

STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETING
The State Universities Civil Service Employee Advisory Committee held its quarterly meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 7th, 2022, and 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 8th, 2022, at Illinois State University Alumni Center, 1101 North Main Street, Normal, Illinois 61761.

Chair Odom called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on April 7th. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

Present: Shauna Bishop, Elizabeth Cheek, Tony Craven, Gary Gilpin, Andy Harpst, Andrea Hoskinson, John Hulseberg, Rick Marr, Jill Odom, Jacqueline Pointer, Michael Pulley, Mary Serio, Peter Skrypkun, and Vee Steward

Absent: Tenea Harris, Caryn Riley, and Hemali Shah

Introduction of Guests:

Sheryl Jones-Harper, EAC Representative phoned in – GSU

Review of Correspondence: None

Public Comments: None

Designated Employer Representative (DER) of Host Campus: None

Report of Chair – Jill Odom

This is the first time we are meeting in person since 2020. It's good to see everyone again.

We will be discussing HB 1172. We need to have an official written statement in opposition of or for these amendments. As of April 1st, nothing was passed or adopted. There's supposed to be more discussion throughout the summer, but the status changed to it being re-referred to the Rules Committee. Jill read her report that she will be giving today at the Merit Board meeting.

Sec. 36d-12 and 36f-4 – discussions and proposed changes

All matters pertaining to Civil Service System.

Approval of minutes of December 2, 2021 Special Meeting:

A motion was made by Vee to table the approval of the December 2nd, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes until the Special Virtual Meeting (TBD) to catch up on and approve all minutes thus far. Rick seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Approval of minutes of January 27 & 28, 2022 Quarterly Meeting:

A motion was made by Andy to table the approval of the January 27th and 28th, 2022 Quarterly Minutes until the Special Virtual Meeting (TBD) to catch up on and approve all minutes thus far. Shauna seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

A Special Meeting has been scheduled for April 29th, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. to approve minutes.

Report of Executive Committee – Michael Pulley

Will be given at Friday's meeting.

Report of Legislative Committee – Shauna Bishop

Legislation as of 3/28/22

- Disaster Proclamation – extended as of 3/4/22, but then ended 3/8/22
- Mask mandates rolled back as of 2/28/22, except in certain settings

- HB 1293-House amendment #1 – Urges retirement systems/pension funds to divest in Russian/Belarusian holdings – Final Action deadline 4/8/22
 - HB 2847 – Limit Retirement Annuity Amount – Referred to Rules Committee 2/18/22
 - HB 2848 – Automatic Annual Increases in Annuities – Referred to Rules Committee 2/18/22
 - HB 2849 – Retirement Age Increase – Referred to Rules Committee 2/18/22
 - HB 4479 (SB 3956) – Tier 3 Implementation by 7/1/23 – Referred to Rules Committee 2/18/22
 - HB 5408 – Amends the State Universities Civil Service Act – Third Reading 4/8/22
 - Merit Board shall have power/duty to establish min. requirements for standards of work hours, holidays, sick, leave, OT comp, and vacation
 - Exec Director of Merit Board is authorized to accept DER appointments per university
 - Employer shall certify names/address on employment registers
 - Juneteenth is State holiday for universities
 - SB 3689 Tier 2 Changes - Establishes that a Tier 2 member is entitled to retirement - Referred to Assignments Committee 1/21/22:
 - Age 60 with at least 35 years of service credit (not including service credit for unused, unpaid sick leave)
 - Age 62 with at least 10 years of service credit (not including service credit for unused, unpaid sick leave)
 - Age 64 with at least 10 years of service credit (including service credit for unused, unpaid sick leave)
 - Currently, a Tier 2 member can retire at age 67 with at least 10 years of service credit or age 62 with at least 10 years of service credit, but with a lower retirement annuity
 - Public Act 102-0696 – Allocates \$2.7 billion in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to help pay down Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund debt – as of 3/25/22
 - Public Act 102-0697 (vetoed HB 2778) – Pay/benefits to school employees/contractors for Covid-19 absences – effective immediately
 - Admin leave for fully vaccinated
 - Return of sick leave used during 21-22 school year if fully vaccinated
 - Federal Loan Repayment freeze – extended to 8/31/22, “fresh start” will allow all borrowers with paused loans to reenter repayment in good standing, but not sure when that will happen
 - General Primary Election – 6/28/22
 - General Election – 11/8/22
- *HB 1172 is being discussed in Ad Hoc Committee, so not mentioned here.
- Move all testing from SUCSS to campuses
 - Direct pt. contact positions would be handled outside registers
 - 900-hr provision on EH would go away, along with any other limits (Amend 1)
 - Crafts/trades classes would be outside registers if had apprenticeship (Amend 2)
 - Change residency requirement, all tests need to be online by 7/1/24, would pay out-of-state applicants to come test (Amend 3)

