

1-30-1998

SR-97-98-26 (IS), Individual Senator Resolution

Marshall University

Follow this and additional works at: http://mds.marshall.edu/fs_resolutions

Recommended Citation

Marshall University, "SR-97-98-26 (IS), Individual Senator Resolution" (1998). *Resolutions*. 43.
http://mds.marshall.edu/fs_resolutions/43

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Resolutions by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu, martj@marshall.edu.

INDIVIDUAL SENATOR RESOLUTION

SR-97-98-26 (IS)

We, members of the Marshall University Faculty Senate, do hereby resolve that all monies generated by the Faculty Improvement Fee be used for eligible full-time faculty as:

1. merit raises;
2. market value adjustments;
3. promotion bonuses;
4. and, cross-the-board or experience increment increases.

RATIONALE:

- A. Improving faculty salaries has been the stated #1 PRIORITY for the better part of the last decade, and there IS a dedicated revenue stream--the FACULTY IMPROVEMENT FEE (FIF)--to bring about such improvement. For example, \$426,847 FIF dollars were generated in the 6-month period of 30 June '97 to 31 December '97, enough to provide Fall Term across-the-board separate paycheck "Improvement" bonuses in excess of \$1000 for each faculty member. FIF monies generated in the period 1 Jan '98 through 30 June '98 should be adequate to provide for anticipated merit, market, and promotions. Such bonuses, generated solely by student fees, can be made without cost to the state treasury.
- B. As presently administered, merit raises, market value adjustments, and promotion bonuses are given to some faculty by reducing the amount of salary increases for all other faculty. Appropriate use of the FIF would provide for merit, market, and promotion increases for eligible faculty, without cutting into pay increases designated for others.
- C. Administrators receive a separate paycheck bonus, in the apparition of an ANNUAL EXPERIENCE INCREMENT (AEI), in addition to their salaries. There IS NO dedicated revenue source to fund such bonuses.
- D. There is no direct evidence that FIF dollars actually find their way into faculty paychecks, fueling speculation that monies intended to improve faculty salaries are "redirected" for other purposes.

A position paper on faculty salaries presented to members of the MU Faculty Senate, and interested colleagues.

--James E. Joy, 5 January 1998

Chas. Gooz.

Hauls of ivy

13 Aug, '93

THE TWO BOARDS overseeing state-operated colleges and universities have pulled a secret deal much like a dark-of-night political plot in a Southern West Virginia courthouse.

The Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors gave raises to the chancellors of the two systems. Charles Manning and Paul Marion, far more than the flat \$1,500 raise the Legislature authorized for higher education staff and administrators.

Manning and Marion got \$9,000 each. But there's more. They also had been receiving \$12,000 apiece in foundation funds. The Board of Trustees decided the state could pick up the tab after the grant expired. So each chancellor is getting \$21,000 more from state coffers now than a year ago.

Legislators who assumed they got only the mandated \$1,500 raise were furious. Sen. Sondra

Lucht, D-Berkeley, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, seemed as upset about secret maneuvering as she was with the totals involved. She had every reason to hit the roof. The boards simply ignored the Legislature's intent and passed out big bucks to the administrators.

Quality higher education is a must for a state with the lowest percentage of college graduates in the nation. Many governance plans have been tried. The old Board of Regents was a flop, so the Legislature replaced it with two boards. Now the new systems' overseers are riding a gravy train, before the new setup is five years old.

Lucht and other key lawmakers may pass a no-exceptions law to keep the boards and chancellors in line, an exercise remindful of making a misbehaving third-grader stand in the corner. State taxpayers deserve better management, but the odds on getting it aren't good.

Editors of the Gazette got it right, of course, but they revealed only the tip of the "Hauls" iceberg. Had they desired to do so, they could have followed the "Hauls" right on through the WV higher education administrative food chain.

"On a percentage basis, administration is not receiving any more than any other group."

--M. McGuffey, The Parthenon, 18 Nov. '97

In the most recent budget cycle the average salary increase for an MU administrator was 5.23%, more than double the 2.47% for the average MU faculty member. This was not an unusual year, it merely reflected a pattern we've seen for some time. For example, faculty salaries in the College of Science increased approximately 14% over the past 5 years (an increase probably similar to that in your college). In that same time frame, however, salaries for MU administrative positions increased by 32.6%. Such numbers leave little doubt about why MU faculty salaries have remained at the bottom of the SREB, while MU administrative salaries have risen to (or above) national medians.

"Seeing their shameful doings, any man of sense would feel both anger and contempt."

--The Odyssey of Homer

The unevenness of the salary playing field has long been recognized on our campus, but few have gathered the courage to speak or write of it. Dr. Joan Adkins wrote astutely in 1986 (The Parthenon, 6 Nov) that;

"I am troubled by the fact that if a professor wants a significant increase in salary, he must either become an athletic coach or move into a 'higher' position in administration. For some reason, we have become infatuated with administrative titles and pay homage with high salaries." She added, "If the pulse of the university beats in the faculty, as I believe it does, we have fallen on hard times."

