

Retiree Rights and Benefits Committee Year-End Report to the KU
University Senate
(15 April 2016)

Table of Contents

Report, 2015-2016	2
1. Report	2
2. Recommendations to the University Senate	4
Appendix	
A. FY 16 University Senate Charges to the RRB Committee	9

The Committee met during the 2015-16 academic year to consider its obligations and the specific charges given to it. Below contains the substance of our deliberations this academic year.

Respectfully submitted,

Clint Chadwick
Associate Professor of Strategy and Human Resource Management
University of Kansas Business School
Chair, RRB Committee, 2014-2015

Report, 2015-2016

The Committee had been specifically tasked to deliberate the following issues (abbreviated; for the exact charges, see Appendix):

1. inquire about parking privileges for the spouses of deceased retirees.
2. evaluate how to communicate “information for retirees”.
3. assess whether HR should develop an “Exit Survey.”
4. evaluate how to make KU more “retiree friendly.”
5. recommend how to establish uniform policies across the University for retirees.

Findings:

1. We consulted with Donna Hultine regarding the retiree parking situation. Retirees are allowed free parking in the Park & Ride lot, but otherwise do not have specific parking privileges on campus unless they pay for retiree permits. There are no current plans to extend free parking privileges to retirees.

2. One of the results of the Chancellor's Task Force on Retirees (2013-2014; see the Committee's report 2013-2014) was to establish a website for retirees. John Younger worked with Justin Henning to develop a website (<http://retirees.drupal.ku.edu/>), which Younger fleshed out somewhat with various kinds of information. He then turned the website over to the Provost's Office to maintain professionally. The website currently exists, and contains much important information. An ongoing concern is the comprehensiveness and currency of its information.

After consultation with the Endacott Society leadership, we suggest that information clearinghouses such as this website be given greater prominence with KU employees, most notably in the University's seminars for employees who will be transitioning into retirement. We further recommend that next year's committee consider turning over custodianship of this website to the Endacott Society, which has members who are motivated to keep this information up to date as part of the Society's outreach to retirees. Finally, we suggest that the “transition to retirement” seminars give a short segment of time to representatives of the Endacott Society to introduce this valuable resource (Endacott) to attendees. We have shared these suggestions with Ola Faucher.

3. One of the tasks considered by last year's committee is exit surveys. This year's committee did not feel that further elaboration on this issue beyond what was done last academic year was necessary. However, given the many established benefits of exit surveys for organizations, we urge University HR to consider adopting exit surveys.

4. This issue of how to make KU more employee friendly is a complex topic. In addition to different specific benefits, the general tone of KU's interactions with its retirees is an key determinant of their attitudes towards the University. It is important to avoid the appearance of indifference to KU retirees. We urge next year's committee to consider specific steps that

the University can take to make KU more “retiree friendly”, particularly steps that have low financial costs.

5. After some deliberation, the Committee decided that it was not in its purview to suggest standardized policies concerning retirees across the University. Each unit treats its retirees differently (see, for instance, Handbook, "Voting Privileges"). Standardizing such treatments is an issue for the Provost's Office to consider.

Recommendations to the University Senate: Future work of the RRB Committee

We recommend that the RRB Committee consider the following as part of its work in the coming 2016-17 academic year.

1. The charge to maintain relations between the RRB Committee and the Endacott Society needs to remain. The chair should consult the Society at least yearly.
2. The RRB Committee notes that the retirements of KU employees seems to be treated in disparate ways by various units and recommends that the Provost's Office should attempt to standardize the treatment of retirees across the University.
3. HR should provide more and continuous information about the process of retiring, about post-retirement health plans, etc.
4. As noted above, the RRB should consider cost-effective ways to make KU more “retiree friendly”.
5. In an era of great turbulence and change both inside and outside of KU, HR should create campus-wide surveys concerning the climate of employment at KU and should offer these at regular intervals (we suggest at least annually). These climate surveys should focus on issues of fairness, clarity, equality, health insurance, and other matters of interest to KU's employees.
6. The RRB Committee notes that the list of issues on the Committee's charge has been stable for a number of recent years. The Committee recommends that next year's RRB Committee begin its work by considering how to refresh this list of issues to include/substitute issues that have been overlooked or have a better chance of gaining traction in the University of Kansas community.

Appendix

FY2016 COMMITTEE ON RETIREES RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

Approved by SenEx:

Approved by University Senate:

- For further information or to schedule a meeting with SenEx to discuss charges or the committee's work, contact SenEx Chair Michael Williams mikewms@ku.edu.
- Minutes of each meeting should be e-mailed to the Governance Office (govern@ku.edu) as they are approved. The minutes will be posted to the Governance web site.
- If the committee is recommending a change to university policy or rules, SenEx must officially receive that recommendation by March 29, 2016 in order to meet timeline requirements for full review by Governance.
- Please send a report of the committee's actions on each of the charges, as well as any recommendations the committee wishes to make concerning charges or membership for the following academic year, to University Governance, at govern@ku.edu, and submit the final report by April 15, 2016.

Standing charges:

1. Promote all appropriate means of communication with retirees, with special emphasis on seeking information from them about their needs and concerns.
2. Consult with SenEx about views and concerns related to retirees.
3. Seek feedback from retirees and University offices about the *Retirees Handbook* and work with staff to ensure that it remains current. (ongoing)
4. Maintain an open line of communication with both the Endacott Society and the provost's office whose representatives are members of the committee, with representatives of the committee offering to meet at least once each semester with the Endacott Society.

Specific charges:

1. Determine whether and how privileges that now exist for retirees (parking permits) can be extended to the spouses of deceased retirees. While it is recognized that spouses of deceased retirees are not eligible for KU email addresses, could they be entered into the KU Alert System (<http://www.alerts.ku.edu/>)? Determine the number of individuals who would be eligible for this benefit.

Donna Hultine, Director of Parking and Transit, is receptive to the possibility of allowing the widows and widowers of retired KU personnel to purchase retiree

parking permits. It needs to be determined if there is any policy or legal reason for not doing so, and whether such a change would require action by the Parking Commission.)

2. Since the information available for retirees often differs, unit-by-unit, study the possibility of setting up an official KU website for depositing "information for retirees". Links to "The Handbook for Faculty and Other Unclassified Staff", "Information for Retirees and Prospective Retirees", the Endacott Society's homepage, and the Chair of the RRB Committee, as well as FAQs about retirement could be made available there.
3. Consider whether to continue to work directly with HR and the Office of the Provost to expand the HR "Exit Survey" to include questions specifically related to retirees' concerns and to determine whether there is a mechanism to encourage broader use of the survey by those who are retiring.
4. Participate in the oversight of the effort to make KU more "retiree friendly," which includes both KU retirees and retirees from other institutions moving into the Lawrence area.
5. Work toward uniform policies across the University in such areas as awarding emeritus status and hiring retirees.