



NEWS

keeping academic professionals informed and involved

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MAY 2011 APAC News, Vol. 4, No. 4 *NEW* What Do You Think of the Conversions?

This is an Open Forum for Readers to Discuss Civil Service Conversions.

WHAT DO you think about the Civil Service audit findings, job analysis, and the conversions? What questions do you have? Please let us know.

- Leave your feedback by clicking on the blue "Comment" button below.
- If you chose, your response can be anonymous.
- Questions and comments will be visible to everyone that logs onto *APAC News*.
- Please ensure questions and comments remain professional and on-topic.
- Check back later to see what others are saying.
- Navigate back to *APAC News* using the menu on the left.

PART OF APAC's role is to help represent the issues and concerns of UIC's Academic Professional staff. In order to do this, we need as much input from APs as we can get. We also want to provide an opportunity for people to discuss the conversions.

30 comments



Labels: [Civil Service Conversions](#)

May Marks Beginning of AP to Civil Service Conversion at Hospital

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[Tomeiko Sewell Joins APAC](#)
 New APAC member Tomeiko Sewell. By Ivone De Jesus

TOMEIKO SEWELL serves as



If these APs are converted to Civil Service, should they retain all seniority accrued in all their previous AP positions? The University Senate recently approved a letter to be sent to Board Chair Christopher Kennedy and University President Michael Hogan asking for retention of all seniority for APs converted to Civil Service. (Photo courtesy AADE.)

By Monica M. Walk

QUESTIONS FROM employees are percolating across the Chicago campus as the Human Resources Office continues to analyze and categorize jobs as Academic Professional or Civil Service as required to resolve State University Civil Service System (SUCSS) audit findings that UIC had misclassified some jobs.

THE JOB analysis process is close to complete in the Medical Center and May 1, 2011, was the first date that Medical Center employees could choose to convert from AP to CS. Jobs in the East Side colleges, West Side colleges, and UA positions will be analyzed in the coming months.

"WE WANT our employees to remain our employees," stressed Executive Director and Associate Vice President for Human Resources Maureen Parks, noting that the University is working hard to personalize the process through both group and individual meetings and ongoing communication.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM the State's Civil Service Office and Human Resources participated in a Town Hall meeting sponsored by APAC at UIC for Academic Professionals on April 19. At that time employees received information about the audit, the job analysis process, the conversion process, and its implications for the employee. The information shared can be found on the Human Resources website, along with additional campus communication reports, FAQs, and related University resources. Visit [UIC's Civil Service Audit and Job Analysis](#) to view these specifics. Additional website updates are expected soon.

"THE CIVIL Service office and the executive director are working closely with us to resolve problems," Parks said. "I am grateful for the way they have partnered with us to work through issues. Civil Service is not trying to do anything bad to the University of Illinois; they are trying to apply the law fairly. The problem is these are old rules—from 1954—and not always a good fit. So, we are working closely to figure out how a rule or statute affects us today. We will work through the issues to explain them. We don't want anyone to leave because they don't understand what is happening."

AP POSITIONS currently funded by grants, or "soft money," are among the situations still being clarified in the reclassification from AP to CS. "The position being Civil Service is separate from funding," Parks said. "The University is concerned about what happens if the money [for a position] runs out. We don't have an answer right now, but we are working on it with Civil Service. Our goal is to have something in place so it's not an issue. We want to have a proposal to the Civil Service office and merit board to review by August, so we can set aside the issue and not have it be a problem."

Real Estate Specialist for the University Office of Capitol P...



Pending 'Washroom' Legislation Senate Bill 1150 Would Remove UI Exemption

Authority

By Michael Moss THE CAMPUS currently has the authority to exempt individual positions from the Civil Service System and create new, Acade...



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University Senate Supports Retention of Full Seniority when APs Converted to Civil Service

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It's the Law

CURRENT EMPLOYEES in AP jobs that have substantially similar duties as the jobs in the Civil Service class plan must be converted to Civil Service. Because it's the law, departments not have an option on whether or not to convert. "We do not want to lose our good and valuable employees," Parks said. "This is not so we can eradicate positions or dismiss people."

THERE ARE several aspects of employment that will change as a result of conversion. For example, Civil Service jobs have either six-month or 12-month probationary periods attached to them. AP employees who are converted must satisfy the applicable probationary period for the new "converted to" Civil Service position. However, time in the "converted from" position will be counted toward satisfying the probationary periods. Additionally, employees will begin to earn seniority in the new Civil Service job classes. Seniority accrued in a visiting position also will count when that position is converted to Civil Service.

OTHER ASPECTS of employment will not change. For example, pay rates (with the possible exception of those covered by collective bargaining agreements), health benefits, and paid time off banks to name a few.

FOR A full description of the implications of converting from AP to Civil Service, visit the HR website UIC's Civil Service Audit and Job Analysis.

EVENTUALLY ALL Academic Professional positions will have been analyzed via this process. However, jobs posted since January 2011 should be classified correctly, as new positions are required to go through job analysis before being posted. So, individuals considering employment with the university or considering a change in employment within the University can expect a job posted as Academic Professional to remain in this category.

IF AN internal applicant in the interview process is concerned, particularly about seniority, Parks urges the job candidate to ask the hiring manager if the job has been through the analysis process. "They will not be offended if asked," Parks said. "People expect the question. This is a hot topic on the Chicago campus. If the job has been through the analysis process it is fine. If it hasn't been through the process, ask why and how confident the hiring manager is that it will remain AP."

0 comments [comment icon] [edit icon] [social media icons: M, e, t, f, s] Labels: Civil Service Conversions

University Senate Supports Retention of Full Seniority when APs Converted to Civil Service

THE UNIVERSITY SENATE on April 21 unanimously passed a letter to be sent to University Board of Trustees Chair Christopher G. Kennedy and University President Michael J. Hogan opposing the reclassification of Academic Professional positions to Civil Service without retention of seniority accrued throughout an employee's entire Academic Professional career at UIC.

CURRENTLY, WHEN APs are converted to Civil Service, they retain only the seniority for their last AP position, but do not receive seniority credit for all their previous AP positions at UIC.

THE LETTER had been drafted by AP Senators William S. Bike, Jacqueline M. Berger, and Jill M. Davis.

THE LETTER read in part that APs "have taken new positions on campus in an effort to advance their careers and have done so in good faith, assuming that the University

had properly classified these positions as Academic Professional. By not allowing seniority accrued from all positions an individual has held, many of these employees who have ten-to-20 years of experience at the University, will be reclassified as Civil Service with only one-to-two years of seniority. This means that if position elimination occurs in their new Civil Service classification, many of these individuals will be at the bottom of the 'bumping tree' and could be laid off in favor of other employees with less total experience at the University."

BERGER USED herself as an example to illustrate the concerns to the Senate. While she has been employed at UIC for over 15 years, she was recently promoted and has been in her current position for less than two years. If she is converted, she will have less than two years of seniority - the other 13 years of service to the campus will not "count."

THE LETTER also notes, "Academic Professionals are a vital part of the University's ability to respond to the needs of the citizens of the State of Illinois. Inequitable treatment of their years of dedication to the University will have a devastating impact on the daily operations of the University and on the level of service we provide our students. We encourage the Board of Trustees and the President to ensure the protection of full seniority during the process of conversion of Academic Professional positions to Civil Service classifications."

BIKE, BERGER, and Davis on the Senate floor explained the reasons for the letter before the Senate took a vote. They addressed the concerns of faculty, who comprise most of the Senate roster.

"CIVIL SERVICE personnel are subject to 'bumping'—removal from their position should a Civil Service employee with greater seniority seek that position," Bike said. "So if a faculty member had a particularly skilled assistant in his or her department who had been an AP and now is Civil Service, that person would be subject to bumping, and could lose that qualified assistant. A way to protect against that is for the University to count all of our seniority."

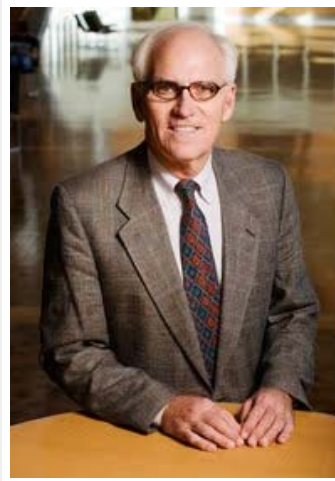
TO SEE a recording of the Senate meeting, click below. Discussion of letter runs from 17:24 to 25:12.

0 comments



Labels: [Civil Service](#) [Conversions](#)

Uncertain Forecast for Pension Changes



"It is an exaggeration to say all the State's budget problems have arisen from the State's pension program," said economist J. Fred Giertz, an economist with the University's Institute of Government and Public Affairs.

By Sam Hostettler, for **UIC News**, and William S. Bike, for **APAC News**

MAY 31. That's the final day lawmakers convene for the current legislative session and the date employees at the three University of Illinois campuses will have circled on their calendars to learn what, if any, changes the Illinois General Assembly will make to the State's massively underfunded pension system.

A PANEL of experts — Robert Rich, director of the [Institute of Government and Public Affairs](#); economists Darren Lubotsky, [David Merriman](#), and J. Fred Giertz; law professor Laurie Reynolds; and [Kappy Laing](#), executive director of the Office of Governmental Relations and the University's chief lobbyist — provided an overview of a new report on the public pension policy to nearly 800 UIC faculty and staff April 12 at the UIC Forum.

"WE'RE NOT here to here to take positions," said Rich, who along with Lubotsky, Merriman, and Reynolds authored [the report](#), "Public Pension Policy in Illinois: An Introduction to a Crucial Issue."

"THERE'S LITTLE practical value to talk about who is at fault. We are here to provide you with information on the issue."

IN MAY 2010, Illinois's unfunded pension liabilities were officially estimated at more than \$79 billion, the worst in the nation. The State's total new pension obligations were greater than \$11.9 billion in fiscal year 2011. Illinois contributed only about \$3.7 billion to State pension trust funds in fiscal year 2011 and added more state debt to make this contribution.

NATIONALLY, UNDERFUNDING of State pension funds totals more than \$3 trillion. Illinois faces two important questions, Rich said: How should the State dispose of its accumulated pension liability? And what sort of pension system should the state have moving forward?

SOME OF the following reforms are [being considered](#):

- Switching from a "defined benefit" (usually financed primarily by the employer) to a "defined contribution" (usually financed by the employee) program;
- Increasing the contributions required of employees;
- Limiting the total amount of pension for which an employee is eligible;
- Changing eligibility criteria;
- Limiting retiree benefits or increasing the costs of the benefits (such as medical benefits) to employees;
- Limiting increases in direct pension benefits by tying these increases directly to rates of inflation.

ACCORDING TO Reynolds, there is a debate over the legality of legislative reforms to the retirement systems, and it all begins with the State's pension law, which in part reads: "Membership in any pension or retirement system of the State...shall be an enforceable contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired."

"WHEN THAT language was added to the 1970 constitution, it radically changed the status of government employee pension systems in the State of Illinois," she said.

THERE ARE several different ways the sentence could be interpreted by the Illinois Supreme Court, she said. One scenario is that the Illinois Constitution creates a legally binding obligation between the employee and the pension system itself, the State Universities Retirement System (SURS), but *not* the State of Illinois. This, Reynolds said, would be the worst case of pensioners.