I hope we do not charge her, retroactively, with pointing her finger, but I digress.

One might have thought Dr. Adkins' warning of endemic malaise in the MU salary structure would have been heeded, and that the appropriate remedies would have been undertaken to begin the healing process, to assure a "unity of purpose." It was not to be, and here we are 11 years later finding that "hard times" are with us still.....and no therapeutic relief is in sight.

The salary reality on our campus today is very difficult to understand, given that:

- * MU faculty salaries have been the "#1 PRIORITY" for the better part of the last decade;
- * a "Faculty IMPROVEMENT Fee", yielding a revenue stream of millions of dollars over the past 14 years, was instituted without resulting in any "IMPROVEMENT" in the position of MU faculty salaries;
- * 5 salary task forces (Ginsberg, Van Eck, Mullen, Carnegie, HEAT) have tackled the salary problem since 1983--producing great clouds of smoke, but no HEAT;
- * we were placed on "minimum" scales, only to find that nearly all of us remained perennially "below the minimum."

~~Has any education group been promised more, and received less, than the MU faculty (and staff too, but I cannot speak to their plight)?~~

Even students saw through the transparent promises. Melissa Huff, an intrepid and insightful Parthenon editor, wrote in 1989;

"I see nothing but more empty promises on the horizon."

Prophetic indeed. Ms. Huff could be writing the same words for today's "STRATEGIC PLAN" and "UNITY OF PURPOSE"; euphemistic phrases developed to supplant the emptiness of "#1 PRIORITY." *Each new 'feel-good' faculty salary euphemism has a half-life shorter than the one it replaces. Call it Joy's Law...whatever.*

I don't want to be doing this. It is not pleasant when your president charges repeatedly that you have been providing the public with inaccurate information. It is not reassuring to be told by your dean that, "you're the only one who feels that way." Nor is it easy to maintain your composure while an administrator is swearing at you. But worst of all is the sense that some very good people, people you have known and respected for many years, may now think ill of you for all those terrible things they've read you are saying about them. Still, there comes a time when the PR rhetoric becomes so dissonant with your actual experiences that you are compelled to speak out. And this is that time.

"If you're going to do things that are unpopular, you have to be willing to accept ridicule and you can't worry about public sentiment."

--Dr. Frances Hensley, in paraphrasing a quote from Susan B. Anthony (The Parthenon, 13 Feb. '87).

I believe the Faculty Improvement Fee (FIF) is the key to the faculty salary conundrum. Former BOR Chancellor Leon Ginsberg felt so too when he wrote;

"But the most obvious and viable solution to the faculty salary issue remains use of the faculty improvement fee."

--Charleston Gazette, 25 July '87

Dr. Ginsberg added, knowingly, that;

"...improved faculty compensation is really not a high priority of the Board...", and "Maintenance of the status quo means that faculty and staff will continue being disproportionately taxed through low salaries."

Board salary priorities seem not to have changed since Ginsberg's writing, and there is no accountability (surprisingly in these times of "accountability") for Faculty Improvement Fee (FIF) dollars.

In the early spring of 1983 legislators came to our campus to sell the idea of a FIF, telling us that "we just want to help." We believed them, and they were true to their word.

Faculty received 3 FIF bonus checks--Spring and Fall of 1983, Spring of 1984. And it was the MU faculty who decided how FIF monies were to be disbursed. The idea of faculty determining the disbursement of funds was anathema to the administration who lobbied to have the law changed so that faculty could no longer make such decisions or receive FIF bonus checks. Interestingly, by the Fall of 1984, when the faculty bonus checks stopped, Annual Experience Increment (AEI) bonus checks for administrators appeared for the first time. Thus since the Fall of 1984 we have had a revenue stream of many millions of F IMPROVEMENT F dollars generated by student fees without any evidence of faculty IMPROVEMENT. Conversely, we have seen annual administrative bonus checks since that time--without any dedicated revenue stream--resulting in significant MU administrative salary advances relative to their SREB peers. If you have ever wondered what was "IMPROVED" by the F IMPROVEMENT F you can stop wondering.....your coincidence meter was reading in the red zone for good reason. FIF monies have thus been "appropriately redirected" ever since 1984;

"...it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled forever."

--Dickens' Tale of Two Cities

The STRATEGIC PLAN, vacillating between promises and proposals, offers certain levels of pay increases for faculty and staff over the next 3 years. Unfortunately, it is a "PLAN" that mistakes slogans for solutions. It is a "PLAN" that virtually assures a continuation of the annual doubling of administrative pay raises over those enjoyed by faculty well into the future. It is a "PLAN" that seeks a "unity of purpose" without offering a "unity of outcome."

The FIF resolution affixed to this paper offers a solution instead of a slogan, and is, I believe, a better course of action for the uplifting of MU faculty salaries relative to their SREB peers. It could do for MU faculty, what the AEI has done for MU administrators.