

December 23, 2004

Mr. David Robson, Chair  
UIUC Council of Academic Professionals  
Springfield Center  
University of Illinois Extension  
P. O. 8199  
Springfield, Illinois 62791

Dear Mr. Robson:

I write in response to your letter of December 15<sup>th</sup> seeking clarification of the policies and practices that pertain to academic-professional employees in the University Administration (UA).

As a practical matter, it is my observation that the University of Illinois has operated for many years under the assumption that University Administration units have followed the Human Resource policies and practices in effect at the campus at which the UA employees resided.

Although the University of Illinois is governed by a single Board of Trustees, it has been clear for some time that campus HR policies and practices differ to some degree. Those differences have created some confusion and conflict for University Administration units with large employee bases at more than one campus, especially in instances in which it has been essential to assure the equitable treatment of UA employees regardless of the campus on which they reside. In most instances we have been able to manage within those conflicting policies. With the onset of severe budget constraints, the need to protect academic programs as much as possible by asking administrative units to shoulder a larger burden of budget cuts, and the need to streamline and consolidate activities as much as possible to keep service levels high with reduced financial support, the differences in campus HR policies and practices have become both more apparent and more difficult to address.

In view of these circumstances, I have a twofold response to the questions raised in your letter of December 15:

- First, University Administration units should apply the HR policies in place at the campus at which their employees reside.
- Second, there should be more consistency among the campuses in defining and implementing HR policies and practices to assure the equitable treatment of all University of Illinois employees. The risks inherent in not assuring such treatment should be obvious to all.

To move us toward the objective just noted, I will establish a working group to examine how key HR policies or practices pertaining to academic professional employees differ among the campuses and to suggest ways in which more common and consistent University-wide policies might be devised. I will seek advice from Vice President Gardner and each Chancellor about who might best represent them in such an effort. I will ask Vice President Rugg to consult with the CAP organizations at each campus and with UPAC to get advice about who might best serve on such a group from their perspectives. Such an effort should build on work already accomplished during the HR transformation project under Associate Vice President Loya's leadership, as well as the more specific review of grievance processes Mr. Loya has asked the University Counsel to pursue.

I will make certain President-Elect White is aware of the effort I shall start but whose results will come to him.

Thank you for raising these important issues. Best wishes for a happy and safe holiday season.

Sincerely,

James J. Stukel  
President

cc: University Officers  
Mr. Loya  
Provosts