

President's Letter

The IFO Negotiation Team has presented to MnSCU our initial proposed language changes, as well as our proposed economic package. I want to take a moment to point out some of the major elements of our proposal. The full text of the IFO's and MnSCU's language proposal can be found on our website at www.ifo.org.



REDIRECTED TEACHING LOAD

The first is a key language change to bring us into alignment with our national colleagues by requiring that one-fourth or three semester hours per semester of teaching time be reassigned to our other duties, including:

1. Scholarly or Creative Activity or Research
2. Continuing Preparation and Study
3. Contributing to Student Growth and Development
4. Service to the University and Community

The obvious intent is to ensure that we have adequate time to proceed with our normal workload and also pursue the other scholarly aspects of teaching.

NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE SALARIES

The second major goal of the IFO's proposal is to achieve the 70th percentile of national salaries by the time the new contract ends on July 1, 2003. This goal requires a salary increase of 20% for each year of the Agreement.

Fifteen years ago, the faculty of the Minnesota State Universities were at the 80th percentile nationally for salaries. We are currently hovering slightly above the average salary paid across the nation. We have lost national stature, competitiveness and our self esteem by this decline in faculty salaries compared to national rankings. Our last two contract settlements have improved our national rankings. We still have a long way to go, as the salary proposal indicates.

In the last school year, there were 70 failed searches at our state universities. That is slightly more than a 20% failure rate. At the same time, we have continued to maintain and add to our nationally accredited universities as well as individual nationally accredited departments or programs. We need to ensure that we keep and improve our competitive edge. When the negotiating team asked MnSCU for this salary increase, it was not "pie in the sky." This is the reality of what we need to retain our quality, integrity and leadership in the field of

higher education. We should not be apologetic about demanding the dollars necessary to provide competitive salaries and to acknowledge the excellent jobs we are doing. We represent quality and accessible education. We want to ensure that this continues.

MORE PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS AND FAIRER TREATMENT FOR ALL FACULTY

Another major goal is increasing the number of probationary appointments being offered while fixed term, adjunct faculty and community faculty are treated more fairly. We have proposed a simple salary schedule for adjunct and community faculty which rewards experience and possession of a terminal degree. We are seeking an increase in the tuition waiver, as well as an expansion of eligibility of the waiver to all faculty, whether full or part-time at our state universities. Similarly, we are seeking insurance coverage under the state insurance plans for domestic partners, eligibility for part-time instructors, and substantial improvements in the State Dental Plan.

SUMMER SESSION SCHEDULES

The parties are seeking greater flexibility in the use of summer sessions to address pedagogical concerns while improving compensation rates for such work and keeping the current length of summer session as the norm.

A TIMELY SETTLEMENT

Our last major goal is not only an acceptable settlement, but one which is settled in a timely manner. Both the faculty and our campus administrations need a settlement this spring to facilitate planning and focus on our mission.

Again, for complete details on language and the IFO's economic proposal, you can access our website at www.ifo.org.

Tentative Agreements for the 2001-2003 Agreement

Several tentative agreements have been reached by the two negotiating teams during the joint sessions of February 8th and 9th and March 22nd to 24th. Some are modest technical changes, such as removing now obsolete references to "terms" (used when campuses were on both quarter and semester calendars). Others, while apparently "technical" in appearance, permit faculty members and administration to plan better for changes in employment, workload or status. Faculty who provide early notice of their intent to retire can now work a summer session or extended days beyond spring semester, if such assignments are offered by the administration, without jeopardizing the two-step increase for the early notice.

Faculty contemplating applying for the phased retirement program will have an application deadline of October 1st or January 15th. Those faculty members considering the annuitant employment program have the same application deadlines and more importantly the annuitant employment program is explicitly acknowledged in the Agreement. Faculty members under both programs are expected to perform all duties prescribed as part of the faculty workload and also to complete professional development plans.

The Agreement will no longer require evaluations of Chairs separate from their PDP evaluations.

Roughly 90 language items are on the bargaining table at this time. The Teams agreed that the scheduled joint sessions of April 5th to 7th would be the last session during which new language items could be proposed for this round of bargaining.

IFO Economic Proposal - March 23, 2001

ECONOMIC ITEM	FY01 CURRENT	FY02	FY03
<i>NOTE: One step equals 2.4%</i>			
Returning Faculty Promotion	4.7%	8 steps	8 steps
Early Retirement Notice	2 steps	2 steps	2 steps
	2 steps	2 steps	2 steps
Adjunct/Community Faculty Minimum Rate	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,900
W/ experience	\$1,000	\$1,650	\$2,090
W/ doctorate	\$1,000	\$1,650	\$2,090
W/ experience & doctorate	\$1,000	\$1,800	\$2,280
Supplemental Retirement Maximum	\$2,000	\$2,700	\$2,700
Professional Travel Funds	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000
Professional Improvement Grants			
Faculty	\$400,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Community Faculty	\$12,500	\$20,000	\$20,000
SALARY MINIMUMS			
Instructor	Step 6		
	Step 10	\$31,687	
	Step 14		\$34,825
Assistant Professor	Step 11		
	Step 15	\$43,098	
	Step 19		\$47,380
Associate Professor	Step 13		
	Step 17	\$45,189	
	Step 21		\$49,678
Professor	Step 15		
	Step 19	\$47,380	
	Step 23		\$52,087
CAREER STEPS			
	Years 10-19	2	2 (year 11)
	Years 20-29	4	2 (year 21)
	Years 30+	6	2 (year 31)
SUMMER SESSION			
	% of Base Salary Per Credit	2.25%	6%
		6%	6%
OVERLOAD			
	% of Base Salary Per Credit	2.25%	6%
		6%	6%

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