

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
Regents' Conference Room
655 Research Parkway

Lance Newbold, Chair, Presiding
January 11, 2024
10:00 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions – Lance Newbold

Chair Newbold welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. (Zoom difficulties prevented the meeting from starting at 10 am.)

2. Approval of December 14, 2023 Minutes – Lance Newbold

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved as written.

INFORMATION OF INTEREST TO THE COUNCIL

3. Oklahoma Community Justice Network – Dr. Ina Agnew, Vice President for Student Services, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology

Ina reminded the council of the email she sent regarding the Legal First Aid Training workshop that is offered through OCJN. Ina said she is investing in her staff and their professional development, as this training will help identify and assist with the most common issues students might face (landlord issues, mental health, warrants, custody disputes and barriers to employment and housing). Ina proposed COSA and OSRHE partner to offer this training opportunity.

4. Discussion of 2024 Fair Labor Standards Act Updates –

- Josh Ulman, Chief Government Relations Officer, College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
- Basil Thomson, Government Relations, College and University Professional Association for Human Resources

Josh gave a brief background of his and Basil's involvement with CUPA-HR and their government relations team. Josh said he has been tracking FLSA changes for at least 20 years and Basil for the last decade. He explained the act is the 1938 federal law that establishes minimum wage and overtime pay standards and what is required from employers. The United States Department of Labor is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the FLSA.

Basil highlighted a few items anticipated in the 2023 proposed rulemaking:

- The new methodology of calculating the minimum salary threshold resulting in a significant increase of over 50%.
- Automatic updates to the minimum salary threshold to the 35th percentiles of weekly earnings with increases set every three years.

Basil said an effective date could be as early as 60 days after a final rule is published, which is projected to be April 2024, and implementation in June 2024. He mentioned the top six positions, based on salary data, that may be impacted on college and university campuses as:

- Academic Advisors – Counselors
- Student Admissions – Counselors
- Administrative Specialists – Coordinators
- Student Success Professionals
- Student Financial Aid Counselors
- Student Residence Hall Managers
- Athletic Trainers – Physical Therapists

Josh spoke about the challenges and concerns and advised discussions need to be held with institutional presidents, chief financial officers and chief human resources officers given the timetable and dramatic impact this can have on a campus. He mentioned options of increasing salaries to the new threshold or reclassifying exempt workers to hourly. He said employers must track hours of hourly employees carefully, as the language is broad.

Josh said a legal challenge is expected to include questions about the DOL's authority to impose the salary threshold increase, as well as its authority to implement automatic updates to those thresholds. He said the Supreme Court has already begun to "chip away" at agency authority this past year. It will be difficult for institutions to implement these changes and then the possibility of the court finding the Biden Administration's rule not valid. He said there may be a lot of litigation pathways. Josh said CUPA-HR will send out the latest information as this proceeds.

Basil closed with the survey results below:

- **95%** of survey respondents indicated they could only manage an increase to the salary threshold if it is lower than the proposed level.
- **84%** of respondents indicated they would need to reclassify previously exempt employees to nonexempt status as a result of this rule.
- **91%** of respondents do not support DOL automatically updating the salary threshold every three years.
- **89%** of respondents believe that DOL should provide 180 days or more to comply with any final rule published to increase the salary threshold.

The presentation was emailed to the council prior to the meeting. Basil also included a link in the chat [FLSA Overtime Resources | CUPA-HR](#).

