

COMMITTEE: Faculty Welfare Committee

MEETING DATE: January 12, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.

PERSON PRESIDING: Ken Ferguson

REGULAR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ken Ferguson, Christine Avenarius, Louis Warren, Rachel Roper, Laura Spratley

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Susan Simpson

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Toller, Anne Jenkins, Lori Lee

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Hartley, Eric Horsman, Amanda Klein (secretary), Erick Green

ACTIONS OF MEETING:

Agenda Item:

Associate Vice Chancellor Anne Jenkins of Financial Services met by invitation with the committee to inform the members on welfare issues relating to the reimbursement of university-sponsored travel. Her discussion took up most of the meeting. Jenkins informed the committee that her office has only two persons who must process all travel requests, and that an average of 74 travel requests must be processed each day, with each request requiring that a 23-point checklist be completed. The travel office is also training two temporary workers, which is very time-consuming. For these reasons, repayment for travel is sometimes delayed.

Jenkins confirmed that the 30 day time limit to submit requests for travel reimbursement is a state law that cannot be extended. If the request is not submitted by 30 days, there is an appeals procedure that may lead to reimbursement if it is determined that the reason for late filing is beyond the traveler's control. But Jenkins stated that reimbursements for late claims cannot be paid out of state funds, and that payment for late requests must be approved by the Vice Chancellor.

Jenkins informed the committee that an automatic system is being developed to tell more quickly whether travel charges have already been reimbursed by the University ProCard. The system will use a list of the last four digits of each University-issued ProCard so that the travel office can determine whether the traveler used to ProCard or a personal Visa card to pay for travel expenses. Because the ProCard is a Visa card, this was previously an issue only when the traveler paid with Visa. Under the new system, the measures that were previously needed to ensure that travelers using a Visa card were not double-paid can be handled without requiring certain receipts that previously made it difficult for some travelers to meet the 30-day deadline.

Members of the committee related to Jenkins issues they had encountered in regard to travel reimbursement. Avenarius stated that the registration fees at conferences, which cannot be paid using a ProCard, are often hundreds of dollars, too much to expect the faculty member to place on her personal credit card, while awaiting later reimbursement by the University. According to Avenarius, another issue is that the ProCard cannot be used to pay hotel bills. Avenarius also stated that more assistance from administrative assistants would be welcome to process grant money. Louis Warren recommended that the travel office provide training to travel grant processors in the individual units to increase the efficiency of this step in the reimbursement process.

John Toller stated that there is a new system being implemented that is able to track in a better way the time that the reimbursement process takes at each stage. Susan Simpson recommended that units efficient at processing travel reimbursement requests should be identified and used as a model for the rest of the University. Laura Spratley requested that faculty be given instructions about how to fill in travel forms; Roper requested that an Internet link be provided, where faculty can receive information about the correct way to complete their travel request forms. Toller stated that administration should be reminded that travel is a necessary component of a faculty member's professional duties and that reimbursement for travel should not be treated as a perquisite.

Jenkins offered to consider any thoughts about how to improve the travel process. The committee thanked Jenkins for her time spent with the committee and for her service to the ECU community, working under stressful conditions.

Agenda Item:

The committee addressed the first of the monthly safety e-mails that it was asked to share with the faculty on behalf of Tom Pohlman, Environmental Manager of the East Carolina University Environmental Health and Safety program. The committee used the body of the e-mail as written by the safety expert and added wording to a template at the heading and conclusion of the e-mail to indicate that the safety measures are being endorsed by the committee. The intention of having the e-mails sent from a faculty committee is to encourage an increase in faculty involvement in maintaining a safe campus. Lori Lee offered to mail the document to the faculty, after gaining the approval of Pohlman for the wording in the heading and footer. The e-mail is appended.

Role of Faculty in Classroom Safety

When an emergency occurs in the classroom, students naturally look to the instructor for leadership, and your knowledge of the correct response is critical to a safe resolution of the emergency. The Faculty Welfare Committee, in cooperation with Tom Pohlman, Environmental Manager of the campus Environmental Health and Safety program, is providing this information in the first of a series of monthly e-mails to help you prepare for classroom emergencies

This is the first in a series of monthly e-mails to help you prepare for classroom emergencies.

What to do before the semester starts:

- **Know how to report an emergency from your classroom or lab.**
- **Learn where at least two evacuation routes are from your classroom.**
- **Determine how you will secure the classroom in case of a lockdown.**
- **Decide how you can/will receive emergency alerts. Register at www.ecu.edu/alert.**
- **Know where your designated evacuations assembly point is or designate an evacuation assembly point for your class in case of evacuation. (At least 100 paces from the building.)**
- **Determine where you will take your class to shelter from severe weather. More information at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/oehs/emergency/Tornado-Safe-Procedures.cfm>**
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Recommended items for instructors to take to class:

- **A charged cell phone or similar communication device.**

- List of important phone numbers (punch card from Student Safety [Lockdown] flier).
- Small flashlight
- Door stop if your classroom does not have an inside locking device.

During the first week of class, tell your students what you will expect in case of:

- Fire
- Severe Weather
- Lockdown (hostile intruder)
- Hazardous material spill (if in a lab setting)
- Consider including safety procedures in your syllabus.

As faculty, you should familiarize yourself with these procedures and do your part to help keep our campus safe. For more information, see the ECU Emergency Response and Preparedness Web site at <http://www.ecu.edu/police/erp>.

Kenneth Ferguson
Chair, Faculty Welfare Committee

The meeting ended.

NEXT MEETING: February 9, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.

Note that the remaining meetings of the spring semester have been moved to 3:30, by consent of the members present, in order to accommodate some regular members with time conflicts at 3:00, including the secretary.