Report of Election Committee – John Hulseberg

The following terms are expiring this Fall:

- Shauna Bishop (SIUSOM)
- Rick Marr (ISU)
- Peter Skrypkun (WIU)
- Jacqueline Pointer (CSU)
- UIS (vacant position – 3 yr term to stay on schedule)

Proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the State Universities Civil Service Advisory Committee to the Merit Board:

- Article C Section 1 Elections

- 1.1a – change the word “ballot” to roll call
- 1.1b – strike the words “who are members of SUCSAC” in first sentence
- 1.1d – change the word “chair” in first sentence to “teller”

Orientation:

Elizabeth, Hemali, and Caryn need to do this. Everyone is welcome to do a refresher.

EAC:

We are your voice to the Civil Service System Office and the Merit Board.

Open Meetings Act Training:

All elected members have to do it, even if you’re reelected for a new term.

- Mary & Sheryl still need to do it.

Report of Ad Hoc Committee: Discussion Regarding Promotion Processes

- In order for it to be a proper ad hoc committee, it needs to be 6 people, otherwise it constitutes a full committee meeting.
- Majority of a quorum → it’s a meeting (we shouldn’t limit who attends)
- Discussion regarding ad hoc committee members and the number of members on the full committee. Should the Executive Committee be in charge of moving this forward?
- HB 1172 → Should this be a charge for Executive or Legislative Committee?
- It’s up to the Chair of the committee to accept public comment.
- Special committees are necessary to keep our focus. They should be made up of less than a majority of a quorum. Jill doesn’t count since she’s ex-officio.
- Vee, Sheryl, John, and Andrea dropped off from our Ad Hoc Committee.
- Do we need to have an action item at our special meeting to change the discussion focus? Don’t need an action item. Just a general consensus here is fine.
- Ad Hoc → Emergent and temporary deals
Promotions and HB 1172
- We’re not discouraging EAC members from attending ad hoc meetings. They would be guests. No voice/no vote.
- No business can be conducted without a quorum. A meeting can’t be opened or closed without a quorum. We’ll move public comment to an appropriate time. We want everyone’s input and support.

Break at 10:55 a.m.

Back from break at 11:14 a.m.

A motion was made by Michael to approve Sheryl Jones-Harper to attend the meeting by electronic means as a guest. Andy seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

We can run over time in our meetings, we just can’t start before the scheduled time.

Other Items as Presented:

HB 1172

- Extra help employees are at-will employees. No benefits/no Civil Service rights. Employers aren’t paying for insurance.
- Check-in kiosks at health care clinics are replacing the need for a full-time employee.
- We are on the road to private business.
- It cannibalizes our benefits and the retirement system. Extra help is not a career path. Extra help should be used to get your foot in the door.

