December 12, 2013

To: Dean Van Galen, Chancellor  
   116 North Hall  
   University of Wisconsin-River Falls

From: David P. Rainville, Chair  
       Faculty Senate  
       University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Re: UWRF Faculty Senate Motion 2013-14/40

At the December 11, 2013 meeting of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Faculty Senate, motion 2013-14/40 was passed and is effective immediately. The motion is forwarded to you for your action.

A motion from the Executive Committee to send a recommendation to the Academic Staff Council to approve the following:

Each academic year, UWRF will adjust the compensation rates for Instructional Academic Staff to reflect any change in a state approved pay plan for faculty and academic staff. Any increase will be at least equal to the percentage increase in the faculty pay plan.

This recommendation is consistent with language in 3.4.4.7.2 which addresses annual adjustment of compensation for internships, independent readings, independent study, study abroad, undergraduate research, and overload courses. This recommendation must be approved by the Academic Staff Council and approved by the Chancellor to be in effect.

Approved

Disapproved  ✓

Please see attached: UWRF Faculty Senate Motion 2013-14/40, April 4, 2014

Dean Van Galen, Chancellor  
Date
The motion has been disapproved because of the potential future, long-term impact on the university's budget, however, I have instructed the academic deans to provide Instructional Academic Staff (IAS) with a 1% increase in "per credit" pay for 2014-2015 as described below.

Regarding the motion itself, the critical point is that currently in the State of Wisconsin, GPR funds that come from the State to (partially) fund "state pay plans" only provide financial support for permanent FTE faculty and staff—this does not include the large majority of employees covered under the IAS category. Thus, signing this motion would commit the university in the years ahead to a potentially significant and "unfunded" expense that would need to come from local funds, thereby competing with other university priorities, including other internally funded compensation adjustments. For example, if there were a 3% plus 3% pay plan in the 2015-2017 biennium, this motion would commit UWR to approximately $250,000 in new, unfunded, expenses—a portion of which would be effectively recurring. Depending on other factors such as the level of state and tuition funding for the university, we may be able to do this, but I cannot in good conscience commit the university in the years ahead to this course of action by signing this motion. Furthermore, IAS must be systematically evaluated as called for in the Faculty Handbook and in a manner consistent with the minimum standards for satisfactory performance that currently make tenure-track faculty and academic staff eligible for pay plans.

That said, Instructional Academic Staff play an important role at the university. At UW-River Falls, IAS engage in a wide range of roles—from teaching a single course from time to time, to consistently teaching up to 15 credits, and other functions. They, indeed, make important contributions to providing quality education to our students.

In recent years, a number of steps have been taken to better support IAS, including offering multi-year contracts as appropriate, informing IAS earlier as to their status for the upcoming academic year, and establishing a "promotion process" that has resulted in a significant number of promotions with associated increases in compensation for IAS.

The academic deans, working with department heads, are responsible for the hiring of IAS and establishing what they believe are appropriate levels of compensation. It is the desire of the deans to continue to have this authority and flexibility, which I support.
The proposal to consider IAS when there is a state pay plan is understandable. In light of the relatively modest 1% pay plan for 2014-2015, I am instructing the academic deans to provide IAS with a 1% increase in their “per credit” pay for 2014-2015 if:

1. The IAS member was employed by the university for the evaluation period (in this case, 2013-2014), AND

2. The IAS member has on file by June 4, 2014 a performance evaluation for 2013-2014, as called for in the Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook, that indicates at least “solid performance” (the same condition is required for faculty and non-instructional academic staff), AND

3. The IAS member has not already received a contract for 2014-2015 that already provides for a 1% or greater increase in “per credit” compensation compared to 2013-2014.

Hopefully, in the future, the level of state and tuition support will enable the university to continue to consider these types of adjustments for IAS.

I would note that this is not an easy issue. We want to do our best to support all members of our campus community, even during difficult times. On this issue, I have had the opportunity to have discussions with governance leaders, as well as administrative leaders (Provost, Deans, CBO) and have concluded there are at times a lack of information and even some misunderstandings concerning IAS on our campus. Thus, I have attached a “Fact Sheet” that was prepared by the UW-River Falls Human Resources that may be useful to all concerned.

Finally, I apologize for the time that I required to act on this motion. The issues are complex, the perspectives are many, and I wanted to take the time to listen to various points of view.
ADDENDUM: Fact Sheet Regarding Instructional Academic Staff  
(Provided by UW-River Falls Human Resources)

UW River Falls Instructional Academic Staff and Payment Rate

- Typically, Instructional Academic Staff (IAS) are individuals who are hired in addition to or outside of the University’s allocation of FTE and state budget-related pay plan. Per the Faculty and Academic Staff handbook, they are to be compensated on a per-credit basis.
- Each College Dean has the responsibility to hire and contract with IAS depending on the college’s needs.
- IAS are paid on a per-credit basis and are earning at least the minimum of the salary range for their title (reference 5.1.1.1 and 6.3.2 Faculty and Academic Staff handbook, and University Personnel Guideline 4.03(2)).
- Typically, IAS are contracted on a fixed term terminal basis whose contracts are written with no commitment to be renewed (ranging from one semester to two academic years).
- Each College Dean has the discretion to compensate IAS at greater than the minimum per-credit rate for the affiliated compensation range for the IAS title.
- State University pay plan increases are not funded for the vast majority of IAS because only permanent employees are covered by the state pay plan.
- A supplemental pay plan cannot be applied to fund IAS because only permanent FTE employees are eligible to be covered by a supplemental pay plan.

IAS and Promotion/Retitling

- The UWRF Faculty and Academic Staff handbook chapter 6.15 sets forth the process for IAS promotion and retitling, in addition to UWRF administrative policy AP-06-103; and the policies together cover both IAS and non-instructional academic staff.
- Academic staff (including Instructional Academic Staff) qualifying for a promotion/title change (upward movement) receive an increase to the minimum of the new salary range or 5%, whichever is greater.
- Seven IAS (and their Academic Deans) were notified on 12/6/13 that they have met promotion eligibility requirements and are eligible for an increase in salary to the minimum of the new salary range or 5%, whichever is greater.