



University Support Staff Senate Archives

Classified Senate

Academic year 2013-2014

Classified Times

Keeping the WSU Classified Staff Informed!

Fall, 2013

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WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Classified Times

Keeping the WSU Classified Staff Informed!

Fall 2013

Letter from the President

Hello,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Classified Senate members for all of their hard work and dedication to the Senate so far this year. We have had an excellent turnout in meetings this year and have been able to make great strides.

In August, the Shocker Scholarship Committee met to review scholarship applications for the Shocker Employee & Dependent Scholarship. This year, we had a tie between two dependent children of WSU employees, therefore two scholarships were awarded. During September, four senate members went to Emporia State University and met with other senates in the Kansas Board of Regents system. During this meeting, we worked on our position paper that will be taken to Topeka in January for "Day on the Hill." I will announce at a different time when this will be happening. We also had the opportunity in October to have lunch with the Kansas Board of Regents. We had a positive discussion with them about the current state of WSU and where we are headed in the future.

In addition, we have been working with the Alternative Service Committee to develop a proposal for classified employees to decide if they want to convert to University Support Staff (USS) employees or to continue as State Civil Service employees. We have had several Town Hall meetings to go over the plan and to get ideas and feedback from all classified employees. I would like to encourage all classified employees to be a part of this process. In the next few months we will be putting together a classified handbook to take to the University Administration for their approval. After that, we will have additional Town Hall meetings, for all classified employees, to present the plan and then vote. If you are interested in serving on a committee or just want to ask questions, please contact one of us on the Alternative Service Committee. You can find out more information at www.wichita.edu/asc

Thank you all again for your hard work in the first semester and I look forward to continuing our progress.

Renea Goforth
President
Classified Senate

Wichita State
University
Classified Senate

2013/2014
Officers

President
Renea Goforth

Vice President
Ali Levine

Secretary
Melissa Conley

[Classified Senate](#)

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Interview with Randy Sessions, President of the Alternative Service Committee

By: Sheryl McKelvey

1. In reference to the Alternative Service Committee, can you explain why this has become such an important and time sensitive matter now?

Current legislative trends are to do away with classified staff in government. This is not only true for Kansas, but for several other Midwest states and southwest into Arizona. As these states do away with the classified service, those employees are being moved into the unclassified service. In Kansas, the House Appropriations Committee is currently working on a bill that would phase out the Classified Service beginning with the IT classifications, lawyers, and upper level supervisors. As future positions open, or promotions/demotions take place, those would then move to the unclassified service. In order for the classified staff at WSU to maintain some semblance of the protections we currently have under civil service law, we are suggesting the move to University Support Staff. By state statute, we would maintain all of our current benefits, including retirement and health insurance, with no change. We would maintain a grievance process and a layoff process. We feel that by moving forward with the USS we are taking our "fate", if you will, into our own hands. We have a say in what our employment future is, not the legislature, many of whom have no idea who/what the classified service in the state is, or does.

2. I'm sure you are fielding a million questions, which is the most asked and what is your answer?

The biggest concerns seem to be about benefits, KPERS, health insurance, leave, etc. By statute that will not change. K.S.A. 76-715a states, "shall retain all health and flexible benefits and leave and retirement benefits provided to them under the state classified employee system." To me, this is pretty black and white, no change in the noted benefits. This being said, we are trying to improve some of the benefits, such as longevity pay and leave hours. As a committee, our suggestion would be to insure that all classified employees receive longevity pay, which is currently given to only those that began their employment with the state prior to July 1, 2008. An increase to \$50 per year has also been suggested. In the way of leave, we would like to see all classified employees at the same level earning the same amount of leave as those that are hired as unclassified employees. We all know that there is some disparity there, we would like to see that changed and things become more equitable.

3. What do you think and feel is the most misunderstood aspect of classified employees moving to University Support Staff?

