



Committee on the Economic and Social Well-Being of the Faculty
Minutes for 1/26/26 Meeting

Meeting information:

Circulated: 2-9-26
Approved: 3-16-26

Members present: Stefan Szymanski (Chair), SaraEllen Strongman, Melanie Tanielian (SACUA), Samantha Kreklau, Zachary Quint, M. Candace Christenson, Chris Rider, Suzanne Selig, Leigh Stuckey, Amy Cheng, Elizabeth Peckham,

Members absent: David Marshall, Maria Teresa Segarra Costaguta Mattos, Christina Snider

Faculty Senate Office staff present: Eric Vandenberghe

Minutes:

12:01pm-12:03pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes, Announcements

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the November meeting are approved.

12:23pm-12:27pm: Review of the 2025 gender salary study

Summary: The committee member working on this charge item described his efforts completed last term and provided suggestions for how the committee could best proceed. They suggest that a request for necessary data from the Provost's Office could be made. It is agreed that this is how the committee will proceed, and the member agrees to draft a proposal for committee review to eventually be sent to SACUA.

Action: Discussion

12:27pm: Campus Climate Issues

Summary: There is no update on this charge item at this time.

Action: Update

12:03pm-12:23pm: Childcare Impact Report

Summary: A member working on this item brings the committee up to speed on the work completed up to this point. They have been in contact with ADVANCE about creating a survey of faculty regarding childcare. The FSO has indicated that there may be funding available to work with ADVANCE on this task. The member will meet with ADVANCE prior to the next meeting to discuss next steps.

Regarding the survey, the committee is asked for input on several issues. The committee indicates that faculty of all tracks should be surveyed. The committee indicates that care



should be expanded to consider elder care, childcare, and other forms of dependent care.

A member describes ongoing labor issues with the UM childcare center. This is a related issue that the committee should consider.

A member indicates that the committee will need to make a persuasive case to the administration that faculty support for dependent care is a worthwhile endeavor. Another member indicates that qualified faculty and staff may have taken roles at other institutions due to better benefits being offered elsewhere. This is something that the survey could flesh out. The committee members make further suggestions regarding the survey. Once the committee has the data, they can make recommendations to SACUA and the UM administration.

A member discusses broadening the issue to the local and state government may be a worthwhile endeavor.

A member discusses reviewing studies related to dependent care subsidies provided by employers to faculty and staff during the pandemic. These may be useful to review.

Action: Discussion

12:28pm-12:40pm: Faculty Tuition

Summary: A member working on this charge item provides the committee with an update on their progress. The committee member is thanked for their work on these resources. This is work in progress and the committee members present agree to work on completing the outstanding items that require attention. A member indicates the benefit of focusing on R1 universities.

Earlier work by UM faculty government regarding this topic is discussed. As with the other charge items, having data to provide solid arguments to the administration for providing this benefit is the goal.

The member indicates that their work will continue on this and include a literature review.

Action: Discussion

12:40pm-12:57pm: Work Connections

Summary: A member provides an update to the committee on work completed on this charge item since the last meeting. The member spoke at the last Regent's meeting about this subject. The member describes work that labor unions at UM have been undertaking on this subject, including hosting a recent town hall for faculty and staff who have negative experiences related to Work Connections.

Some of the issues ongoing with Work Connections include return to work recommendations undercutting personal physician recommendations, and unpleasant to abusive interactions with Work Connections staff. The process works fine for some but is a nightmare for others. The member describes some of the opinions on tactics for how to proceed.



The committee members indicate their support for continued work on this important issue. The Faculty Senate Office staff will work in conjunction with the committee on a peer review of this issue.

Action: Discussion

12:57pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office