ANOTHER INTERPRETATION is that the State could recognize its obligation to its employees under the pension system, but that it can reduce benefits for current employees, reducing existing, accrued benefits, she said.

REYNOLDS SAID the most widely held interpretation is the State has no power to change any benefits, formulas for calculating benefits, or to alter any of the terms and conditions of the pension plan that was in effect on the employee's first day at work.

IT IS unknown at the present time how the Illinois Supreme Court would interpret the decision, Reynolds said.

"IF THE Legislature passes laws reducing benefits for current employees, there will be lawsuits," Reynolds said. "This is probably going to the Illinois Supreme Court."

SHE NOTED that the Illinois Supreme Court tends to show "judicial restraint" and deference to the will of the Legislature. The court also is unlikely to let any litigant "put the State over a cliff" by making a decision that would bankrupt the State.

"VALIDITY OF a decree is contingent on if the money is available," Reynolds said. "If they give litigants a \$69 billion judgment but \$69 billion isn't available, what good is it?"

CHANGES HAVE already been made to the pension program by Illinois lawmakers. The adjustments, which apply to employees hired on or after Jan. 1, include:

- An increase in the retirement age from 60 to 67;
- Benefits are now based on the eight highest years of pay in the past ten years, rather than the highest pay in four consecutive years;
- Cost of living adjustments are calculated using simple interest instead of compound interest;
- The earnings based used to calculate benefits is now capped at \$106,800;
- The cost of living adjustments are limited to three percent per year or one-half of the actual inflation rate, whichever is less.

IT IS an exaggeration to say all the State's budget problems have arisen from the State's pension program, said Giertz.

IT ALSO is an exaggeration to think that the pension system will fail and no one will receive their benefits — that is unlikely to happen, he said. "Failure assumes the State stops funding them, but that won't happen. The State isn't that close to insolvency."

"SINCE PENSIONS are not the cause of all the problems, changing them won't solve all the problems," Giertz said. "The State never funded pensions in a timely way, shorting them decade after decade."

LAING SAID, "We're looking at a redeployment of contributions. That would result in less possibility of lawsuits than changing benefits paid out would."

"ANY LEGISLATION will have a *long* implementation period," Laing concluded. "If you want to affect legislation, the most effective lobbying is your letter or phone call to Legislators."

SUCH LOBBYING must not be done on University time, on a University telephone or computer, on University stationery, or on the University premises.

TO SEE the entire April 12 meeting, please click the following:

For more information on pension issues, go to www.igpa.uillinois.edu/pensions, <https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/cf/index.cfm>, www.surs.com, or https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/cf/policies/indexcfm?item_ID4534.

0 comments



Labels: [SURS](#) and [Benefits](#)

Shari Smith Representing APs on VPAA Search Committee

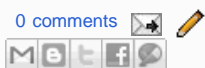


*Shari Smith, Associate Director, Center for Online Learning Research and Service,
University of Illinois at Springfield.*

PRESIDENT MICHAEL Hogan has selected Shari Smith, Associate Director, Center for Online Learning Research and Service, University of Illinois at Springfield, as the AP rep on the search committee for Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).

SMITH, IN applying for the post, noted, "I would lend a voice to the importance of online learning in the academic future of the University of Illinois. In addition, I have strong interest in promoting AP retention and expanding professional development and opportunity for APs, faculty, and staff in the University. Through the University Administrative Fellows, I'm familiar with the system-wide needs and strengths of the

three campuses and have heard from many departments who ultimately would report to the VPAA. Finally, I believe in the diversity of talent that exists in the ranks of Academic Professionals at the U of I and would like to be of service to this very talented group of people."



Pending 'Washroom' Legislation Senate Bill 1150 Would Remove UI Exemption Authority

By Michael Moss

THE CAMPUS currently has the authority to exempt individual positions from the Civil Service System and create new, Academic Professional positions. These exemptions are based on the standards defined by the Civil Service System "Exemption Procedures." This decision is made locally by UIC HR as a normal part of the Academic Professional hiring process.

HOWEVER, PROPOSED changes to the "Employee Washroom Act" (SB1150) would seem to have implications beyond washrooms - the authority to exempt positions from the Civil Service System and create new AP positions would be removed from UIC. Further, "the intent to propose an exemption must be provided to impacted employees and any labor organization with exclusive bargaining rights for that position and posted in all public places allocated for Civil Service employment information".

APAC WOULD like to acknowledge the efforts of senior University of Illinois administrators who attended the Senate Labor Committee to speak in opposition to this legislation. However, this bill passed the Senate and was sent to the House.

THE HOUSE Sponsor is Rep, Patrick J. Verschoore (D 72nd Rock Island):



Springfield Office:
259-S Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-5970 (217)
558-1253 FAX

District Office:
1504 3rd Ave., 2nd Floor
County Office Bldg.
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 558-3612 (309)
793-4764 FAX Rock Island County

THE ALTERNATE Chief House Sponsor is Representative Kenneth Dunkin (D 5th District):

Springfield Office:
278-S Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-4535



(217) 782-4213 FAX

District Office:
1543 North Wells Street
Chicago, IL 60610
(312) 266-0340
(312) 266-0699 FAX
Cook County

Email: kendunkin@msn.com

SEVERAL PEOPLE also have also requested contact information for their specific State Representatives in the House. You can look up your Illinois District Officials here: <http://www.elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/DistrictOfficialSearchByAddress.aspx>.

IF YOU wish to search by zip code, you will need the full 9-digit zip code which you can find here: <http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/welcome.jsp>.

READ MORE at Illinois Senate Bill 1150: <http://tinyurl.com/sb1150>.

HOUSE ACTIONS as of Publication:

4/15/2011	Arrived in House
4/25/2011	Placed on Calendar Order of First Reading
4/25/2011	Chief House Sponsor Rep. Patrick J. Verschoore
4/26/2011	First Reading
4/26/2011	Referred to Rules Committee
4/27/2011	Assigned to Executive Committee
4/28/2011	Alternate Chief Sponsor Changed to Rep. Kenneth Dunkin

"WITH RESPECT to principal administrative employee positions exempted from the State Universities Civil Service System, provides that the positions must be approved by the Merit Board (instead of as determined by the Merit Board). Provides that no position may be exempt unless the exemption has been reviewed and approved by the Merit Board or by the Executive Director as delegated by the Merit Board. Provides that the authority to exempt lies solely with the Merit Board or the Executive Director as delegated by the Merit Board, and such authority shall not be extended to any other employing institution or agency. Provides that adequate advance notice of the intent to propose an exemption must be provided to impacted employees and any labor organization with exclusive bargaining rights for that position and posted in all public places allocated for civil service employment information."

0 comments



Labels: [Civil Service Conversions](#)

We're Not the Problem



It was the September 2008 collapse and bankruptcy of the Lehman Brothers investment bank that signaled the start of what is now called the Great Recession.

Reprint from **USW@Work**, published by the United Steelworkers

BLAME WALL Street and lax regulation. Blame global capital and bad trade deals. Blame banks and an overzealous mortgage industry. But don't blame workers for the mess our economy is in.

THE RUSE, of course, is that public employee salaries and benefits are the underlying cause of budget problems that have gripped state and local governments across the nation.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES didn't deregulate the financial services industry or promote complex and risky investments like derivatives. Their pensions didn't push Wall Street to a crisis.

"THE PEOPLE who do the work – those who take care of our kids and try to give them a good education, the firemen who run into burning buildings to save us, the policemen who patrol our streets at the risk of taking a bullet, the nurses who fight for patient care or the steelworkers who are fighting to keep their plants open – we're not the problem," said International Steelworkers President Leo W. Gerard.

IT WAS the September 2008 collapse and bankruptcy of the Lehman Brothers investment bank that signaled the start of what is now called the Great Recession.

LEHMAN HAD had borrowed significant amounts of money to fund its investments, much of it in housing-related assets that made it vulnerable to a downturn. When the subprime mortgage crisis hit, Lehman faced an unprecedented loss and filed for bankruptcy.

LESS THAN a week after Lehman's filing, the Bush administration asked Congress for powers to buy bad debt and mortgages. On Sept. 29, after the House rejected a \$700 billion rescue bill, the Dow fell 777 points, its largest one-day point loss in history. The Senate passed the bailout on Oct. 1. The House approved it on Oct. 3 and President George Bush signed the bill.

BY THE end of October, it was very clear the country was in recession as consumers cut back on their spending by the biggest amount in 28 years.

THE RECESSION led to unsustainably high unemployment, which still exists today, and continued bad economic consequences, including budget problems at state and local governments.

MUCH OF the problem can be traced to tax revenues that have fallen because of the recession and political decisions to give huge tax breaks to the rich.

IDLED BUSINESSES no longer pay taxes. Nor do the 27 million people who are still unemployed or underemployed.

TO JUSTIFY the assault on public employees, some falsely blame employees for the dismal conditions of public pension funds. But public sector workers did not lose trillions of dollars in risky Wall Street investments. Wall Street money managers did that, not ordinary working people

FOR MORE Information, go to <http://www.usw.org/blamewallstreet>.

0 comments



Labels: [Budget Crisis](#)

State Comptroller Says No to Bankruptcy



Illinois State Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka is dead set against the idea of bankruptcy for Illinois.

A PROPOSAL has been floated in the U.S. Congress to allow states to declare bankruptcy, which heretofore has been illegal under Federal law. Although the proposal is the brainchild of prominent Republicans, the Illinois State Comptroller, Judy Baar Topinka, a Republican herself, is dead set against the idea for Illinois.

"THERE IS no question Illinois faces serious financial challenges, but declaring bankruptcy is not the answer," Topinka said.

WHILE SUPPORTERS of bankruptcy "are no doubt well-intentioned, their proposal to allow states like Illinois to break their financial commitments is misguided at best," she continued.

STATE BANKRUPTCY would immediately result in increased borrowing costs, reduced access to financial markets and suspended or downgraded credit ratings, Topinka contends, noting "It is irresponsible. In fact, I fear that the mere discussion of this option runs the risk of destabilizing the bond market."

BEYOND THOSE consequences, "State bankruptcy threatens to create more financial uncertainty and stunt economic recovery," Topinka said. "Residents in our State already face high unemployment, residential foreclosures and other economic difficulties. Bankruptcy will only exacerbate their plight. In addition to disrupting the bond market in the short-term, it would stop infrastructure and construction projects that are needed to jump start the economy. In Illinois specifically, it would also further paralyze business recruitment already made more-difficult by the recently-approved corporate tax increase.

"PERHAPS MOST important: bankruptcy is simply not the right thing to do. Sadly, my State and others have made irresponsible spending and borrowing decisions that have led to massive deficits. As State leaders, we now have a responsibility to make difficult and unpopular decisions to reduce spending and restore our fiscal integrity. Bankruptcy is little more than an 'easy way out' that would wrongly allow the State to skip out on its financial obligations without correcting the choices that have led to this point," Topinka concluded.

0 comments



Labels: [Budget Crisis](#)

Government Workers Vital to Economy, says Campaign for America's Future



Study after study shows the public employees do not receive extravagant compensation. (Photo courtesy CommonDreams.org.)

THE CAMPAIGN for America's Future is a progressive economic strategy center based in Washington, DC. Bill Scher, online campaign manager for the Campaign for America's Future, recently discussed why the government workers need to be protected from attacks on our salaries and pensions.

