

Human Resources Advisory Board (HRAB) Annual Report for 2008

1. Charge

The Human Resources Advisory Board serves to advise the Vice President for Human Resources, and other senior officers as appropriate, on resources and priorities with regard to human resources, personnel matters, and the strategic direction for human resource management. The HRAB reviews and makes recommendations concerning policies, programs, and initiatives designed to support and promote the intellectual and professional development of the university's work force. The Board considers such matters as the training and support provided to staff and faculty serving in administrative roles; orientation and support for new members of the work force; and the promotion of a healthy community within and between departments. In addition, the Board reviews and makes recommendations concerning existing and proposed hiring and recruitment procedures and policies and compensation and benefits policies and programs for University faculty and staff. With regard to faculty benefits and awards, the Human Resources Advisory Board coordinates with, and does not duplicate, the work of the Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED).

2. Organization and Membership

The HRAB is chaired by Karen L. Davis, Vice President for Human Resources, and staffed by Stephanie Altomari-Cavanagh, Executive Assistant to Karen Davis and Administrative Manager of Human Resources. Brenda Allen, Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Diversity, and Janice Wright, Associate Counsel, serve as special advisors to the Board. Drew Murphy, Director of Benefits, serves as an ex-officio member.

The Board membership consisted of the following faculty members through June 2008: Brian Evenson, Robert Pelcovits (who also served as Faculty Vice Chair) and Wendy Schiller. Staff membership through June 2008 included: Elizabeth Doherty, Michael Pickett, Jessica Smith, Regina White, Gretchen Willis and Amanda Woodward.

3. Current Faculty and Staff Members as of July, 2008

The current membership of the Board includes: Brian Evenson, Phyllis Hudek, Jim Hutchison, Steve Maiorisi, Robert Pelcovits (Faculty Vice Chair), Michael Pickett, Wendy Schiller, Jessica Ann Smith, Peter Weber, and Amanda Woodward. A list of their titles and contact information is provided on page 7.

4. Topics Reviewed

The Board met from January through December 2008. Meeting dates during this time period were: January 24, March 27, May 19, July 17, September 19, October 16, and December 18. This meeting schedule enabled the HRAB to play a key advisory role on issues such as Brown's staff compensation, policy updates, health insurance, retirement, and child care benefit programs. In addition, the Board heard presentations on the HR Systems Replacement project and a request for the review of transgender benefits. A student proposal to remove Columbus Day from the current Brown observed holiday schedule was heard and the Military Leave policy was reviewed.

5. Major Issues and Recommendations

a. Benefits

- i. Health Insurance Renewals – As of 1/1/08, the University became fully self-funded and began assuming the risk of claims. Brown projected that this change would save the University over the long term (3 – 5 years) and is projected to save the University and our employees approximately \$1M this year in health care premium costs. The University is currently reviewing the option to carve out prescriptions, possibly in 2010.
- ii. Health Contributions – The Board was made aware of the upcoming change to the health care contribution formula effective on 1/1/09. As of that date, the maximum contribution for those making over \$77K will be 38% for 2-Person and Family coverage. Contributions for those making between \$32k and \$77K will be reduced as well based on the contribution formula change. This change shifts approximately \$1M of premium cost to the University and enhances the current benefit which covers approximately 3,400 employees and 3,600 dependents.
- iii. Dental Benefits - Based on the Board’s recommendation, the University accepted the negotiated Delta Dental 2009 renewal increase of 0 % to the *Plus* and *Comprehensive* options and agreed to all Evidence Based Dentistry changes except that frequency for annual cleanings, bitewing x-rays, and repairs to existing dentures will remain unchanged. In addition, the Board approved Delta Dental’s “Annual Maximum Rollover” enhancement. If a member has 1) at least one preventive care visit and 2) less than \$500 in claims he/she will receive a \$250 carry over to the following year’s annual maximum (\$350 if all services were provided by an in-network dentist). The Board also recommended that the 95/100 contingent premium and rate cap guarantees be extended two years through 2013. The rate caps for 2010 and 2011 were reduced from 6% to 5% and rate caps of 5% for 2012 and 6% in 2013 were added.
- iv. Opposite Sex Domestic Partner Benefits – The Board reviewed a request for Brown to add opposite sex domestic partner coverage eligibility to our health plans. In RI, opposite sex couples are able to marry as common law spouses if “they hold themselves out to the community” as being married. RI common law regulations do not specify how long an opposite sex couple must be together in order to be married under common law. For same-sex couples, Brown decided 12 months was appropriate. In order to be eligible for health coverage same-sex couples must either submit documentation that they have lived together for at least 12 months or present a marriage certificate from a state which recognizes same-sex marriage. The Board discussed that opposite sex couples do not have the same societal impediments to receive benefits as same-sex domestic couples because same-sex domestic couples cannot get married legally in RI. Because opposite sex couples are entitled to this legal right, the HRAB recommended that domestic partner benefits not be extended to opposite sex domestic partners.
- v. TAP Policy for Stepchildren – The Board reviewed extending the current TAP benefit beyond natural and adopted children to include stepchildren under the

