Value Proposition for Alternative Assignment of Academic Staff
Academic Staff Senate Ad Hoc Working Group on Appointments
February 2011

UWS 12.08 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code allows academic staff to be reassigned to other positions in the university if laid off for reasons due to budget. It requires that UWM actively seek to establish reassignments and, in the case of staff with indefinite appointments, support professional development to enable staff to carry out the duties of the new position, provided such retraining can take place within one year.

UWS 12.08 is part of the UW System’s broader, Chapter 12 policy pertaining to layoff of academic staff for reasons of budget or program. As such, this provision pertaining to reassignment of laid off staff is accompanied by provisions for reappointment processes. The policy consequently applies both to staff who have already been laid off and those who are in the process of being laid off.

This document describes the value and importance of reassigning academic staff in the event of layoff due to budget reasons. Making a good-faith effort to identify potential job opportunities for talented, hard-working academic staff employees—and accepting those staff to fill openings in your own college/school—has significant advantages to UWM, the employee, and the community at large that should be considered when determining the need for layoff due to budget, and when seeking to fill vacancies following staff layoffs. These benefits include:

Benefits to the Employee’s Current College/School
- Meet budget goals without layoff
- No unemployment benefits
- No need to recall laid-off staff for new position openings
- Improved staff morale

Benefits to the Receiving College/School
- No downtime for unfilled positions
- No external recruitment and associated expenses
- Immediate application of employee’s knowledge base and experience

Benefits to the Employee
- Continued employment
- Increased morale and loyalty
- Opportunity to learn new skills
- Retention of health care benefits

Benefits to the University
- A needed position can be filled instead of left open in the event of a hiring freeze
- Employee’s familiarity with UWM mission, goals, objectives
- More seamless transition to serve student needs
- Expansion of knowledge base and opportunity for employee to gain new skill sets in the accepting department

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1 “Each institution shall devote its best efforts to securing alternative appointments within the institution in positions for which staff laid off [for reasons of budget] are qualified…” and

“Each institution should seek to provide financial assistance for academic staff members who have indefinite appointments and who are to be laid off to readapt within the operational area or within another operational area of the institution where such readaptation is feasible within one year’s time.”
Benefits to the Community at Large
- Employed workers contribute to the state or federal tax base
- Decreased reliance on limited federal unemployment benefits
- Employee wages propel economic growth through consumer purchasing
- Lower risk of home foreclosures, thereby preserving home values and property taxes, decreasing urban blight, and preventing homelessness