Weak Economies Need More Demand

"OUR ECONOMY is struggling and our state budgets are distressed because increased unemployment and falling home prices have reduced economic demand," Scher explained. "Weakening the ability of any workers to negotiate fair pay and secure retirements will only weaken demand further, hurting the overall economy."

Strong Standards Strengthen the Middle Class

WHEN PUBLIC sector workers get fair pay, healthy workplaces, and secure retirements, "that puts pressure on private sector CEOs to do the same, or else they risk losing talent to the public sector," Scher said. "Making public sector work less inviting does nothing to make private sector jobs pay better. We need to raise the bar, not lower it."

Decent Government Pay Means Decent Government

MOST EVERYONE wants our federal, state and local governments to function effectively. "That means being able to attract skilled, productive workers with fair pay, healthy workplaces and secure retirements," Scher noted.

Public Employees Are Not The Problem

STUDY AFTER study shows the public employees do not receive extravagant compensation, and that the problems with state public pension systems are largely overblown. State budgets are reeling from an economic recession caused by reckless Wall Street speculators, top end tax cuts, and corporate tax avoidance. "The projected shortfalls in public retirement benefits derive mostly from skyrocketing health care costs thanks to private insurers, and poorly performing pension investments thanks to deregulated Wall Street firms," Scher asserted.

Scapegoating Lets The Culprits Get Away

"RIGHT-WING billionaires," said Scher, "are pumping millions into a nationwide effort to break" public sector employees. "Because if they can get most people to blame public employees for the nation's economic ills, they won't hold irresponsible corporations

accountable and force the ultra-rich to make any sacrifices, such as higher taxes and tougher regulations.

"THIS IS a critical moment in our nation's history. Will we be a nation where workers can thrive, or where workers are nickel and dimed? Will we have a vibrant economy that works for all, or will we have a stagnant economy that serves the few? Now's the time to stand up," Scher concluded.

FOR MORE information, see www.ourfuture.org.

0 comments



Labels: [Budget Crisis](#)

APAC at Full Strength



APAC member Jill Davis leads an APAC resources session for employees.

THE ACADEMIC Professional Advisory Committee (APAC) now is at full strength, with the addition of some new members.

NEW PERSONNEL are Vainis Aleksa, Director of the Writing Center, Department of English; Tomeiko Windham Sewell, Real Estate Specialist, Capital Programs and Real Estate Services; Lee Jackson, Project Coordinator, Department of Pediatrics; Agnes Kawalec, Center Coordinator, Center for Clinical and Translational Science; Lorene King, Academic Skills Specialist, Academic Affairs, College of Medicine, Peoria; Patricia Lynn Ransom, Instructional Designer, OBFS; and Susan Varghese, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Department of Medicine, Cardiology.

RETURNING APAC members are Jacqueline Berger, William S. Bike, Virginia Buglio, Jill Davis, Margaret Moser, Michael Moss, Melinda Reeter, Yair Rodriguez, Jennifer Rowan and Deidre Rush.

IN ADDITION, Monica Rausa Williams has been appointed Liaison to APAC from the Office of Chancellor Paula Allen-Meares. Annieste Lemond will continue to serve as the liaison to APAC from University Human Resources.

Jeff Alcantar, Assistant Director, Business Information Systems, Office of Business and Financial Services (OBFS), is holding the role of APAC Webmaster.

0 comments



Tomeiko Sewell Joins APAC



New APAC member Tomeiko Sewell.

By Ivone De Jesus

TOMEIKO SEWELL serves as Real Estate Specialist for the University Office of Capitol Programs and Real Estate (UOCPRES). For the past six years, she has worked with the University handling all real estate related matters for various departments and colleges campus wide. Many of these units have various leasing and space needs, and it is Sewell's job to execute them. Her responsibilities are expanding as office personnel retire and as the office works toward ensuring they meet the needs of the campus entities.

PRIOR TO joining the campus, Sewell worked as a real estate paralegal, but wanted to venture into property management. "I never expected to find this opportunity at a University, but I am glad I did," she said. "I love that every lease is different, being that each unit has different needs."

WHILE HER involvement with APAC has been rather recent, Sewell always has followed the events via the APAC website and e-mail. She stated, "I am proud of their [APAC's] ability to be a voice for the APs and their ability to engage and inform them across campus by hosting various events that are specific to our concerns."

AS A newly appointed member she is looking forward to working with APs and possibly with the Communications or Building Community Committees. "I would like to help out wherever possible to see that we are of service to our colleagues."

SEWELL HOPES to be able to reach more APs on campus and form more alliances with a broader scope of people. "We are dealing with various compelling issues and this is the time that we can engage the masses," she noted. With that said, she also wants to work in engaging more APs within her department and others who work in close proximity.

IN HER spare time she loves to read novels and watch movies. Sewell is very active in her church and volunteers with the youth groups in various Chicago-land communities. She is married and has two sons Jordan (11) and Jason (2).

0 comments



Labels: [Member Profiles](#)

QUICK TAKES



CAPE Award chair William S. Bike explains the nomination process to UIC employees.

APAC Meeting

THE MONTHLY APAC meeting will be held Wednesday, May 11, on the East Campus, at 12:30 p.m. Room to be announced.

ALL ARE invited. For more information, contact Yair Rodriguez at yar@uic.edu or call (312) 355-0322.

CAPE Awards

CHANCELLOR'S ACADEMIC Professional Excellence Award nominations can be submitted between now and Friday, July 1. For more information and a nomination form, go to <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/apac/cape.html>.

UIC-HR Organizational Effectiveness Business Writing Course Set

A UIC-HR Organizational Effectiveness Business Writing Fundamentals course for any level of staff reviews basic rules of writing, and provides guidelines for planning, organizing, drafting, and editing processes. Register at <https://hrnet.uillinois.edu/dart-cf/sessions/index.cfm?act=ListClasses>. Upcoming dates are Wednesday, May 25, at 10 a.m. and Tuesday, June 28, at 1 p.m.

0 comments



Labels: [Events](#)

BENEFIT BEAT

Tuition Waiver Benefit Available for Graduate-Level Courses

THERE IS an important benefit to Academic Professionals, Faculty, and Civil Service who are taking graduate-level courses and who are eligible to receive a tuition waiver at the University.

THE UNIVERSITY exempts the first \$5,250 of the tuition waiver from taxable income in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 127. This exemption is based on tuition waivers received by an employee in a calendar year.

UNIVERSITY PAYROLL monitors waivers posted to employees' student accounts. When the value exceeds the exempted amount of \$5,250, the employee is notified of the taxability. The notification will be in the form of an email and via the U.S. Postal Service to the mailing address in Banner.

FOR ADDITIONAL information regarding employee eligibility and restrictions for graduate-level tuition waivers, see https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/cf/events/index.cfm?Item_id=1121&rlink=1116 and select your appropriate employee group. For contact information regarding tuition waivers, please see https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/cf/events/index.cfm?Item_id=3235.

0 comments



Labels: [SURS](#) and [Benefits](#)

AP RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT



UIC has policies in place to help employees deal with sexual harassment.

Official university policy on sexual harassment

THE UNIVERSITY of Illinois will not tolerate sexual harassment of employees or students and will take action to provide remedies when such harassment is discovered. The University environment must be free of sexual harassment in work and study.

IN ORDER to assure that the University is free of sexual harassment, appropriate sanctions will be imposed on offenders in a case-by-case manner.

THE UNIVERSITY will respond to every complaint of sexual harassment reported.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT is prohibited by Federal and State nondiscrimination law.

Where can I go for help?

THE FOLLOWING services are available to staff, faculty, and students who wish to learn more about the University sexual harassment policy and procedures, or who are looking for counseling and advice about sexual harassment matters.

If you want information or help with a sexual harassment problem, phone or visit:

Office for Access and Equity (OAE)
809 S. Marshfield Avenue
Room 717 (M/C 602)
(312) 9968670

If you want to discuss a problem before taking action or need supportive counseling, please contact:

Counseling Center
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Student Services Building, Suite 2010
1200 W. Harrison St.
(312) 996-3490
312-996-5535 (InTouch Crisis Hotline)

UIC Gender and Sexuality Center
1180 Behavioral Sciences Building
1007 W. Harrison St.
(312) 413-8619

Office of Women's Affairs
802 University Hall
601 S. Morgan St.
(312) 413-1025

Employee Assistance Service
511 Psychiatric Institute
1601 W. Taylor St.
(312) 996-3588

0 comments



Labels: [Resources and Prof Development](#)

Websites to Know

PENSION BILLS. A website, https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/cf/policies/index.cfm?Item_ID=4534, is available containing proposed bills in the Illinois State Legislature that could affect our benefits and pensions, with links to reports and summaries which you can use as an additional information resource.

OTHER PENSION information from the Institute of Government and Public Affairs: http://igpa.uillinois.edu/system/files/Pensions_One%20Page%20info_IGPA.pdf, and

<http://igpa.uillinois.edu/system/files/IGPA%20Report%20on%20Pensions%202011.pdf>.

THE STATE Universities Retirement System of Illinois (SURS) website also has a detailed pending legislation page, available here: <http://www.surs.com/shepherd.surs?flk=Legal&shp=63>.

HUMAN RESOURCES has a page devoted to the Civil Service Audit and Job Analysis, available here:

http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/UIC_Civil_Service_Audit_Job_Analysis/index.shtml. The PowerPoint from the recent APAC Town Hall event, as well as other important communications and presentations, are available here: http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/UIC_Civil_Service_Audit_Job_Analysis/CampusCommunications/index.shtml.

0 comments



Labels: [Resources and Prof Development](#)

The Continuing Crisis



"Get active with your State Rep, your State Senator, the Governor's office, your Congressman, and the two Senators," Christopher Kennedy, Chairman of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, told his audience and the University at large recently when he presented "The Research University and Our Future" at the UIC Forum. (Photo by Kathryn Marchetti.)

SOME STATE Senators want to cut our pensions. See *CarmiTimes* of March 17: http://www.carmitimes.com/state_news/x1777817449/State-Senate-Republicans-spell-out-budget-cut-options.

PRESIDENT HOGAN spoke to the Appropriations Higher Education Committee of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois on April 4: <http://www.uillinois.edu/president/speeches/2011/April4.Appropriations.cfm>.

PENSION BILLS on hold, but action is expected, in State Legislature. See *UIC News* of April 6 at <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/uicnews/articledetail.cgi?id=15205>.

PENSION CHANGES put UIC's status, future at risk, says former Chancellor. See *Chicago Sun-Times* of April 10: <http://www.suntimes.com/news/otherviews/4693114-452/pension-changes-put-uics-status-future-at-risk.html>.

BOARD CHAIR Christopher M. Kennedy speaks at UIC April 14.

One of things Trustee Kennedy encouraged us to do at the Q and A session after his talk was to contact our State elected officials about our pensions and any other issue which is important to us. He indicated that they don't get contacted by large numbers of people, and they will listen if we speak, especially in large numbers. You can find your elected officials at this webpage:

<http://www.elections.illinois.gov/DistrictLocator/DistrictOfficialSearchByAddress.aspx>.