policy. The policy states that eligible “Dependent child means the naturally or legally adopted child(ren) of an eligible faculty or staff member who is unmarried, under the age of 24, reliant upon the parent for primary support and maintenance, and who otherwise meets the IRS definition of a dependent.” There can be numerous reasons that employees do not or are unable to legally adopt a stepchild. The Board discussed that extending the benefit may also open the door to include other groups, e.g. grandchildren. The Board agreed to leave the policy as-is at this time and recommended not to extend the benefit to stepchildren.

- vi. Retirement Plan Fiduciary Oversight Committee and Policy Statement – The Board was informed of the new Retirement Plan Oversight Committee(RPOC) which would be a subcommittee that would report to the HRAB on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. The RPOC’s objective is to assist the plan sponsor, Brown University, in making fiduciary decisions. The committee will provide prudent oversight on plan expenses, investment strategy and investment options, as well as compliance with the plan document and ERISA. The RPOC will direct its duties with respect to the Plan solely in the interest of the Plan’s participants and beneficiaries. Members will include the Director of Benefits as the Chairperson and the Benefits Manager as the committee Secretary. The committee would also include an Office of General Counsel appointee, Brown Investment Office appointee and the AVP & Controller. Members will remain on the committee for as long as they are in the named position. A third party advisor may be selected to assist the RPOC in monitoring investment options and fees.
 - vii. Backup Care – The Board heard four presentations from Backup Care groups and recommended that Brown University contract with Work Options Group to administer the Backup Care Program. Work Options Group will provide care when there is a temporary breakdown in normal child care, elder care, and self-care arrangements. Care can be provided anywhere in the country. This program was rolled out to eligible employees on September 1st.
- b. Time Off Benefits
- i. Military Make Whole Pay Policy and FMLA Policies – The HRAB reviewed Brown’s Make Whole Pay Policy. The policy had been a temporary one that required approval from year to year. That old policy provision (covered in HR policy 30.025) offered a 10 working day per year make whole pay provision for reservists. The time off does not count as a leave of absence/FMLA. Accompanying paperwork must be provided to the supervisor as soon as it is received. To continue to receive their regular pay and benefits, the reservist must remit compensation received for military duty to Brown’s Payroll Office (excluding monies for room and board). The Temporary Policy, enacted in 2002, met or exceeded USERRA requirements and stated that employees called to active duty may be placed on a short-term administrative leave and receives supplemental pay equal to the difference between their military compensation and the employees’ regular rate of pay for up to 90 calendar days. The Board recommended implementing the 90 day make whole pay provision on a permanent basis. This provision was made permanent in the policy in April 2008.

c. Staff Compensation

The HRAB reviewed recommendations for staff compensation proposals to be presented to the University Resources Committee:

- i. Salary Increase Percent – The HRAB heard a preliminary presentation regarding staff salary increases in October; however due to the economic crisis there will be no salary increases for faculty and staff in FY 10 (except for promotions, pre-existing contracts or when specific market pressures require it).

d. Other

- i. New Employment IT Reviewer Policy - The Board heard a request for a new policy which would allow CIS to review, track, and make recommendations on all IT positions above a grade 9. By doing so, CIS can assist in the evaluation of a candidate's qualifications and overall appropriateness for employment as they have experience in recruiting and hiring staff along the continuum and can ensure required skills are listed in the job description and classification. This also allows CIS the ability for career development as qualified individuals are made aware of openings more efficiently. If CIS does not respond with input on an open position within a reasonable amount of time, the position will proceed as is. The Board recommended that the new policy be implemented.