Liz McCraw (SEOSU) asked for clarification of how to pay a nonexempt, hourly wage employee who is on-call and responds after hours. Josh said there are special rules for this, which are explained in the link Basil provided. He said it is a complicated methodology but can be done. Alberta Nutter (RSC) asked a question in the chat – The 2016 salary level was \$47,400. What drove the increase to \$60,000? Josh said democrats, when in power, want to establish a very high threshold. The formula was to be the 40th percentile of all salary workers in the census region. Josh said, since the 40th percentile was not previously acceptable to a court, it was lowered to the 35th percentile this time. He said there is not a lot of rationale in determining these percentages, and this causes a large problem with automatic updates. Josh said the data pool will not include many employees earning \$60,000 with the automatic increases. Alberta asked another question in the chat - Did comments identify the higher traditional salaries between the coasts and the middle of the country and the need to have different regional salary levels instead of a nationwide \$60K rule? Josh said the FLSA is designed to be a floor and that regional differences

should be handled under the statutory scheme. He said states are allowed to set a higher threshold, but the FLSA is supposed to set a minimum salary for the entire country, targeting the lowest cost region. Alberta asked another question in the chat - Do you think they will let us implement and make personnel actions as "temporary" to see if the rule will be rescinded? Josh said institutions can do whatever they want with respect to making changes, as nothing is permanent. He said changing an employee's status can be difficult. Josh said this can be done as the law changes, but the issue is the personnel side and employee relations created.

Lance thanked Josh and Basil for their information and resources to utilize as this rule moves forward.

5. Higher Education Day at the Capitol Brief – Dr. Jarrett Jobe, Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations, OSRHE

Jarrett informed the council of a change to the upcoming legislative tours. He said the tour scheduled at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) next Thursday has been canceled due to several legislative conflicts. The remaining schedule is intact:

January 17, 2024 – Rose State College

January 19, 2024 – Tulsa Community College, SE Campus

January 26, 2024 – Pete's Place, Krebs, OK

Jarrett mentioned Higher Ed Day at the Capitol will be Thursday, February 8, 2024, and held on the 2nd floor rotunda. He said the agenda is being finalized and should be available early this year. Jarrett said Governor Kevin Stitt and Senator Adam Pugh have confirmed their attendance. He encouraged the council to schedule time in advance for students to speak with their legislators and that invitations to student speakers will go out soon.

He reminded the council that a group photo with Governor Stitt and legislative leadership will be taken at 11:30 am. Jarrett encouraged campuses to bring their mascots to Higher Ed Day as well. Lunch with legislators is scheduled for noon. The house floor program will begin at 1 pm, with three student speakers, typically three legislators and Governor Stitt will give comments. Jarrett said they want every institution present in the house chamber and encouraged the council to designate four students to sit on the house floor as representatives of their institution during the Distinguished Service Awards presentation at 2 pm. Jarrett also mentioned the day is very hectic. He said the OSRHE legislative team will be happy to help facilitate a day for institutions to meet with legislators during the session.

Adam Johnson (SWOSU) asked a question in the chat – Is there a suggested number of students to bring to Higher Ed Day? Jarrett said he does not want to limit the number of students. He said the goal for the day is for legislators to see our presence across the state and the more the merrier at this event.

Jarrett gave an update on the budget that was presented to the Senate and House Committees over the last four weeks. He said the reception has been positive. He mentioned Oklahoma Promise language will be created so any student that graduates from an accredited high school in Oklahoma and is admitted to a college or university in our system will be eligible for the program. He said another change in OKP language is for students that have been impacted by DHS custody as foster kids. These students can apply until they have either graduated high school or a little more time will be given to those receiving a GED in the summer.

Lance thanked Jarrett for the all of the information provided today. He told the council that Rose State College students research who their legislators are in advance and stressed the importance of students knowing their hometown representatives.

6. Oklahoma Money Matters (OKMM) Financial Literacy Services – Sara Lorenzen, Outreach Specialist III, Oklahoma Money Matters & Ready Set Repay, Oklahoma College Assistance Program, OSRHE

Sara introduced herself to the council. She is a certified financial education instructor and outreach specialist III for Oklahoma College Assistance Program. She said OKMM is a personal finance education program that helps K-12 schools, higher education campuses, businesses and community partners develop or expand educational services that empower Oklahomans to make positive financial choices. The program has been offering these services since 2004. Ready Set Repay is the student loan management and default prevention initiative of OCAP. Ready Set Repay works with student loan borrowers and Oklahoma higher education institutions to help students make smart borrowing decisions and successfully repay their student loans.