Here are the State Representatives:

<http://www.ilga.gov/house/>; and here are the State Senators:

<http://www.ilga.gov/senate/default.asp>

DIRECTOR OF the Illinois Retirement Securities Initiative Bukola Bello presents an analysis of State Universities Retirement System (SURS) retirement benefit conditions relative to fiscal problems and State Legislators:

GRIM OUTLOOK for University's fiscal future. See *UIC News*,
<http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/uicnews/articledetail.cgi?id=15297>

0 comments



Labels: [Budget Crisis](#)

State Announces Selection of Managed Care Plans for FY12



HUMAN RESOURCES & University Payroll and Benefits recently sent a memo to benefits eligible employees. The memo read:

PLEASE BE assured that your concerns about the State of Illinois' recent decision regarding managed care plans are being heard. On April 12, University of Illinois President Michael Hogan sent a letter to the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, as well as to Governor Pat Quinn and our local legislators, to communicate the impact of this decision upon the University. You may read President Hogan's letter at <http://nessie.uhr.uillinois.edu/pdf/benefits/ManagedCare041211.pdf>

Background

ON APRIL 6, the State of Illinois announced its decision to award the contracts for administering HMO services to BlueCross BlueShield HMO Illinois and BlueCross BlueShield Blue Advantage. Open Access Plan (OAP) contracts were awarded to HealthLink OAP and PersonalCare OAP. These awards were arrived at through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process governed by the state Procurement Code. The University of Illinois had no input on this decision.

THE FOLLOWING link includes the Illinois Department of Health and Family Services press release and fact sheet with FAQs:

http://www.cms.illinois.gov/3_servicese_ben_choice/Managed-care-FY2012.htm.

Quality Care Health Plan

THE CHANGES announced on April 6 do not impact the Quality Care Health Plan.

PersonalCare HMO vs. PersonalCare OAP

PERSONALCARE HMO, which will not be a part of the State's managed care plan, is a different provider than the new PersonalCare OAP option that will be available. Employees who are currently enrolled in PersonalCare HMO will need to select a new plan.

Health Alliance and Humana HMOs

HEALTH ALLIANCE HMO, Health Alliance Illinois, Humana Health Plan, and Humana–Winnebago will not be part of the State's health insurance plan beginning July 1, 2011. Both the Health Alliance and Humana Medical Plans have protested this decision. The State of Illinois Procurement office has stated that reviewing the protests could take weeks. Employees who are currently enrolled in one of the Health Alliance or Humana plans will need to select a new plan.

What Should Employees Do Now?

UNIVERSITY FACULTY and staff do not need to take any immediate action with regard to their choice of managed care plan until the annual Benefit Choice period, which will begin on May 1, 2011, and last through at least May 31, 2011. Prior to this time, employees will receive instructions on when and how to choose a new health plan.

IN THE meantime, employees may wish to familiarize themselves with the differences between an HMO and an OAP plan. See the following resources:

Pages 12–15 of *Your Guide to University of Illinois Benefits* at
<https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/pdf/benefits/benefitssummarybooklet.pdf>

Please note that cost information is applicable to the current plan year and is subject to change July 1, 2011.

Pages 8-11 of last year's *Benefit Choice Options* booklet at
https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu/pdf/benefits/BC_Booklet.pdf

AGAIN, COST information is applicable to the current plan year and is subject to change July 1, 2011.

What is the University Doing Now?

WHILE DISCUSSIONS and vendor protests are ongoing with the State, the University is preparing for the possibility that employees in Health Alliance HMO, Health Alliance Illinois, PersonalCare HMO, Humana Health Plan, and Humana-Winnebago will need to select a different managed care provider during the annual Benefit Choice period, which began May 1, 2011. The University will provide instructions via email, and will schedule informational sessions and computer labs to assist with this choice.

THE UNIVERSITY continues to monitor the developments in this area closely. No further information has been provided by the State of Illinois. We will relay more information as it becomes available.

THE ILLINOIS Department of Health and Family Services press release is available at
http://www.state.il.us/cms/download/pdfs_benefits/HFS-Press-Release.pdf

THE ILLINOIS Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) earlier this month announced that it has selected four managed care organizations to provide benefits to State employees, dependents, and retirees starting July 1. The plans also will provide care to members of the Local Government Health Plan, the Teachers' Retirement Insurance Program, and College Insurance Program. State officials estimate that the award of these four contracts will result in a savings of approximately \$102 million in Fiscal Year 2012, and a savings in excess of \$1 billion over the life of the contracts.

“PROVIDING HIGH quality health care is our highest priority,” said HFS Director Julie Hamos. “Through these plans, we are also able to realize significant savings for taxpayers and improve our state’s fiscal health. At the end of a thorough evaluation of the bids we received, we are confident that the managed care plans selected will provide the quality health care that members of the State group insurance system expect to receive, as well as significant savings.”

THE SELECTED managed care plans will replace the incumbent plans, whose contracts expire June 30, 2011. Members of the State’s four group insurance programs will have the option to select a health plan that meets their needs during the annual Benefit Choice period in May.

AS A result of a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the State gave notice that it intends to award the contracts for administering Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) services to two plans that are part of BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS): BCBS HMO Illinois and BCBS Blue Advantage. A separate RFP for Open Access Plan (OAP) services led to the selection of HealthLink OAP and PersonalCare OAP.

FIVE PROPOSALS were received and evaluated for HMO services, with the two BlueCross BlueShield proposals receiving the highest scores based on a combination of technical responsiveness and price. For the OAP service, four proposals were received and scored, with HealthLink OAP and PersonalCare OAP receiving the highest scores based upon a combination of technical responsiveness and price.

LETTERS ARE being sent to members, which outline the steps they must take if they are enrolled in one of the incumbent plans that is being replaced. Additionally, information regarding all of these changes will be included in the Benefit Choice Options book available on the benefits web site: www.benefitschoice.il.gov, as of May 1, 2011.

0 comments



Labels: [SURS and Benefits](#)

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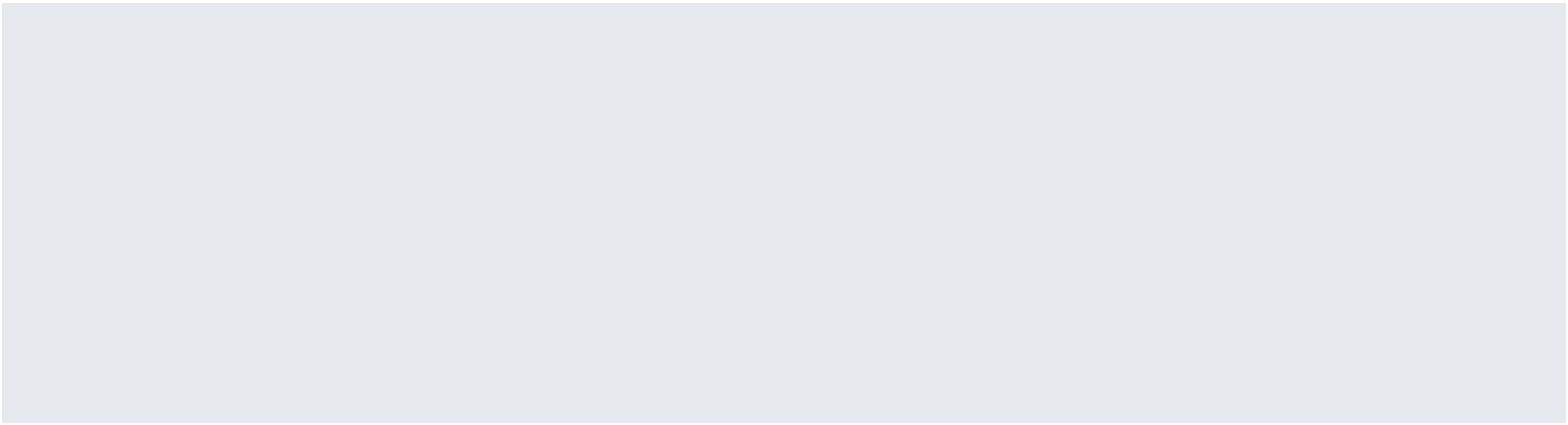
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Editor: William S. Bike, Chair, APAC Communications Subcommittee. Please send questions or ideas for future *APAC News* stories to billbike@uic.edu. If you would like to write for *APAC News*, please let Bill know. *APAC News* is best viewed using Mozilla Firefox.



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NEWS

keeping academic professionals informed and involved

Home *BREAKING NEWS* Pension/SURS Petition



EXTERNAL LINKS

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[FY2012 Benefit Choice \(NESSIE\) Enrollment Period](#)

FY2012 Benefit Choice (NESSIE) Enrollment Period

UNIVERSITY PAYROLL and Benefits recently sent a memo to benefits eligible employees. The memo read:

THE STATE Department of Central Management Services (CMS) has announced that the annual Benefit Choice Enrollment period will begin May 1. The CMS letter, which you will receive at your home address, has defined the enrollment period as May 1 through May 31, but due to unforeseen contract issues, the Benefit Choice Period end date is unknown at this time. UPB Benefits Services has released to employees all the information available and will continue to keep employees updated as we receive additional information. Since the final decision regarding the FY2012 managed care contracts is not complete, the only Benefit Choice change that you can make beginning May 1, is to enroll in either of the two Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) - Medical Care Assistance Plan (MCAP) and/or Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP). New enrollees in MCAP will receive the MyFBMC Visa Card for next year, at no charge. [Note: If you currently have the Visa card, it will continue to work, so do not discard it.]

FOR CHANGES to health, dental, life and adding or dropping dependents, the **NESSIE Benefit Choice** enrollment form will not be available to you until the health plan contracts are finalized. Whenever that happens, CMS has confirmed that employees will be given an opportunity to make informed elections based on premiums and health plans available in their counties.

PLEASE NOTE that any FSA enrollments, which you submit during the month of May, may be changed again, once the new managed care contracts have been finalized.

THE LIMITED Benefit Choice Options booklet is located on the University's web-based NESSIE system at https://nessie.uhr.uillinois.edu/pdf/benefits/BC_Booklet.pdf.

BENEFIT CHOICE Dependent related changes effective July 1, 2011:

- Dependent child under the age of 26 will be eligible for health, dental and life insurance coverage.
- Dependent children are eligible regardless of marital status.
- Stepchildren are not required to live with the employee in a parent child relationship.
- Child life insurance coverage will be guarantee issue for all dependent children (no health statement required) during the FY2012 Benefit Choice period only. Birth certificate is required.
- The student and adult child relationship types will not be used after July 1. Employees will select from the list of relationship types, such as natural child or stepchild, regardless of dependent's age.
- Dependents currently in the student category will be changed to adult children after July 1 by CMS.
- The semi-annual certifications have been eliminated; therefore, dependent relationships will not change in the future. A Fall annual certification will be

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- ▶ March (17)
- ▶ February (16)
- ▶ January (12)
- ▶ 2010 (35)
- ▶ 2009 (3)



POPULAR ARTICLES

MAY 2011 APAC News, Vol. 4, No. 4
NEW What Do You Think of the Conversions?

This is an Open Forum for Readers to Discuss Civil Service Conversions. WHAT DO you think about the Civil Service audit findings, job a...



Bills That Could Reduce Our Pensions Introduced in Illinois General Assembly

The Illinois House of Representatives will consider two bills that could reduce our pensions. TWO ILLINOIS House Bills, HB 146 and HB 1...