- ii. HR Policy - The Board recommended the update of two HR policies. Telecommuting Policy and Guidelines - It had been requested that the Alternate Work Arrangement policy be clarified to address the numerous questions HR receives regarding staff members working from home. A new policy entitled "Telecommuting Policy and Guidelines" was drafted to formalize criteria for regular off-site work. The Board approved changes to the policy and the updated version was made available on June 2, 2008.

Weapons Policy – The HRAB was asked to review language for an extension of the Weapons Policy, which had previously only included students, to now include Brown employees. The committee discussed various language options for the extended policy. Following the Board's recommendation, the policy received approval from Beppie Huidekoper and was rolled out on June 2, 2008.

6. Continuing and Upcoming Issues

- a. Continued Subcommittee Monitoring – The HRAB will continue to monitor the implementation of policies and practices suggested by the Limited Duration Employment, Background Check, and Retirement Plan Oversight subcommittees. As appropriate, the Board will recommend policy revisions to ensure that Brown has implemented best practices.
- b. Holidays – A student group leading an initiative to eliminate Columbus Day as a University recognized holiday had requested that their materials be distributed and discussed by the Board. The Chair brought the request to the Committee on their behalf as the student group was been unable to attend the meeting. The Board discussed options for addressing the group's concerns including: recognizing another holiday in place of Columbus Day, adding a floating holiday, or leaving the holiday as is on the calendar and renaming the day to be more

respectful of indigenous people. The Board was not asked to make a formal recommendation on this issue. However, at the discussion's conclusion, it was noted that the Board may be asked to discuss the issue again at a later date.

- c. Organizational and Vacancy Review Committees – Karen presented an overview of the purpose and activities of both committees which were formed in fall, 2008. The Vacancy Review Committee (VRC) determines the small number of vacant positions that are critical to the University goals and should be filled. The Organizational Review Committee (ORC) is charged with evaluating whether staff and administrative organizational changes can be made to achieve efficiencies and enable the reallocation of resources to student support and academic programs. Karen will continue to keep the HRAB informed on recommendations of both committees as necessary.
- d. Transgender Benefits - Kelly Garrett, Coordinator LGBTQ Resource Center, and Sarah Doyle Women's Center presented a request for transgender benefit changes to the HRAB during which she discussed the possibility of removing transgender exclusionary clauses from health benefits provided to Brown University staff and faculty. In addition to discussing the exclusionary language currently listed with most health insurance carriers, Kelly presented information on the psychological implications of transgender individuals not receiving surgery; her views of the impact on Brown's transgender community of such a benefit enhancement, and notable transgender benefit changes that have been made at other institutions. A continued dialogue will take place on this issue.
- e. HR/Payroll Systems Replacement Project – Roberta Gordon, Director of the Human Resources/Payroll Systems Replacement Project, and Phil Goldstein, Consultant, reviewed the project specifics including the function, limitations, capability, and capacity of the current system; reasons for doing the project now, project governance structure; and preliminary timeline. The HRAB was asked to identify important outcomes for the project during this presentation. This project has currently been put on hold.
- f. Retiree Health Insurance – As part of the University Retirement Policies Review Committee (URPRC) recommendations, the HRAB recommended options in 2005 for providing Brown retirees and their spouses over age 65 with access to group health insurance programs specifically designed for a Medicare-eligible population. Based on the recommendation of the HRAB, Brown now offers a Medicare Advantage option through BlueChip for Medicare through BCBSRI and the National Employee Benefit Companies (NEBCO) Medicare Supplement Insurance for retirees. The Emeriti Retirement Health Solutions and TIAA-CREF retiree health care models were reviewed with the Board. The Board will review whether to add a University contribution to retiree health at a future date.
- g. Health Care – The HRAB will continue to evaluate health care plan design and premium contribution structures to ensure that Brown employees are offered cost-effective plans that continue to meet their health insurance needs.

- h. Day Care – Michele Wise was named Child Care Coordinator in the Benefits Office and reviewed child care options for the University in the future. As such, the Board will continue to evaluate alternatives and make recommendations to senior administration as appropriate.

7. Membership

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