

Results from Senate Survey: Proposal 5-10

Faculty constituent surveys sent:	472	Staff constituent surveys sent:	523
Faculty constituent surveys returned:	228 - 48.3%	Staff constituent surveys returned:	230 - 44%

Disqualified 5 surveys:
(3) with no name
(2) with illegible names
(3) had two survey sheets included but only one was counted

Breakdown of responses by Question: (not everyone answered every question)

Question 1: "President Mroz and the executive team have proposed changes in the University's retirement contribution structure for next year. Do you support these changes?"

YES:	Faculty - 31	Staff - 53
No:	Faculty - 169	Staff - 146
No Opinion:	Faculty - 25	Staff - 28

Question 2: "President Mroz and the executive team have proposed changes to the health benefits for the university community next year. Do you support these changes?"

YES:	Faculty - 27	Staff - 42
No:	Faculty - 182	Staff - 165
No Opinion:	Faculty - 17	Staff - 19

Question 3: "Do you support the current communication process of the benefit plans: announcements, informational meetings, and then choose the available plans all within 2 weeks?"

YES:	Faculty - 33	Staff - 62
No:	Faculty - 181	Staff - 147
No Opinion:	Faculty - 14	Staff - 17

Question 4: "President Mroz and the executive team have stated: "These changes will make it easier for the University to attract and maintain excellent faculty and professional staff". Do you agree with this statement?"

YES:	Faculty - 21	Staff - 32
No:	Faculty - 188	Staff - 161
No Opinion:	Faculty - 18	Staff - 33

Comments from Senate Survey: Proposal 5-10

General Comments:

1. This is a very weak survey, very leading. The issue of governance is important but this does not get at it.
2. I believe these questions are poorly worded and therefore lead to responding NO.
3. This is such a poorly designed questionnaire with biased questions immediately evident, that it will produce no useful information!
4. Do I support some stronger form of faculty representation? YES.

5. Why do this after the fact? If you want input, ask before changes are implemented. What did it cost to do this survey?

Question 1: "President Mroz and the executive team have proposed changes in the University's retirement contribution structure for next year. Do you support these changes?"

1. It's hard to say without knowing how these changes were arrived at. Just looking at my own situation, it looks like I will end up marginally behind where I am right now.
2. Staff screwed – underpaid and have to contribute more of salary to make a little difference
3. Proposed? Does this mean the changes may not occur?
4. The information session has not been held yet. Do not know if I support.
5. So far I can't figure out what they are so I can't support them.
6. No, because it reduces MTU contributions.
7. Not TIAA-CREF member – I am MEPSERS
8. I believe the changes have already been made. I understand cost containment and realize just how lucky we are to even have \$1.00 for \$1.00 contributed to our matching. In the non-education sector it's difficult to get dollar for dollar anymore.
9. I wasn't aware that there was going to be a change.
10. I have MERS – I don't feel confident to have an opinion on another person's retirement.
11. This plan hurts the employees who can least afford to be hurt.
12. Give him the Nobel prize!
13. Not clear what is meant by support? Would I have voted to structure the options this way if I had a chance?
14. The compensation part of these changes is disturbing.
15. The 2-2% matching was an option provided to those when MTU changed health care for retirees. The new options, in effect, ends this program. The cohort of employees currently taking the 2% match are once again "harmed" by MTU 's change in health care for retirees.
16. I don't have a clear idea about the changes since there is no detailed information on the web pages of HR. This information should be available so you can come with questions to the informational meetings.
17. Is this how we're financing the SFHI's?
18. Costs have to be taken into consideration and changes need to be made.
19. But wish it would have been more salary and benefit neutral overall.

Question 2: "President Mroz and the executive team have proposed changes to the health benefits for the university community next year. Do you support these changes?"

1. Once again, it is hard to say without knowing what those changes are. All I know so far is that the PPO premium is increasing and the HAS out-of-pocket maximum is increasing by 20%. I'm sure there are other changes.
2. Surely won't go to the Dr's anymore. Can't afford even with coverage!!
3. I have not yet attended a session. So I don't know yet.
4. Each year we get less and less health care!
5. Not adequate info. How does it lower the fringe really!
6. Should have considered that those choosing the HAS had to do this for a 2 year period.
7. No, health benefits have been reduced.
8. Increase of 60% out of my pocket per month. Aetna's rates only increased 10-15% - why?
9. The current health benefit plan was supposed to be a change for the better last year. You've cut benefits twice now (Aetna has less than BC) and you've raised premiums.
10. Per my comment above, the changes have already been made. I would certainly like to see more changes to health for employee plus one. I don't feel an employee plus one should have to pay the same out of pocket as a family.
11. I wasn't aware that there was going to be a change.
12. You should have imposed a deductible years ago – too late now. It's like trying to rearrange furniture on the Titanic – you're already sunk. Health care went out of control when the University eliminated the deductible back in 99-00 or earlier – Travelers to Wausau?? We went to \$10 then \$20 co-pay and 100% coverage for major procedures. The providers locally got greedy and raised all their prices.

Employees got lazy, careless and felt entitled to 100% coverage. Now you're trying to correct that.
Good luck.