May Marks Beginning of AP to Civil Service Conversion at Hospital

If these APs are converted to Civil Service, should they retain all seniority accrued in all their previous AP positions? The University Sen...

State Announces Selection of Managed Care Plans for FY12

HUMAN RESOURECES & University Payroll and Benefits recently sent a memo to benefits eligible employees. The memo read: PLEASE BE assure...



Tomeiko Sewell Joins APAC
New APAC member Tomeiko Sewell. By Ivone De Jesus

TOMEIKO SEWELL serves as Real Estate Specialist for the University Office of Capitol P...



Pending 'Washroom' Legislation Senate Bill 1150 Would Remove UI Exemption

Authority

By Michael Moss THE CAMPUS currently has the authority to exempt individual positions from the Civil Service System and create new, Acade...

We're Not the Problem
It was the

required only for dependents in the disabled, other and veteran adult child categories.

- The domestic partner category ceases to be an option on June 1; therefore, no new enrollments will be permitted during the Benefit Choice period. Current domestic partner enrollees will be grandfathered in and retain coverage.
- New domestic partners will be eligible under the new Civil Union Partner provision effective June 1, 2011.

OTHER CHANGES effective July 1, 2011:

- The Quality Care Dental Plan has a new claim administrator - Delta Dental. Two types of dental PPO networks will be added, although the dental premiums and Schedule of Benefits have not changed. Additional information is available in the Benefit Choice Option booklet.
- Minnesota Life once again has been chosen as the life carrier and there will be a change to premiums and coverage.
- Long-Term Care (LTC) insurance will no longer be offered. Employees currently enrolled in the LTC program will continue to have coverage as long as premiums continue to be paid.

*** Refer to the Benefit Choice Options booklet for information on other changes in response to the Federal Healthcare Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. ***

ONCE CONTRACTS are final with the managed care plans, employees will receive notice that the NESSIE enrollment form is open. Employees may make elections to their State health and life plan enrollments, opt into or opt out of the State group health insurance plan (if you have other non-state group coverage), opt into or opt out of the dental plan and enroll or re-enroll in FSAs. You may also add (documentation is required) or drop dependents. Changes will become effective on July 1, 2011.

BY ACCESSING the "Benefit Choice" option in NESSIE at https://nessie.uibr.uillinois.edu/cf/benefits/index.cfm?Item_ID=10 you can make your benefit changes online. The UPB Benefits Services office will send an email to employees once the **NESSIE Benefit Choice** "benefits" enrollment form is open. If you need assistance, select the Help link that appears on every screen for answers to common questions and phone numbers to call for assistance.

IF YOU have any questions about your benefit plans or your options at this time, please contact your campus UPB Benefits Services office or send email to benefits@uillinois.edu.

- Urbana UPB Benefits Services - (217) 333-3111
- Chicago UPB Benefits Services - (312) 996-6471
- Springfield UPB Benefits Services - (217) 206-7144
- UPB Benefits Services (Toll-Free) - 866-669-4772, Select Option #1
- Dependent and OPT OUT Documentation fax - (217) 244-3135

0 comments

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Editor: William S. Bike
Writing Staff: Ivone De Jesus, Monica Walk, Kristina Giuliana, Lucia Gonzalez
Web Publishing: Jeff Alcantar

Chair: Michael Moss
Vice Chair: Jennifer Rowan



September 2008 collapse and bankruptcy of the Lehman Brothers investment bank that signaled the start of what is now called the G...

[FY2012 Benefit Choice \(NESSIE\) Enrollment Period](#)

UNIVERSITY PAYROLL and Benefits recently sent a memo to benefits eligible employees. The memo read: THE STATE Department of Central Manag...

[Uncertain Forecast for Pension Changes](#)

"It is an exaggeration to say all the State's budget problems have arisen from the State's pension program," said economist J. Fred Giertz, ...

[University Senate Supports Retention of Full Seniority when APs Converted to Civil Service](#)

THE UNIVERSITY SENATE on April 21 unanimously passed a letter to be sent to University Board of Trustees Chair Christopher G. Kennedy and ...

Secretary: Jill Davis
Treasurer: Virginia Buglio
<http://www.apac.uic.edu/>



0 comments



March 2011 APAC News, Vol. 4, No. 3

Did you know that you can now click on the "comment" button below each story to post an observation or reaction to the article?

1 comments



Cash Flow, State Structural Deficit Continue to Plague University



Frank Goldberg, UIC vice provost for resource planning and management (right), and Todd Van Neck, UIC director, budgeting and program analysis, gave a budget update.

By William S. Bike

THE UIC BUDGET continues to be a topic of huge interest to Academic

Professionals, faculty, and other staff as another near-capacity audience heard Frank Goldberg, UIC Vice Provost for Resource Planning and Management, and Todd Van Neck, UIC Director, Budgeting and Program Analysis, give a budget update at an APAC event for that purpose on March 3.

UIC IS “facing two problems,” Goldberg said. “A cash flow problem and a structural budget problem.”

IN TERMS of cash flow, Goldberg displayed a chart showing that in February 2008, for example, the UIC had billed the State \$665 million and had received \$542 million for a gap of \$123 million. This year, UIC has billed the State \$644 million but received only \$189 million by February—a gap of \$455 million.

IN ADDITION, in the University’s Monetary Award Program (MAP), “we give the money to students and then bill the State,” Goldberg explained. “The State is an additional \$44.8 million behind in MAP money.”

ADDING The \$455 million and \$44.8 million puts the State nearly one-half of a billion dollars behind in payments to UIC.

“IF OUR units hadn’t been very prudent and reserved cash over the last several years, then you and I wouldn’t have been paid,” Goldberg stated.

GOLDBERG RECAPPED recent State legislation that resulted in pension reform affecting new hires, spending caps, Medicaid reform, and tax increases, and said further pension changes may be in the offing.

HE NOTED that Governor Patrick Quinn at the recent University of Illinois Board of Trustees meeting said that with the tax increase and with borrowing to make up shortfalls that he was optimistic that the State would be in decent financial shape by 2016. However, Professor David Merriman of the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs was the next speaker and disagreed. Merriman believes even after the tax increase the State will continue to have a \$4.4 billion structural deficit—an ongoing problem in which expenditures exceed revenues (see also *APAC News*, Feb. 2011).

“SO WHAT do you do about the cash flow deficit?” Goldberg asked. “The Governor’s solution is to pay for it by bonds, but the interest on the bonds adds to the structural deficit. And that doesn’t address the pension deficit.”

THE GOVERNOR’S Fiscal Year 2012 budget proposal keeps funding for State universities flat at FY 2011. “This is good news, because the Governor is not looking to cut University funding,” Goldberg said.

VAN NECK noted that in UIC FY 2012 budget plans, “not only do we need to meet our needs, but we have some ‘wants’ we’d like to fund,” he said, and showed a chart showing University goals such as growing the research enterprise, supporting diversity, ensuring the integrity of the physical infrastructure, information technology, and globalization. Moving forward with meeting these goals will require funding.

HE ALSO explained that “we’ve been saved over the past few years by increasing our tuition revenue. That has offset cuts in state appropriations. But as we compare ourselves to other institutions, our tuition is pretty high. So we can’t increase it much more, if at all.”

IN RESPONSE to a questioner who asked about State tax increases, Goldberg said the recent tax increase “was necessary, but it’s not sufficient to balance the budget. The State Legislature isn’t done yet, but they won’t raise taxes more. That means they’ll have to cut expenditures.”

FOR GOLDBERG’S and Van Neck’s PowerPoint presentation, see [Presentations](#). For further information see, [Planning & Budgeting](#), [UIC Office of Budgeting and Program Analysis](#), and [The Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois](#).

0 comments



Labels: Budget Crisis, Events

Public Employee Pensions Face the Chopping Block...

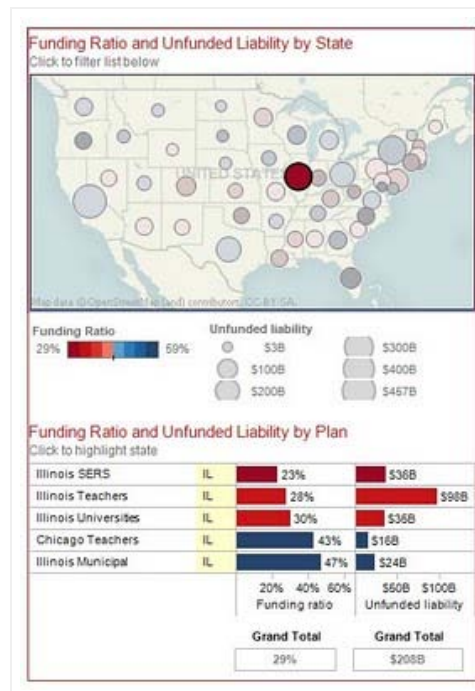


Chart courtesy Mish's Global Economic Trend Analysis.

By Jean Lachowicz
Special from the *Gazette*

PHRASES LIKE “ticking time bomb” and “political tsunami” are being used to describe the pension situation for State, City, and County employees, as record-breaking government deficits put longstanding benefits in the cross hairs of budget-cutting proposals.

ACCORDING TO the Civic Federation, Illinois’s pension code allows State and local governments to avoid paying the actuarially required contributions for employees’ retirements. That fundamental flaw has been made worse by staff reductions and early retirement incentives as well as the current recession.

LAURENCE MSALL, president of the Civic Federation, said, “People nationwide are starting to ask why Illinois and Chicago have allowed this fiscal recklessness to happen. That’s not an easy question for politicians to answer. But if we don’t take action soon, we may be beyond the point of fixing these problems.”

ON FEB. 8, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-Chicago) outlined many of the decisions the Illinois General Assembly must face during the current legislative session. He warned there likely will be proposals to reduce pension benefits for current State employees.

“WE’RE ALL familiar with the inadequate funding of the State pension systems,” Madigan said. “Again, tough decision-making, telling people you’re not going to get everything you thought you were going to get, telling people you may have to pay in more. Not easy stuff. So we all better get ready for it.”

THE GENERAL Assembly passed a measure in spring 2010 that established a new set of pension benefits for State employees hired after January 1, 2011. New employees now receive reduced benefits and, in most cases, must work until age 67 to collect full retirement benefits. Yet some business groups and many members of the legislature still are looking at the immediate and significant savings that would come only from reducing benefits for those working for the State before last year's reforms went into effect.

THE SAME day Madigan made his statements, Governor Patrick Quinn's office confirmed the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is conducting an inquiry into the State's financial disclosures about potential savings expected from the pension reforms enacted last spring.

"THIS IS not an investigation, this is an inquiry," said Kelly Kraft, the governor's budget spokeswoman. "The SEC has stated this is not an indication of any violation. We feel our disclosures have always been accurate and complete."

Pension audit

THE SEC is examining whether the State was taking projections of future savings and treating them as reductions in the State's current pension costs. In response to the SEC inquiry, Representative Dwight Kay (R-112th/Edwardsville) introduced legislation urging the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability to conduct an audit of Illinois's pension systems.

TO PUT the situation in perspective, the Pew Center on States ranks Illinois as having the most underfunded public pension plans in the nation. At the end of the current fiscal year on June 30, 2011, legislative analysts project the five retirement systems for which State government is responsible will need roughly \$131 billion to cover benefits already earned by public workers, with only \$46 billion in expected assets to cover the costs, or about 35 cents on the dollar. The other \$85 billion represents the unfunded liability, an obligation the State must meet but for which no funding source exists.

