

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES COUNCIL
February 28, 2002
SUMMARY

Present: Brenda Andrews, Margie Clements, Angie Kleffman, Lesa Merritt, Janice Newburg, Lee Proctor, Britt Sosebee, Beverly Vinson

Absent: Debra Russell, Kathe Tow

MINUTES:

The minutes for the January 31, 2002, meeting were approved as distributed.

BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING:

Lesla Merritt shared observations from the February 26, meeting including proposed changes to the AC Benefit Plan.

TECHNOLOGY MASTER PLAN UPDATE:

Angie Kleffman reported that there are two classified employees on the Technology Users Group. A draft proposal has been drawn up incorporating priorities established in the many focus groups regarding technology needs for Amarillo College by 2010. An April 1, deadline must be met by the group.

CEC ELECTION PREPARATION:

Lesla Merritt presented the nomination form and discussed accompanying documents to be distributed with the form to help clarify responsibilities of CEC membership.

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES MANUAL:

A discussion ensued regarding the Classified Employees Manual. Most of the CEC members had never seen such a manual, and those who were familiar with the manual had different versions of it. The consensus of the CEC was that there is need for a Classified Employees Manual, and that it needs to be updated and placed on the the AC website. Ms. Merritt had contacted Gary Waren regarding the matter, and his response was that this project was not priority and that he did not have it scheduled. Lesla Merritt stated that the Classified and Administrators Handbook Review Committee, which is already in place, should be responsible for updating the manual.

COMMUNICATION WITH CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES:

Since being notified that not all classified employees who have access to e-mail are included in the "everyone" e-mail address, Lesla Merritt checked with ITS personnel with no resolution. Therefore, she suggested that all CEC communication include both hard copy and e-mail versions. The committee concurred.

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AWARD:

As an additional reminder, a memo is being sent to all classified employees regarding the Classified Employee Education Award.

MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY SURVEY:

The Administrators Association conducted a survey of two-year colleges in Texas to determine whether or not they were closed for this holiday. Of the 66 responses, only 3, including Amarillo College, were open with no classes, 7 did not observe the holiday, and the remaining 56 campuses were closed.

The CEC members expressed the concern that classified employees should be allowed to observe the holiday the same as faculty and students, but are not interested in giving up another holiday to observe the Martin Luther King holiday. Dr. Williams agreed to present these findings to the Executive Committee.

FINAL RETREAT REPORT:

Beverly Vinson, Secretary, presented the final report of the Classified Employees Retreat to Dr. Williams and CEC members.

QUESTION:

A question was submitted regarding whether or not the information solicited at the retreat had been forwarded to administration. Lesa Merritt responded that Dr. Williams had not yet been presented the report but would be receiving it soon.

DR. WILLIAMS JOINS THE COUNCIL:

Dr. Williams reported that the documentation for response to the SACS report is coming along well for the April 15, deadline. The SACS committee meets in June. Amarillo College will be notified in July.

The Executive Committee reviewed the draft documentation on the Technology Plan. The Facilities Master Plan is moving well.

The AC Board of Regents election will be held May 4. Three positions are open: The terms for Louise McDaniel, Fred Snyder, and Sharon Oeschger expire.

Six proposals were presented to the Board regarding changes to the AC Benefit Plan to meet IRS statutory requirements. They included the following:

- 1) Maximum Exclusion Allowance: The maximum amount of retirement contributions an employee can tax defer in a year has in effect been removed.
- 2) New Tax Credit: Employees whose AGI is under \$25,000/\$50,000 can take a tax credit on their 1040 ranging from 10% to 50% of their "elective deferrals." The 2 ½ fringe benefit is considered an elective deferral.
- 3) Transfer Between Retirement Accounts: Allows transferring between different types of retirement account (i.e. part-time employees become full-time can transfer their part-time retirement account (457) into the ACBP.

- 4) Roth IRA Type Contributions: Beginning in 2005, employees will be able to have “after tax” deductions into a retirement account that has all of the characteristics of a Roth IRA. The earnings will not be taxable.
- 5) Another Chance to Get Into ACBP: Employees that did not elect to get into the ACBP when they came to work at AC will now be able to get into the program at any point. However, once they are in they cannot decide to get out at a later date even if they have a break in service.
- 6) Other Provisions To Be Considered:
Do we want to provide a loan provision or allow participants to use their retirement account as collateral on a loan from a third party?
Do we want to allow for “in service” distributions to employees once they reach 59 ½?

The first four proposals were adopted and the last two were tabled pending further discussion.

The Committee discussed with Dr. Williams the fact that job audit requests are being made and nothing is being done with them. Angie Kleffman recommended a committee take on the job audit responsibilities. This committee should consist of classified, administrative and faculty representatives. Dr. Williams will consider this suggestion.

Dr. Williams agreed to discuss the Classified Employees Manual and the Martin Luther King holiday issues with the Executive Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Vinson, Secretary
Classified Employees Council

Lesa Merritt, Chair
Classified Employees Council