The Faculty Council on Retirement, Insurance and Benefits met on November 14, 2002, at 1 p.m. Chair Jim Whittaker presided.

**PRESENT:** Professors: Bliquez, Boxx, Frey, Haley, Waaland, Whittaker, Kochin  
*Ex-officio:* Chamberlin, Dougherty, Dwyer, Olswang, McKenzie, Guerrero  

**ABSENT:** Professors: Brandt, Dugdale, Johnson, Martin  
*Ex-officio:* Chamberlin, Henley, Olswang

**Synopsis:**  
1. Announcements  
2. Approve agenda  
3. Approve minutes  
4. Action plan for 2002-03 - prioritize FCRIB issues, form subcommittees

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

**Announcements**  
Jim Whittaker announced that he has a conflict with the Regents meeting on November 21, where the Fund Review Plan will be presented for approval. Katy Dwyer and Charles Chamberlin, who worked on the proposal, will attend. Whittaker thanked Larry Bliquez for attending two SEC meetings in his stead.

Dwyer announced that Flexible Spending Accounts begin January 1 – deductions must be signed and postmarked by the end of November. The minimum is $240/yr, the maximum is $2400.

The annual Benefits Summary is also out, and contains an error in the "current cost" area. An email correction has been sent to draw attention to the error.

**Approval of Agenda**  
The agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes**  
The October minutes were approved.

**Prioritize FCRIB issues, form subcommittees**  
Dwyer presented a list of issues to the group for discussion – some of them are carryovers from last year, some are new issues. The document includes columns for the benefits issue title, its impact and costs, the "controlling" party, and comments on each issue. It would be important for FCRIB to spend some time prioritizing these issues, so they can be worked on in the order of their importance.

Some things on the list are controlled by PEBB, but even this could change, Dwyer said. The collective bargaining bill passed last year allows employees to negotiate for everything except pensions. This could be very different and challenging for the Health Care Authority in the future, which could find itself with different employers having different sets of benefits or different reimbursements for the same benefits.

Whittaker cited three immediate issues for FCRIB:

- Appointing the FCRIB representative to the Fund Review Board  
- Reviewing the re-employment policy
• Benchmarking with peer institutions on benefits

There are some other issues, such as a cafeteria approach to benefits, which might be looked at. Purchasing dental care from HCA makes sense, Dwyer said, or the UW might opt to do its own Long Term Care plan. It would be important to keep in touch with Dick Thompson as this process continues, so he can be alert to legislative needs for information that might arise in connection with some new choices. It's also important to research the cost of some of the options, Dwyer added, since this can be a big factor in establishing priorities.

General observations during the discussion:

A good candidate to be added to the list for study would be the University Retirement Plan Structure.

At present, the Benefits Office is working on the College Savings Plan and the GET plan, as well as the legal and veterinary insurance option.

Issues to be resolved include the limitations of the payroll system, which has a limited number of "buckets" for new deductions. Maybe this should be an agenda item at some point, since it directly affects the benefits that can be offered.

Dwyer has received a memo from HCA on Long Term Care Partnership. This product provides asset protection for persons who need long-term care, receive Medicaid benefits, and wish to protect assets from estate recoupment by Medicaid after their death.

Should FCRIB schedule a Long Term Care presentation for December? Larry Bliquez' experiences might be very helpful – there are many complex decisions to be made in arranging for LTC.

Pat Dougherty said she is hearing increased concern about access to housing for faculty (Dougherty). Her office is starting to explore ideas about creating housing. Would this be an area to devote some attention to? Dwyer said the Benefits office just expanded their housing Web site – there are lots of new options, and she also sees this as something FCRIB could address.

There are lots of FCRIB areas that could benefit from research into what peer institutions are doing – should we create a database of specific information from ten benchmark F-1 institutions? This will take data-oriented people working with Katy, who has used the AAUDE info, but is not convinced it's the best source. We'd have to ask the right questions, and possibly create a template – what would be the key indicators to compare progress? Perhaps a small, serious committee could look at primary surveys, look at core questions, and write our own questions. This would take a couple of people. It might be possible to get an intern from the Information School to help look at statistics. Diane Martin and Charles Frey were nominated for this subcommittee. Perhaps they could create a series of charts and see what changes to those charts would produce. Statistics should be coupled to costs.

Emeritus/Senior titles. Holdover from last year. Chip Haley will work with Ernest Henley and FCFA on this, to craft legislation.

Re-employment policy – the policy is posted on the Academic Human Resources site; there is also a link to the policy on the Benefits site. We have taken this on as a council, so council members should be alert to any "local" issues that come up due to a failure to understand the policy.

"A/B" salary is being taken up by Faculty Affairs. This policy, now in use by some faculty, allows a faculty member to resign a percentage of tenure and retain their salary, then supplement salary from grant
sources. There are certain restrictions on those who are eligible for the A/B salary option and, once resigned, the tenure portion cannot be regained.

**Fund Review Board** is being presented to the Regents next week.

Frey would like to see a subcommittee formed to address **benefits education issues** not folded in to the list of issues. Whittaker said almost every issue has an education component attached to it – an **education or dissemination subcommittee** could address the best ways to point people to the information they need to make informed decisions. Dwyer said there are two parts to that – "apples-to-apples" statistics supplied to benefits by vendors, and classes offered by Benefits Offices. Issues include what's out there, and the proper timing for action on the products. Having the Fund Review Committee should help quite a bit with data collection and analysis. It would be good for retirees to have this information before they are funneled into exit seminars dominated by vendors. Charles Frey, Katy Dwyer, and Larry Bliquez will meet as a workgroup to develop strategies for an education component for FCRIB.

Whittaker summed up the discussion as follows:

**Priorities and Subcommittees for 2002-2003**

**Long Term Care**: Dwyer, Dougherty, McKenzie, Boxx

**Fund Review Board**: Appointment of FCRIB rep (entire Council)

**Re-employment Policy Review**: Olswang (December)

**Senior/Emeritus Status/Title**: Haley, Henley, FCFA

**Education Workgroup**: Frey, Dwyer, Bliquez, Dougherty

**Benchmarking Benefits w/Peers**: Martin, Dwyer, Frey, Bliquez

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*