I think that many just don't understand the process and the reason that it is needed. I think that much of it is misunderstood and we have a tremendous opportunity to do some educational work with our meetings to show people that we aren't necessarily suggesting a bad thing. The idea is to provide an option, not force a change. We are exploring an option to the classified service, not forcing anyone to actually make that move, unless there is an affirmative vote. Many on the committee feel that a move to the USS is the way to go, but others on the committee remain undecided. We are not a committee being handled and manipulated by the administration to force the classified staff to make this move. Many of us have been university employees for 25+ years and are attempting to show an option that might be a viable way for the staff to have a hand in their future.



4. It seems that people are concerned about Layoffs and Furloughs. What are your thoughts on this?

Again, by law, these cannot happen as a result of a move to USS. As stated in K.S.A. 76-715a, "Implementation of this section shall not cause a salary reduction or layoff of any classified employee." This, again, to me is very black and white. Layoffs did happen at KU, but those layoffs would have happened had the move been made there or not. They were a result of financial issues. There is no way that the ASC or the USS could determine, or control, any fiscal gains or losses that the university or departments might see. We would have no control over layoffs or furloughs, now, or in the future. We are working on a plan that, if approved, could be a bit different from what is currently in place for layoffs, but that plan is subject to the approval of the classified staff. We welcome any input on this, or any other issue. We need input from the staff. The more voices that are heard, but better the plan that we present to the administration.

Town Hall Meeting

By: Melissa Conley

The Alternative Service Committee organized Town Hall Meetings to discuss the future of classified employment at Wichita State University. I attended the Town Hall Meeting on December 5th. Topics discussed were Appeals and Discipline, Compensation and Pay, Layoffs and Furloughs, Performance Evaluations and Policies and Agreements.

There is one more opportunity for Classified Employees to attend a Town Hall Meeting. The last Town Hall Meeting is Tuesday December 10th at 8:30—9:30 AM in Hubbard Hall Room 231. The Alternative Service Committee members are available to answer any questions you may have about exploring the option of moving to University Support Staff.

More information can be found on the [Alternative Service Committee website](#).

Including:

- Links to Draft Handbooks from Fort Hays State University and Kansas State University
- A list of questions and answers from all the Town Hall Meetings
- Town Hall Meeting Handouts
- Subcommittee Schedules
- Contact Info
- Timeline
- FAQ's



Classified Senate Members

- Brenda Achey
- Sherry Alexander
- Bryan Carter
- Christina Clarkson
- Melissa Conley
- Sonya Cotton
- Sheri Daniel-Washington
- Lora Eckman
- Shaleah Fields
- Renea Goforth
- Christina Gregory
- Anton Hubl
- Shelly Kellogg
- Ali Levine
- Angela Linder
- Maria Lucas
- Walter Mayne
- Amy McClintock
- Sheryl McKelvey
- Robbie Norton
- Jeanne Patton
- George Schroeder
- Sonja Schroeder
- Randy Sessions
- Hercilia Thompson
- Micah Thompson
- Angie Tucker
- Connie Wells
- Michelle White
- Jennifer Williams

Tuition Assistance

By: Sheryl McKelvey

There is tuition assistance available to classified employees.

Tuition assistance has been utilized approximately 250 times per year for the last 20 years. This assistance is available only to benefits eligible employees.

There are guidelines that must be followed and the information is available at: [Employee Tuition Assistance](#)

Time is running out. In order to be considered for the Spring 2014 semester, you must submit your application no later than December 13, 2013!

If you miss out for the spring semester, there may be funding available for the Summer semester. Application deadline is April 18, 2014 for the Summer semester.



Classified Senate Meeting Schedule

December 11, 2013

January 8, 2014

February 12, 2014

March 12, 2014

April 9, 2014

May 14, 2014

We meet in Lindquist Hall Room #200, LAS Boardroom. All Classified Employees are welcome at the meetings.

Classified Senate Committees

- Community Service
- Constitution
- Elections
- Food Advisory
- Heskett Center Board
- Library Appeals
- Newsletter
- Position Paper / Legislative Issues
- Rhatigan Student Center Board
- Shocker Pride Celebration
- Shocker Scholarship
- Traffic Appeals
- Tuition Assistance
- Welcoming Committee
- Wellness Committee