

COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007-2008

I. FUNCTIONS

This committee was established by the Faculty Senate and Academic Staff Assembly to:

1. Review and make recommendations on university services relating to retirees
2. Review and make recommendations on services related to retirement planning

II. PAST YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Retirement Issues met three times during the 2007-08 academic year to discuss a number of issues pertaining to retirement and retirees. One was retirement patterns and the availability of data to support planning of services related to retirement and retirees. The committee reviewed campus retirement projections prepared by the Office of Academic Planning and Analysis in May 2007 and learned that 34% of UW faculty members are expected to retire in the next decade, a rate that reflects a slight increase in retirements compared to the past ten years and wide variations among schools and colleges. The committee also learned that the nature of academic staff appointments makes it difficult for the Office of Academic Planning and Analysis to gather similar information about this group of employees and that such information is thus more limited.

The committee continued to work to advance the idea of establishing a faculty-staff emeriti center, which was initially developed in November 2006. This included meeting with the provost to introduce the concept and meeting with representatives of the board of directors of the University Club, a possible location for the center. The proposed center was conceptualized as a physical and operational focal point for nurturing mutually beneficial relationships between the campus and its retirees, as well as for enriching the diversity of campus life and highlighting strategies for successful aging – both *before* and *after* employees attain status as retirees. Proposed center goals are to: promote lifelong scholarship, recognize achievements of retirees and those pertaining to retirement, offer programs of interest to retirees and those interested in retirement, serve as a point of contact with retirement committees and organizations to advance university of retirement organization goals, disseminate information about volunteer opportunities for retirees on campus and in the Madison community, and facilitate communication about retirees and retirement issues.

One additional committee activity was to develop a prototype for a web site tentatively titled RETIREMENT@UW that would bring together the many outstanding retirement-related resources that do exist at UW-Madison but are not often recognized or easily located. As proposed, the web site would permit multiple authorized users to contribute content and would contain information for departments/units, information for individuals preparing for retirement and after retirement, and information about retirement, including scholarship about retirement and useful links related to retirement. Committee representatives have presented the concept and prototype to the UW-Madison Office of Human Resources (OHR) and are awaiting feedback about the possibility of OHR hosting the site.

III. CURRENT ISSUES OR CONCERNS

The consensus of the Committee on Retirement Issues is that retirees comprise an often overlooked and undervalued resource for the university. They are another group of “alumni” that could benefit the university, and in turn be benefited, by a more strategic campus-wide effort to nurture reciprocal relationships both before and following retirement. The committee further concludes that, although the campus does currently have a wealth of resources relevant to retirement and retirees, these resources are

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often not well known or easily located. The concern is that the campus is missing two important opportunities: 1) the opportunity to expand resources at a time of shrinking public support; and 2) the opportunity to advance further the campus goal of nurturing human resources internally.

IV. FUTURE ISSUES

The need for attention to matters concerning retirement and retirees is certainly not going to diminish in the future, and if anything, will likely only intensify both for the university and individual employees. Trends suggest that individuals are going to have to assume greater personal responsibility for financial security and health matters in retirement. But to be successful, individuals need to think about these and other attributes of successful aging well before retirement age. Growing competition and uncertain public financial support also suggest the university cannot afford to miss any opportunity to expand its base of resources. Retirees are already “sold” on the university – they are likely to remain loyal if provided the incentive and avenue for doing so.

V. SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee brings two recommendations. One is that the university take immediate steps to establish a web site that would bring together resources relevant to retirees and matters concerned with retirement. Preliminary discussions suggest that the Office of Human Resources may be a logical unit to host such a web site. A second recommendation is the Provost’s Office work with the Committee on Retirement Issues to establish a center on retirement issues as a vehicle for better nurturing mutually supportive relationships between the university and retirees both before and following retirement.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Doreen Adamany	Steve Myrah
Mark Albanese	Susan Nitzke
Darrell Barth	Steve Pearson
Jon Goldstein	Char Tortorice
Karen Holden	Judy VanBlarcom
Art Hove	Ann Wallace
Roger Howard	Patrick Walsh
Gary Johnson	Wendy Way (chair)
Don Klimpel	Pat Wolleat
Pat Lasky	Doug Worsham