WHILE HOUSE Republicans already have their own bill, which would give current State employees three options on changing their benefits, Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) and many others say they believe reducing benefits to current employees would be unconstitutional.

ARTICLE 13, Section 5 (Pension and Retirement Rights) of the Illinois Constitution states, "Membership in any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, shall be an enforceable contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired."

WHILE IT is believed by most authorities that Illinois State employees currently enrolled in pension plans and Illinois State pension plan recipients (and survivors) cannot have their benefits reduced, based on the Illinois Constitution, legal challenges ultimately could be decided by the Illinois Supreme Court.

MERRILL L. GASSMAN, professor emeritus of biological sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), and president of the UIC Chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association, said, "From my perspective, this is a public policy issue that has been building for many years and has been ignored for the most part. Now the State is way behind in pension payments, and the magnitude of the problem, coupled by the current economy, has brought the issue up to the front page of public attention.

"FOR MANY years, the State has neglected to make contributions to the pension fund and sometimes sold bonds instead of making payments," Gassman continued. "If the State did not have its own public pension funds and instead had to participate in Social Security, it would not have had the flexibility—payments would have been made. The law requires that benefits be paid but says nothing about putting money into the fund, so the State is not legally compelled to do so."

GASSMAN BELIEVES public employees have become a scapegoat to the larger problem of focusing on the debt. "When a person makes a decision to enter into public service, one of the considerations is that the wages might be lower than what they

would earn in the private sector, but the benefit package compensates for the difference. It is a moral issue when current State employees face such a radical shift in their existing benefits package," he said.

"STATE EMPLOYEES are not paying into the Social Security system as private sector employees do. When private companies go bankrupt, the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation steps in to cover most defined benefit pension promises. But the PBGC does not fully cover municipal or State retirement plans," Gassman noted.

THE STATE'S most troubled pension plans (all having less than 50% funding) are: State Universities Retirement System (SURS), Teachers Retirement System (TRS), State Employees' Retirement System (SERS), Judges Retirement System (JRS), and General Assembly Retirement System(GARS).The healthiest plan is the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, which ended 2010 at 100%(fully funded).

Create new revenue streams

INSTEAD OF focusing on what should be cut from workers' pensions, Lou Phillips, business manager of Chicago Laborer's Local 1001, wants to create new streams of revenue to support pensions.

"WE SHOULD clean up the unemployment rolls and alleviate the pension fund problems at the same time," Phillips said. "The pension is a promise, and keeping a promise is simply the right thing to do."

PHILLIPS SEES a need for increased education about public employee pensions, since private sector employees have experienced great losses themselves over the past few years and they do not appreciate the fact that public employees have constitutional protections that private sector employees do not have.

"PEOPLE DON'T understand that public employees don't have Social Security to fall back on," he said. "People don't understand that public employees contribute 8-1/2 percent to the pension funds every paycheck, year after year, no matter what. "When we have job cuts, less goes into the pension funds. When we have furlough days, less goes into the pension funds. You can't just cut cut cut. You're going to have to feel it somewhere. Put people back to work and the pension funds will recover," said Phillips.

U OF I President Michael Hogan said, "Our current faculty and staff were hired - and have served our students, patients and the public for many years - on the understanding that these pension benefits were part of our compensation. We are not eligible for Social Security and our salaries often lag far behind those of our counterparts at private institutions of comparable quality. Our people, therefore, have built their financial planning and retirements around these pension benefits, and it is not their fault that the pensions have not been adequately funded. Accordingly, we continue to participate in discussions on this issue in Springfield and to use our good offices to the best advantage of our faculty and staff."

THE HUMAN Resources office has developed a website that is tracking the various proposed bills that would affect employee pensions; this information is available at [State Universities Retirement System \(SURS\)](#).

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Labels: [SURS and Benefits](#)

[...However, Cullerton Legal Counsel Says Pensions Can't Be Unilaterally Cut](#)



Illinois Senate President John Cullerton has said cutting pension benefits for current state employees is "clearly unconstitutional."

By Micah Maidenberg
Special from the Progress Report

IN 1905, Franklin MacVeagh, then the head of the Commercial Club of Chicago, addressed his colleagues in Cincinnati on the topic of contracts. A person's character, he insisted to the Ohio business leaders, can be measured by whether or not they stick to such agreements. "There is no moral exemption for any man or body of men that breaks contracts," MacVeagh said. "Nor is there any hope of public or private respect for a contract breaker. A contract breaker is an utter misfit as a citizen or a business man."

THE QUOTE is included at the very beginning of "Is Welching On Public Pension Promises An Option For Illinois?," a new legal analysis written by Eric Madiar, Senate President John Cullerton's chief legal counsel,

IT IS a cheeky way to begin, given that the Commercial Club of Chicago has been at the [forefront](#) in pushing State government to renege on the retirement commitments it has made to public employees across Illinois and slash their pension benefits. The spirit of Franklin MacVeagh apparently does not animate the current crop of leaders at that organization.

BUT MADIAR'S report isn't meant to merely tweak the interests demanding benefit cuts. The 76-page document, studded with 630 footnotes, is a dense legal analysis that powerfully argues that the state constitution's pension clause creates a set of guarantees public-sector workers can count on. The clause states the following: "Membership in any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, shall be an enforceable contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired."

DEBATES ABOUT the State's pension funds are starting to intensify. The five funds for teachers, State employees, University employees, judges, and legislators are challenged, to say the least. A [March 3 report](#) (PDF) from the state's auditor general puts total pension liabilities at nearly \$139 billion as of June 30, 2010. The five retirement programs have approximately \$63 billion in assets, the auditor general says. The funding issue has already meant big changes to how the state compensates its workforce: [new employees are now excluded](#) from the traditional pension option.

THE QUESTION floating now is whether Governor Pat Quinn and the legislature will seek cuts to current employees' benefits. House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-Chicago), one of the most powerful actors in Springfield, raised eyebrows last month when he broached the idea of lower pensions for present state workers. "What we're saying is that there's a benefit plan up in place up until today, but starting tomorrow, there's going to be a new benefit plan that's not going to be as rich as the old," [the](#)

[speaker said](#). The state's supreme court, he said, ultimately will make that call.

SHOULD PENSION cuts pass the legislature and win Quinn's signature, Madiar's analysis serves as something of a preview of how public employees would likely defend their rights in the court system. Here's how Madiar describes what the pension clause means for state government and its current employees:

"THE PENSION Clause not only makes a public employee's participation in a pension system an enforceable contractual relationship, but also constitutionally protects the pension benefit rights contained in the Pension Code when an employee joins a pension system, including employee contribution rates. The Clause also safeguards pension benefit enhancements that are later added during employment. Further, the Clause bars the General Assembly from adversely changing the benefit rights of current employees via unilateral action. And, the Clause ensures that pensions will be paid even if a pension system defaults or is on the verge of default."

MADIAR'S REPORT also takes on a dissenting legal opinion from the law firm Sidley Austin from last spring that argues that the governor and legislature can reduce benefits for current employees. Madiar writes that the law firm's interpretation of the clause "ignores the Pension Clause's plain language, defies common sense and logic, and adds limitations where none exist." He supports his analysis with long discussions of related case law.

"IN SUM," Madiar writes, "welching is not a legal option available to the State."

THERE IS only way pension levels can be changed. And that's through "mutual assent via contract principles." Which is to say collective bargaining with the labor organizations that represent many state employees. Union members, however, will be loathe to see what are relatively modest benefits rolled back, especially when every one of them has paid into the pension systems with each paycheck over the course of their careers.

THE VAST majority of State pensioners -- [nearly 82 percent](#), according to one of *Progress Report's* previous calculations-- earn less than \$50,000 annual in pension benefits.

JUDGES RECIEVE the best benefits, the numbers show, but keep in mind that [only about one percent](#) of all State pensioners get more than \$100,000 annually.

WHILE EMPLOYEES contributed their share the five pension funds, State government repeatedly chose to take a pass. Pension liabilities "principally stem from the State's decades-long failure to make its required contributions to the five pension systems," Madiar writes. He goes on thusly:

"THOSE CONTRIBUTIONS were not forthcoming because the State's fiscal system failed to generate sufficient revenue to both maintain public services, such as education, healthcare, and public safety, as well as cover the State's actuarially required contributions to the systems. As a result, the legislature and various governors chose for decades to use the pension system as a credit card to fund public services and stave off the need for tax increases or service cuts."

SOME OF the most fascinating discussions in Madiar's report are historical ones. He notes, for example, that in 1970, the five State pension systems had an aggregate funding level of just 41.8 percent, so underfunded pension funds are unfortunately nothing new in Illinois.

AT THE time of the 1970 constitution convention, the underfunding issues and loose laws on the books lit a fire under public employees -- especially people who worked for Illinois' universities, the report says -- pushing them to advocate for including the pension clause in the constitution. They feared a capricious legislature and governor would simply strip their benefits away, with no recourse.

A SNAPSHOT from the convention finds members of the convention "inundated with communications" from public-sector workers worried about their retirements. "Public employees believed their pension benefits were imperiled due to underfunding and

required constitutional protection," Madiar writes. "John Parkhurst, chairperson of the Local Government Committee, received similar correspondence from police and firemen concerned that granting municipalities 'home rule' authority would permit them to abandon their pension obligations to employees."

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES won a major victory in 1970 in securing the pension clause's place in the state constitution. There's no question that the state's pension system needs improvement, but Madiar lays out the case that it cannot be done by unilaterally, on the backs of state workers who have contributed so much to the system.

MADIAR REITERATES that point near the end of his legal brief, switching into something of a moral argument. "The Pension Clause will become a 'suicide pact' only if individual citizens are purely self-interested and admit no obligation to the common good," he writes. "By adopting the Clause, the drafters and voters weighed, and found wanting the current claim that it is unfair to pay these pension obligations. Public employees have paid their required fair share of pension costs; it is incumbent on the State to meet its end of the bargain."

TO SEE Madiar's report, see [Is Welching On Public Pension Promises An Option For Illinois? An Analysis Of Article XIII, Section 5 Of The Illinois Constitution.](#)

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Labels: [SURS](#) and [Benefits](#)

Conversion to Civil Service Classifications is Underway

UICHR PUBLISHED on the [Human Resources \(HR\) website](#) new information on the job analysis process and compulsory Civil Service conversions currently underway.

THE JOB analysis (JA) process is a result of recent audits conducted by the State Universities Civil Service System that determined inappropriate exemption of positions from Civil Service. Through job analysis, we are able to determine the appropriate employment category for positions

SO FAR, close to 600 interviews (Chancellor's and Provost's Offices, Academic Computing and Communications Center, Honors College, Athletics, and contested exemptions from the audit) have been held with the interview process just concluding at the Medical Center. At the Medical Center, many of the jobs reviewed (approximately 70%) will be converted.

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL positions (approximately 3,200) in the Specialist, Assistant to, Coordinator, Director, Assistant Director, Associate Director, and Executive Director categories will be reviewed as part of the job analysis process.

