestic partner equal to that which is offered to University of Nevada, Reno faculty which covers 2/3 of tuition costs
    - This option would bring University of Nevada, Reno classified staff in line with DRI’s classified technicians, other Peer Institutions, as well as, University of Nevada, Reno faculty
• **On the charge of changing payroll**
  - The ‘State of Nevada Employee Handbook’ pg. 12 states the following:
    - Employees in the Central Payroll systems are paid biweekly.
    - Employees in the Nevada System of Higher Education are paid Semi-monthly.

• **On the charge of furlough dates, hours and pay**
  - Furlough of 6 days per fiscal year will continue July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015
  - Furlough days will continue as this past year with 3 per 6 month period with no grouping of days
  - The 2015 legislature will determine any extension of furloughs

• **On the charge of Faculty Senate representation**
  - Pamela contacted Michelle Hritz with the Faculty Senate
    - At this time the Faculty Senate has placed the Salary and Benefits Committee on hiatus until the fall of 2014. Once a new chair has been chosen they will consider our request.

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**Additional Recommendations**

- Add one member + a non-voting advisory representative from Human Resources to bring the committee where it should be according to the By-Laws

**Budgets**

- No Budget established and zero costs were incurred

**Timeline**

- Most BCC charges require research work outside of a physical meeting and are completed separately then gone over together as a committee. The BCC is currently meeting either in person or by email.