- Amendment 1
 - Removed authority from the Merit Board.
 - HR does a horrible job with credentials assessments.
- Amendment 2
 - Exempts the trades from all of this.
- Amendment 3
 - All testing to be online by FY '25
 - System Office has to pay for travel expenses for all out of state testers until the testing is online.
- If the Civil Service Act disappears, CMS would take over. Upward mobility and transfers are possible within CMS. CMS employees are still CS employees. Bumping would be a nightmare. You could bump across the state.
- The amendments to HB 1172 are against our Civil Service System/Act, and will break our unions too. Stabilities, protections, and features in our Act are what need to be highlighted. This bill has a negative impact. It removes the authority from the CS System and gives it to HR.
- According to our HR offices, the System Office impedes the universities attempt to recruit and hire. The hiring process is faulty and slow on our campuses and has nothing to do with the System Office. Unfortunately, the System gets blamed for everything.
- Computer-based testing is definitely necessary. There's definitely a need to do away with a paper and pencil testing.
- HR are not experts when it comes to credentials assessments. People miss out on an interview due to them not knowing the proper language or keywords to look for. Their expertise is in regards to recruitment and hiring. Even with the testing online, you're going to have people cheating, probably even more than normal.
- HR likes to say "we are stretched thin due to people working from home." The pandemic is always an excuse they like to use too.
- HR offices are overcomplicating hiring process. An email goes out for candidates to answer questions. From there, you might get a phone interview. After that, you might get a zoom and eventually an in-person interview. The process is sometimes so drawn out. They weed people out to get the candidate they want. In general, it takes like 6-8 weeks.
 - 1-2 weeks for the position to get approved and posted
 - 1-2 weeks for testing and interviews
 - 1 week for HR to figure things out and process everything
 - 2 weeks' notice for employee to start

Break for lunch at 12:02 p.m.

Back from lunch at 1:05 p.m.

Roll call was taken after lunch and a quorum was present.

Present: Shauna Bishop, Elizabeth Cheek, Tony Craven, Gary Gilpin, Andy Harpst, Andrea Hoskinson, John Hulseberg, Rick Marr, Jill Odom, Jacqueline Pointer, Michael Pulley, Mary Serio, Peter Skrypkun, and Vee Steward

Absent: Tenea Harris, Caryn Riley, and Hemali Shah

Merit Board Meeting was streamed live at 1:00 p.m. and adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

Break at 3:03 p.m.

Back from break at 3:16 p.m.

2022 Quarterly Meeting Schedule:

- Thursday, July 21st & Friday, July 22nd Meeting

- System Office – Urbana
- Wednesday, October 12th & Thursday, October 13th Meeting
 - Northeastern Illinois University – Chicago
- Friday, October 14th – Council of Councils
 - Northeastern Illinois University – Chicago
- NIU will host Council of Councils on October 20th, 2023
- Who will host 2024. . .UIC will look into it!

Council of Councils → A chance to collaborate with each CS council across the state.
Tours/In depth look at the campus.

Other Items as Presented:

- June 16th is the next Merit Board but will have to be rescheduled.
- Should we have a special meeting of EAC with Chair Jones, Butler, and maybe another MB member? Jill will call Gail later today to discuss.
- How many universities are there? How many HR directors are there? How many Civil Service employees are there? Why is this even a discussion? (HB 1172)
- MB didn't know about it, the same way we didn't know, and Gail didn't know. We were all blind-sided by this bill. There is a serious lack of respect for our group (EAC), the Merit Board, and System as a whole.
- The synopsis as introduced for HB 1172 – They want to use apprenticeships instead of the testing process. So only hire apprentices and not journeymen.
- We will reconvene tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.
- Leave work during work hours. Get here during work hours. The Act states that our time traveling is reimbursable by the University.

*Call of Chair Odom to recess at 3:52 p.m.
We will resume tomorrow*

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Chair Odom reconvened the meeting at 10:32 a.m. on April 8th. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

Present: Shauna Bishop, Elizabeth Cheek, Tony Craven, Gary Gilpin, Andy Harpst, Andrea Hoskinson, John Hulseberg, Rick Marr, Jill Odom, Jacqueline Pointer, Michael Pulley, Mary Serio, Peter Skrypkun, and Vee Steward

Absent: Tenea Harris, Caryn Riley, and Hemali Shah

Introduction of Guests:

Gail Schiesser, Executive Director and Legal Counsel – SUCSS
Sheryl Jones-Harper, EAC Representative phoned in – GSU

Report of SUCSS Executive Director and Legal Counsel - Gail Schiesser:

Merit Board

→ Was given at the Merit Board Meeting that was streamed live yesterday.