THE PROCESS, as stated above, began in January of 2010 and is tentatively scheduled to conclude in January of 2012. The intent is to analyze jobs in the following sequence in the coming months:

- Administrative units and disputed exemptions
- Medical Center
- East Side colleges
- West Side colleges
- University Administration positions

THE PRESENTATION details the overall process, but from the perspective of employees undergoing analysis the JA process has three major steps. First, the jobholder/AP will provide information on his or her current job—what he or she does via an online questionnaire followed by a face-to-face interview. The face-to-face interview

will focus on how the person does the job. Supervisors will be present for the face-to-face interviews.

IF THE results of the interview process indicate that the position matches an already existing Civil Service classification, the employee will be transitioned via the "conversions" process. The conversions process is separate from job analysis and focuses on ensuring the employee is transitioned into the appropriate job titles.

CONVERSIONS FROM AP to CS will have no impact on employees' assignments, responsibilities, tasks, or duties. It may or may not impact Fair Labor Standards Act status (salary exempt status versus hourly status), union representation, and vacation and sick leave. Conversions will eliminate notice rights and converted will enter a seniority-based system with "bumping" rights. Seniority is defined by (110 ILCS 70/36i) as follows:

Sec. 36.i. Seniority. After the completion of the probationary period, the employee's seniority shall date from the day of original employment. Employees seniority shall be by institution or campus at which he is employed, unless a lesser unit shall be determined by the Merit Board in an agreement with the employees involved. Whenever it is necessary to reduce the number of employees those with the least seniority shall first be laid off, and their names placed on a reemployment register which shall take precedence over any other register. Reemployment shall be made in the order required to preserve the seniority rights.

THE FULL presentation is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/SUCSS-PPT>.

APAC ALSO has received a number of questions related to the Civil Service conversions. In an effort to address some of those questions, we have compiled a series of Questions and Answers from the HR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). Given the importance of communications and in an effort to ensure that employees have as much information as possible, APAC is planning a fourth Town-Hall event to address the conversions specifically. The HR FAQ will be expanded to include questions that are raised in the Town-Hall meeting and will be made available at the [UIC Human Resources website, FAQs](#).

Select questions and answers

This feels like an attack on Academic Professionals. Why can't current Academic Professional jobs be grandfathered and the new ones get converted to Civil Service? Academic Professionals represent a critical employee group to the University overall and are necessary for the University to achieve its mission. However, the University must also ensure that it is compliant with all applicable Federal, State, and Municipal laws. Ensuring that the position management process at UIC is compliant, a thorough review of all AP jobs is being conducted. The outcome of this review, including conversion of some jobs to Civil Service, must be approached seriously and applied fairly and equitably across the Campus.

If the employee refuses to convert, what is the outcome for the employee? The position will be converted and the person will not be reappointed in the same AP job.

How many AP jobs must be converted to Civil Service classifications? There is no specific number or planned amount of conversions. Jobs currently classified as Academic Professional that substantially mirror jobs in the Civil Service Class Plan must be converted.

Will additional conversions take place? Yes. Based on experience to date with the job analysis process, the University is anticipating that more conversions will occur within the next several months and as the University progresses through the job analysis process. There are more than 1,000 classifications embedded with the Civil Service Class Plan. For more information, refer to the [SUCSS website](#).

Will my pay rate be affected as a result of being converted from AP to Civil Service? Pay rate will not likely decrease as a result of a conversion to Civil


Service classification.

Does this change impact the frequency with which I'm paid? Yes, Civil Service employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis. The University bi-weekly payroll schedule can be viewed on the [OBFS website](#), [Payroll Schedule](#).

Will benefits - pension, vacation, and sick time, health care - be impacted? Health insurance benefits for Civil Service and Academic Professional employees are the same. Retirement (pension) benefits for Civil Service and Academic Professional employees are the same. Paid time off (e.g. vacation and sick leave) benefits are provided for eligible Civil Service and Academic Professional employees. However, the accrual methodologies differ slightly.

What methodology will be used to conduct the job analysis? Each AP job will be reviewed against a common set of factors approved by UIC's senior management. The factors are autonomy, expertise, thinking skills, planning and development, responsibility for resources (physical and financial), responsibility for staff, relationships with others, communications and interpersonal skills, working conditions, and physical environment.

EACH INCUMBENT will be interviewed about his/her job duties with his/her manager present (the manager will provide context and ensure fairness and consistency between job holders).

0 comments  

Labels: [Civil Service Conversions](#)

Study of State Retiree Benefits and Premiums Forthcoming, Raises Concerns

By Monica M. Walk

A CALL for proposals for an outside independent consultant to review the cost of healthcare coverage currently provided to State of Illinois retirees has raised some concerns for both retirees and current State employees.

THE CALL for proposals comes from the State of Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (CGFA), and was initiated by Illinois State Senator Jeffrey Schoenberg (D-9th, Evanston).

"THE FUNDAMENTAL idea is to start charging State annuitants—teachers, professors, judges—who received public pensions to impose premiums," explained Merrill Gassman, PhD, Professor Emeritus of biological sciences, and President and Webmaster of the UIC Chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA). "It is still in the early stages, but it is a concern to SUAA."

THAT CONCERN was articulated in a "Call to Action" alert issued by SUAA (<http://www.suaa.org/>), which noted two main issues:

1. The Request for Proposal (RFP) from outside independent consultants was not subject to the Illinois Procurement Code.
2. The RFP states: "The premium contribution should be means tested and based on the retiree's overall annual household income."

The action alert urged employees covered by the State health care plan to contact the CGFA commission members, including Schoenberg, about these issues.

AN ADDITIONAL e-mail document from SUAA noted concern that the contract could be awarded to an entity that is biased, if the RFP is allowed to bypass the procurement code.

AT A time when transparency in government has become a much-heralded theme, Gassman said, "The contract code should be abided by. We have a right to know."

CGFA REVENUE Analyst Anthony Bolton responded to a query about adherence to the procurement code by sharing a link to the Illinois Procurement Code and the specific section ([30 ILCS 500/1-30](#)) applicable in this situation.

"BASICALLY, THE legislative branch is exempt from the procurement code and is instead directed to make rules to govern their needs that may incorporate parts of the Code," Bolton said via e-mail, noting that the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules is the key office for explaining how procurement works for the legislature and organizations covered under it, such as CGFA. "CGFA is a part of the legislative branch under law," Bolton said

THE ISSUE of household income being used to decide premium contributions is of personal concern for both current retirees and current employees, Gassman said.

"THE ISSUE has been raised if it is fair to take the entire household income into account in such a proposal or just the individual retiree; there is some controversy," Gassman confirmed. He noted that employees pay insurance premiums based only on their own incomes and not on their spouses' incomes. "So, if they take the entire household, that doesn't seem fair for the retiree....Whose means are being tested? It doesn't seem fair to test the whole household when it [the benefit] is just on the retiree. For employees, it is just their salary and their payment."

CITING FROM a document from SUAA, Gassman explained that "household income" means the combined income of the members of the household, including the applicant, the spouse of the applicant, and all persons using the residence as their principal place of residence. The SUAA document noted that households including such members as a mentally challenged adult child, an ailing parent, teenagers with income, or a wealthy spouse have attached incomes that may include Social Security Disability, Social Security, another pension, and an inheritance.

THE REQUEST for proposal calls for a study of healthcare costs around the country and how they are covered for retirees and their dependents, CGFA's Bolton said. The intent, he said, is to "find out what the options are and how other states handle it. Based on what is found around the country, they [the consultant] will be asked to mock up how that could look in Illinois...a general synopsis of the more popular programs around the country and how they would look in Illinois. It's really just purely research to see what the options are in Illinois."

ACCORDING TO Bolton, \$473 million is spent annually on retirees in Illinois, with \$12 million contributed by retirees. Another \$150 million is currently spent each year for retirees' dependents, with \$40 million contributed by retirees.

BOLTON REPORTS a contract will be ready by May 2, 2011, or sooner. He does not have a timeline for announcements about the study.

GROSSMAN EXPLAINED how the situation affects current employees who anticipate a future as retirees and annuitants. "People take jobs for many reasons, including the benefits anticipated when they retire. You make financial decisions in life for family and self while employed based on these considerations.

"IT IS unfair for the state to turn around and make changes in the benefit structure that is not a two-party agreement," Grossman continued, stating that the process has been done without direct consultation of the parties involved.

ERIC MADIAR, chief legal counsel in State Senator John Cullerton's office, recently composed a defense of the Illinois State Constitution's pension clause. He states that the clause "...makes a public employee's participation in a pension system an enforceable contractual relationship, but also constitutionally protects the pension benefit rights contained in the Pension Code when an employee joins a pension system, including employee contribution rates." (For detail, see Madiar's full document [Is Welching On Public Pension Promises An Option For Illinois?](#).)

Senator Schoenberg's office did not respond to queries from APAC News prior to deadline.

0 comments



Labels: [SURS](#) and [Benefits](#)

APAC Profile



Margaret Moser.

Margaret Moser Looks to Increase AP Representation on Committees

By Ivone De Jesus

MARGARET MOSER is the Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Research. Serving in that post since November of 2006 and at UIC for a total of six years, Moser thinks the best part of her job is that she has the opportunity to see “the impact that our institution, the work that all of do each day, benefits our city, state, nation and world. We have an exciting, successful, impactful research enterprise at UIC.”

BEFORE UIC, Moser worked for Coca-Cola Enterprises for seven years in sales and management.

WHILE THIS is her first term as an APAC member, her involvement comes from an interest in networking and learning more about UIC. “Now I understand how important APAC is to our community,” she said. For Moser, this is evident through the event series that APAC hosts such as town halls, where APs can get current and accurate information on important issues. She is proud to have AP representation on important University search committees and that representatives are elected by the AP base on campus.

COMMUNICATION TO the AP community also is a very important function of APAC, and Moser is enthusiastic about the Communications team, noting, “this newsletter is

award-winning." She is very pleased with the work the APAC Chair, Michael Moss, has done of advocating for several years the need to survey APs. Moser also thinks the weekly blast to the PACADEMY listserv on UIC-related news articles is a great tool for APs across campus.

THERE ARE many things about APAC that inspire Moser, and she would like to see APAC push for the representation of Academic Professionals on important campus committees, such as the Administrative Review and Restructuring Committees and the Implementation committees. "I am convinced that AP representatives--not just representatives who happen to be APs, but an individual positioned to represent APs--will enrich the discussion, improve communication with campus, and aid in the ultimate implementation of the recommendations," Moser said.

SHE AND her husband, Charlie, are parents of the "coolest three-year-old on the planet." The trio love Lincoln Park Zoo and the Nature Museum. In her spare time, she likes to make puzzles with her son, read books, and cover her home in "brightly colored and obnoxious-sounding little vehicles from the Disney Cars Movie". Come out to the next APAC event, the April 13 APAC meeting in room 1152 of the Molecular Biology Research Building (MBRB) at 12:30 p.m. to learn more about Margaret Moser.

0 comments



Labels: [Member Profiles](#)

Marietta Giovannelli, Long-Time Member, Leaves APAC



Marietta Giovannelli (Center) with APAC Colleagues.

By Lucia Gonzalez

MARIETTA GIOVANNELLI, a long-time member of the Academic Professional Advisory Committee (APAC), has decided to retire from the committee. She had been a member of APAC for over 12 years.

EARLIER IN her career with APAC, Giovannelli had served as a member of the Building Community Committee. Later, she co-chaired that committee with her colleague Cathy Foley-DiVittorio and eventually, Giovannelli became chair of that committee.