She shared student survey results revealing 38% of college dropouts cite money as the biggest factor, 24% reported running out of money six or more times in the last year, 61% reported having trouble getting access to \$500 in cash or credit in case of an emergency, 49% reported being housing insecure and 22% showed signs of food insecurity. She said these numbers are much higher in certain areas of Oklahoma.

Sara said the OKMM team is happy to visit campuses to help with financial education, new student orientation and student loan information. Money management workshops are also available for students and staff in person or via webinar. OKMM offers a free Make it Count Money Webinar Series the third Tuesday of each month that can be uploaded to You Tube to be viewed at a later time as well. Another resource offered is the Train-the-Trainer workshop for institutions that prefer their staff to offer this type of training to students. OKMM has many free resources, self-paced online modules, video series, webinars and publications. They also offer help with developing student financial content for an institution's social media outlets.

Sara briefly explained the Ready Set Repay website and videos break down student loan information, payment plans, how to borrow smart, income-driven repayment plans and loan forgiveness programs. She provided the web link www.ReadySetRepay.org.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

7. Student Leadership Retreat Update – Lindsay Echols, Executive Director of Campus Compact and Director of Student Affairs, OSRHE

Lindsay said she will be emailing the SLR workshop proposal information soon. She asked the council to forward this to their staff who would like to present on the following leadership tracts:

- Mastering Self-Management: Goals, Time, and Resilience
- Catalysts for Change: Fostering Community Impact and Social Responsibility
- Discovering Your Leadership Identity: Styles and Self-Assessment
- Synergy in Action: Mastering Team Building and Collaboration
- Navigating Your Future: Crafting Your Career Pathway
- Strategic Minds: Enhancing Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

She reminded the council of the legislative panel scheduled for the SLR. Dr. Jarrett Jobe is assisting her in confirming which legislators will be in attendance. She said students will be given an opportunity to ask questions. They are working on how students will submit their questions in advance. Some topics may be education, policy, economic development, environmental concerns, healthcare access, mental health resources for students, higher education funding, hot topics facing college students, etc.

Lindsay said all students serving in a leadership position or thinking about that should be registered to attend the SLR. She mentioned the possibility of having campus career services staff on hand to help students with their resumes. She will include information on this in her workshop proposal email to the council.

Adam Johnson (SWOSU) asked in the chat if staff should register differently than students. Debbie Myrick (OSRHE) said the online registration has two options to select; student sessions and faculty/staff.

8. State Regents' Update – Dr. Robert Placido, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, OSRHE

Robert reminded the council that Dr. Colbi Beam is the new Associate Vice Chancellor for State Grants and Scholarships. He said she is a great resource for questions about Oklahoma's Promise. He gave an update on the progress of OSRHE's new centralized scholarship portal and said phase I is the design stage of building the portal with the Inspire To Teach scholarship. He said other scholarships and types of services and resources will be added to the portal so students can sign into their account and see what educational opportunities are available to them. Institutional financial aid offices will eventually be able to download student information, allowing more transparency.

Robert said the concurrent enrollment working group subcommittees have provided their recommendations. Angel Icenhour and Stephanie Beauchamp (OSRHE) will draft what policy and/or funding changes will be presented to the State Regents. Robert hopes to have these approved by this summer. Calleb Mosburg (NWOSU) said he was a member of the working group. He thanked Robert for the invitation to participate and making sure COSA was part of the discussions. Robert said he appreciated Calleb's engagement.

9. Announcements – Lance Newbold

Lance announced the Executive Committee decided to meet via Zoom the Friday prior to each monthly COSA meeting date. This will allow more time to discuss the agenda. He said there will be no Executive Committee meetings the morning of the COSA meeting date.

The next COSA meeting will be during the Student Leadership Retreat on February 29, 2024, at Oklahoma City Community College.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:34 am.

Upcoming Events of Interest to the Council

- February 29, 2024 – Student Leadership Retreat, Oklahoma City Community College