Agency Budget

→ No update.

Qualified Research Program Project Update

→ Hasn't gone anywhere so no update.

Class Plan Update

→ Still moving a bunch and deleted a bunch. There's a whole stack of classifications without incumbents in them that are set to be deleted.

Governance Risk & Compliance Audit

→ UIS and College of Med Peoria are finalized
→ Draft has been sent to SIUC
→ Jonah Jett is helping out with audits to help catch up with the process

Legal Update

→ 4 things out
→ Chad Bateman – Electrician – Cost us over \$20k to redo test – Bouncing from status to status down in Madison County
→ Christopher Bean – Labor action against System Office – Dismissed
→ Vincent Bradford – Appealed his dismissal – Will probably come back to System Office
→ Karl Seymour – University filed suit against MB – In November, Seymour walked away with a check and a resignation

Discussion

→ Julie Jones expressed interest in meeting with us.
→ HR departments are treating the Merit Board with contempt.

- Systemic erosion for the respect of Civil Service.
- Amendment 3 – To make all tests available online, wherever, so they can take them and change them whenever they want.
- If the universities had open and continuous testing like they're supposed to, it wouldn't take so long to hire someone. Approval of the post alone takes 2-4 weeks by the university. It's not the System that slows it down, it's the excuse of the System that slows it down.
- Some of our campuses have made a decision to oppose Civil Service. Others have made the decision to rid themselves of CS.
- House amendment 3 will cripple the System.
- Labor has no opposition in this right now.
- 250.110f – Hearing – It's an infringement on due process to move expeditiously.
- Merit Board members are a policy body.
- More than 80% of our tests are online. Those are the classifications that are the most utilized.

*Jill leaves at 11:15 a.m.
Jacqueline takes over as Chair*

Universities want to control whatever testing they want. Universities are hesitant to supply subject matter experts. When it's time to help update the tests universities claim that the System Office doesn't help/change/update tests. It's one of the easiest lies to tell and they tell it freely so that's why they do it.

UIC - one of the lowest paying state employers in the city and across the state as identified by the unions. People are better off going to Rush. UIC has a new surgery center being built. They received private money for it. It was stated that since it was private money, they won't allow union workers. BSW's are concerned they won't be allowed to work. The claim is that they can't hire union workers because it's being built with private funds. Yeah, that's not going to happen...totally illegal!

There are fewer than 1,000 Civil Service classifications.

1/3 of those use credentials assessments. Of the 2/3 remaining, 80% of those are E-tests. E-tests have to be administered and proctored. Universities want complete control over testing and criteria.

21 audits/21 HR directors → 26,000 employees

Keicher is on HR appropriations

We need to stay aware and involved. HB 1172 was a shell bill. Adding amendments is faster and more devious. It's a vehicle for ease but comes off as devious because it's hidden.

Legal Counsel for SUCSS → Job has been posted – No candidates at this time.

Report of Executive Committee – Michael Pulley

- Motion approved this morning
- Article C-section 1 elections
- First reading today for three changes
- Second reading in July

Jill has joined us on the phone

Other Items as Presented:

- Clarification about travel - University is to reimburse travel and commute. You can't be working off the clock. The time question is a labor law question.
- Higher Ed Travel Control Board
- FLSA non-exempt employees are the concern. Labor law states that you be paid for hours worked. The day started when we left the hotel

Motion to Adjourn: Michael Pulley Seconded by: Shauna Bishop

*A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor.
The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m. by Jacqueline Pointer*

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Serio, Secretary



Jill Odom, Chair