Most recently, Giovannelli served as a member of the Building Community and Education Committee, as it is now called.

WHEN ASKED about APAC in her earlier days, she stated that the major problem she experienced was the lack of visibility for APAC in the past. Giovannelli explained, "When I joined APAC, I do not believe we had the visibility we now have. The present committee has worked hard to increase visibility."

SHE ALSO was a driving force behind APAC earning University Senate representation. "During my early years while serving on APAC, having been a Graduate Student Senator, I thought it was important that APs have a voice on the Senate," she said. "Together with Judy Cohen and Booker Suggs, I helped present our case to the Senate. The rest is history." APAC was eventually awarded three Senate seats.

HER INVOLVEMENT with APAC has never been a burden, she noted. "I have never experienced problems with APAC. Recently, not being able to devote the time required to be an active and effective member has caused a problem," noting that is why she decided to retire from APAC.

GIOVANNELLI SAID she hopes that APAC will be capable of gaining further outreach. "I would hope that the committee continues to work towards a recognition of APAC that reaches far and wide," Giovannelli said.

GIOVANNELLI continues to serve UIC as Assistant to the Executive Director of the Council for Teacher Education and as Certification Officer for the University.

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Labels: [Member Profiles](#)

APAC EVENTS

AN APAC Brown Bag on Civil Service conversions, featuring Executive Director for Human Resources Maureen Parks and Executive Director of the State Universities Civil Service System Tom Morelock, will be held soon. Information on time and location to be announced.

THE MONTHLY APAC meeting will be held Wednesday, April 13, in Room 1152 of the Molecular Biology Research Building, 900 S. Ashland Ave., West Campus, at 12:30 p.m.

ALL ARE invited. For more information, contact Yair Rodriguez at or call (312) 355-0322.

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Labels: [Events](#)

Learn How to Fight Bullying



By William S. Bike

"ENOUGH IS Enough: Taking a Stand Against Bullying" will be the subject when all interested APs join Chancellor Paula Allen-Mearns, Dr. Stacey Horn, students, faculty, and other employees as they reconfirm UIC's tolerance for diversity and share information about how to respond to and prevent bullying.

THE EVENT will be held Wednesday, April 6, from 1:45 to 2:45 p.m., Room 302, Student Center East, during the University's Wellness Center's "Enough is Enough" week. Free pizza and t-shirts will be available. It is being coordinated by the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Issues.

"THE COMMITTEE is acting in a response to a string of suicides in the US last fall that were the result of bullying," said R. Scott Boots, co-chair of the committee. "The purpose is to share information and promote affinity among different people and tolerance at the University."

COMMITTEE MEMBERS designed and created a t-shirt "that affirms UIC's commitment to tolerance and diversity," Boots said. About 800 shirts will be available the day of the event.

THE FRONT of the shirt says "Take a stand against....," leading reader to the back which contains terms such as "intolerance," "oppression," "ethnocentrism," and many more.

"WE'VE RECEIVED encouragement and financial support from the Chancellor and other Chancellor's committees," Boots said.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS are hoping for a large turnout from Academic Professionals, faculty, students, and other employees. Volunteers are needed to greet attendees and hand out t-shirts. "Everyone is invited," Boots said.

CHANCELLOR ALLEN-MEARNS will make opening remarks, and then a panel of people who have suffered from bullying will speak. "One person was cyber-bullied; another was bullied as a youngster because she had braces on her legs," Boots said.

MODERATING THE panel will be Dr. Horn, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, who has a Federal grant to study bullying in school.

"EVEN THOUGH the LGBT Chancellor's Committee is taking the lead with this, actually, that the number one reason for bullying is documented to be due to physical appearance," Boots noted. "So anyone and everyone can be affected by bullying."

STUDENTS FROM the College of Education also will participate. "They are our future teachers, and this event will help remind them about resources and ways to identify and respond to bullying, and that they have resources and can prevent bullying," Boots said. "Illinois has an anti-bullying law of which teachers and the public should be aware."

FOR MORE information, contact the Wellness Center at (312) 413-2120.

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Labels: [Events](#)

How Secure Are Our Pensions?

UIC UNITED, the UIC chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA) will host its spring membership meeting with Bukola Bello, Director, Illinois Retirement Security Initiative, Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, speaking on "How Secure are Our Pensions" Thursday, April 14. Coffee and rolls 9:30 a.m., business meeting 10 a.m., Bello talk 11 a.m., buffet luncheon noon, Student Center East, 750 S. Halsted St., Illinois Room B. Cost of luncheon is \$15. RSVP required. Contact [Donna Knutson](#) at (630) 579-6134, or [Rose Kirk](#) at (630) 852-7316.

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Labels: [Events](#), [SURS and Benefits](#)

Pension Panel

"THE ONGOING discussion in Illinois regarding pension plans for University and other public employees is of high import to every one of us," said Chancellor Paula Allen-Meares. The Institute of Government and Public Affairs (IGPA) will present an informational panel discussion on pensions on the UIC campus on Tuesday, April 12, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in Rooms D and E at the UIC Forum, 725 W. Roosevelt Rd. For more information, call (312) 996-6188.

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Labels: [Events](#), [SURS and Benefits](#)

Benefit Beat



Some LLEAP courses are available online. (Photo courtesy AADE)

Take a LLEAP to Advance Your Career

By William S. Bike

THE LIFELONG Learning and Education Access Program (LLEAP) is designed to provide permanent, non-faculty academic and open-range civil service support staff employed at UIC for at least one year with release time, flex time, and/or funds for development opportunities focused on enhancing a career at UIC.

EMPLOYEES can utilize the following benefits on an annual basis: Up to \$200 and up to eight hours of release time for professional development activities; up to \$200 for coursework not covered under a university tuition waiver; continuous flex time of four hours per week while enrolled in or actively pursuing an educational development activity; and release time of up to 16 hours per year for professional development activities.

ACCORDING TO Kim Morris Lee, Director of Organizational Effectiveness for UIC Human Resources (HR), LLEAP "is a policy that has been in place many years to encourage lifelong learning for our employees. Through completion of the appropriate form, employees may request an opportunity to participate in professional development programs. Employees can select training courses and programs that are provided by University of Illinois or an external professional organization to continue building competence in a specific professional area."

THE BENEFIT for employees "is that they start developing skills and gaining additional knowledge to do their current job well at UIC; and it's an opportunity to get skills for roles at the university that an individual might want in the future," Morris Lee said. "If someone wants to develop a career at UIC, the goal would be to start thinking about, 'What skills do I have currently that I need to enhance to get to the next level or the next position?' or 'What skills or knowledge do I need to acquire?'"

EVERY EMPLOYEE can benefit from LLEAP, said Morris Lee, "from those who just started to those who have been around for ten-to-15 years or more. This is a policy that allows employees the opportunity to develop as a professional and engage in the process of Lifelong Learning. There is always more to learn if you have interest in developing a career and becoming a workplace high performer."

"LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS" is an example of the type of program offered by Organizational Effectiveness for which LLEAP funds may be used, Morris Lee said.

"IT'S A two-day program for new supervisors and managers who are interested in learning more about some of the key responsibilities associated with their new role," she noted."

"DURING THE first day of the leadership essentials training there is significant conversation about communication and working with team members to accomplish goals.

The second day focuses on HR policies and procedures rather than day-to-day operations and skills needed to guide a team. On day two, experts from the Office of Access and Equity and across UIC HR present various topics such as Civil Service disciplinary procedures, performance review process, and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)."

AN AP interested in requesting LLEAP funds or time for professional development may view LLEAP information and download the form at [Lifelong Learning and Education Access Program \(LLEAP\)](#).

THE EMPLOYEE should give the completed LLEAP form to his/her manager for review and approval. According to Morris Lee, "After the employee receives the signed form from the manager, it is sent to Organizational Effectiveness. When the employee receives the signed form from Organizational Effectiveness, a copy is provided to the manager. At this point, the manager takes necessary steps to secure department funds (up to \$200) and/or confirm release time for requested development opportunity."

INSTRUCTOR-LED courses are during work hours. Those run by OE are offered on the West Side of campus. Other training courses and development opportunities are offered by various colleges and administrative units campus-wide. The MyCareer website provides information about many of these career development opportunities. Access the [MyCareer website](#) to view campus-wide offerings.

ONLINE COURSES may be completed during work hours, before or after work--- 24/7. These courses can be accessed via the MyCareer website. SkillSoft a provider of online training has partnered with OE to offer more than 100 online courses to UIC APs.

FOR MORE information about LLEAP or Career Development at UIC, contact [Kim Morris Lee](#).

0 comments



Labels: [SURS and Benefits](#)

Quotable

"MEN AND WOMEN who retire after decades spent in the workforce are entitled to the pensions they and their employers have contributed to throughout their careers." -- *2004 Republican platform*.

0 comments



Websites to Know

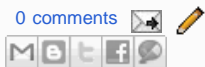
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The Continuing Crisis

Editor's Note: *"The Continuing Crisis" is a section of APAC News which links to news pertinent to the State budget crisis as it affects the University and Academic Professionals.*

In a February interview with *Politico*, Gov. Brian Schweitzer (D-MT) said that it's wrong for politicians to blame public workers for their states' budget deficits. The governor said politicians who "aren't any good with money" shouldn't "demagogue and blame the people that actually do the work." See [POLITICO interview: Gov.](#)

EXPECT MORE patients at the Medical Center: A new study shows the potentially devastating effect that the budget proposed by the House of Representatives in Washington, DC, would have on the neediest in Illinois. See the March 1 *Progress Report* [Illinois' Sick, Poor, And Children Get Hit In House GOP Budget.](#)

BUSTED BUDGETS used as excuse for class war. See March 4 *Gazette* [Busted budgets used as excuse for class war.](#)

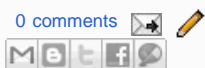
ILLINOIS' LONG-TERM pension debt experienced a sharp increase last year. See *Progress Report*, March 4: [State's Pension Debt Jumps.](#)

U OF I Board of Trustees Chairman Christopher Kennedy delivered compelling remarks to a packed audience at the City Club of Chicago, a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose members include prominent business, civic and government leaders in the city. Kennedy highlighted the University's unique role in Chicago and in the State as a proven, sustainable economic engine. Kennedy argued that perhaps "the only perpetual job creation activity a government can engage in is funding academic research institutions ... like the University of Illinois." To see Kennedy's address, go to [Chris Kennedy - President, Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc. 03-01-11.](#)

PRESIDENT MICHAEL Hogan made a strong case for University support when he appeared before the State Senate Appropriations Committee. A summary of his testimony appears on the President's website, [Legislative Testimony Update.](#)

ECONOMY BAD to both public- and private-sector workers, says March 15 *Washington Post*. See [The economy has been bad to both public and private-sector workers.](#)

ILLINOIS PENSION crisis eludes easy solutions, said the *Wall Street Journal* on March 16. See [Illinois Pension Crisis Eludes Easy Solutions.](#)



Labels: [Budget Crisis](#)

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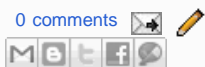
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NEW: CHECK out "AP Resources" and "Print News" by clicking above. Click "Home" to return to APAC News. Did you know that you can now click on the "comment" button below each story to post an observation or reaction to the article?

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