13. Dumb question.
14. Again, I wasn't involved in the discussion. I would need to know the alternatives that were discussed.
15. Actually, I do not know what these changes are but since health benefits have been getting worse every year, I expect it is for the worse.
16. Did not support change to Aetna either.
17. It's okay. But this is like asking "do you support higher costs". I wish that the costs weren't increasing but I think they're reasonable.
18. Blue Cross was better!!!
19. We should restructure compensations so that somebody earning above a certain salary level get fixed salary increases instead of having them proportional to current salary. There should also be a salary cap beyond a certain salary level. The savings could be used to shore up health benefits without changing retirement package.
20. Same reason only old information in HR web pages.
21. Not enough information; but with costs going up so rapidly something has to be done.
22. How can MTU justify the "cost of inflation" increase in health benefits, but does not give "cost of inflation" raises. I cannot afford the current insurance co-pays not to mention the proposed increases.

Question 3: "Do you support the current communication process of the benefit plans: announcements, informational meetings, and then choose the available plans all within 2 weeks?"

1. Sprung up quickly.
2. Should have been two months ago.
3. This year the period was six weeks and the changes are minor. Last year the period was too short for the amount of changes. Doesn't the Senate have a member on the BLG? Why doesn't that Senate member inform MTU employees of pending changes?
4. Would prefer announcements while changes are a "work-in-progress." (Even if no input is really taken the appearance of asking for input/feedbacks, i.e. involvement in decision-making – will make it more acceptable)
5. More time needed!
6. Several items are not clear at all.
7. Too short a time period.
8. How about ask for our opinion BEFORE you change the plans!
9. I think they are giving us more than 2 weeks though. Most companies give you 2 I think we get 4.
10. I don't believe this is the case. The forums themselves span just short of 6 weeks.
11. This is wrong. I can't answer this question.
12. I believe they are giving us six weeks, aren't they?
13. In the last round, last year, the administration lied – Ingrid Cheney said the health benefit would not change – just the cost of co-pays would go up. Instead many procedures are no longer covered.
14. Do we have a choice?
15. If faculty were involved in the process.
16. Actually I have not made a meeting. The written stuff is misleading, like saying retirement change instead of retirement change and compensation cut.
17. No – two weeks is too short.
18. Absolutely not. I do not even know what changes are proposed!
19. It's okay.
20. The 5-5-5 option may be like Northwestern but the president did not inform us of Northwestern's complete wage package. Does NW provides subsidized health care to retirees?
21. I would like information also available in the university web pages.
22. Much too rushed.
23. Need more time.
24. I was not notified of the changes. I heard about them through my co-workers.
25. Actually, the time is 6 weeks.
26. More written information needed.
27. Forum 1: 10/19 Enroll by: 11/25 Two weeks?
28. Same mistakes as last year. Fast rollout, no discernable way to calculate one's own interest.
29. I want a voice before the decision is made.

30. If you can please cite this: There is no communication between the executive and the employees. It was like a king making a decision and then just announce to his subjects. Are we still in the middle ages?

Question 4: "President Mroz and the executive team have stated: "These changes will make it easier for the University to attract and maintain excellent faculty and professional staff". Do you agree with this statement?"

1. What is in it for staff? Underpaid not attractive when expenses go up and salary doesn't.
2. Ridiculous!
3. Most information sessions have not been held yet. I don't know yet.
4. Take it all into account. This is a cut in compensation not a good way to attract new staff.
5. It's just more complicated! Why not just increase wages if the % of benefits to wages is too high?
6. Attract.. maybe. Maintain existing..maybe. But really many of us won't leave because we like it here or have family ties. (or maybe we aren't in the excellent category).
7. Absolutely not. We're not on par with salaries or benefits!!
8. I don't know but those of us who are already here, we should get a say.
9. We still offer great benefits. Maybe diversify more though.
10. Don't know because I don't know what the changes are.
11. I believe this could attract new (and current) but it's already a moving target. Prospective employees will do their homework before accepting and relocating.
12. Salaries are one piece of recruitment and retention but not the only piece.
13. Are you kidding me!
14. I am a MEPSRS employee so I still don't understand the ramifications for employees like me.
15. I don't think the survey reflects my opinion. While I would love to continue to receive the awesome benefits we're used to I understand and agree with the importance of shifting benefit dollars to salary dollars. Also – it's my understanding that these recommendations came from a committee of our peers – not the executive team. I think the Senate constituency needs to know that.
16. This used to be true – now MTU is no better than anyone else.
17. Part of being here was the insanely-great benefits package which has only eroded since I was hired. That is not helping to "maintain" me.
18. Not sure retirement change makes salaries look bigger (good for recruitment). Health benefit change will hurt (I am sure).
19. Undermining our benefits will do the opposite. If you want to attract and maintain quality staff offer exceptional packages. The University doesn't have a great endowment or National recognition (not on the scale of Cornell for example) But what we can offer is exceptional quality of life (balance between work and personal life) through programs like health care, benefits, maternity/paternity leave. Eroding the benefits will only weaken our ability to get/maintain good people. My projection: (1) New faculty (2) spend all their start up money (3) get cherry picked to a different university just as they are ramping up (4) lots of \$\$ invested no money returned to the university.
20. Most job candidates look at the wage package not just salaries.
21. I do not believe this argument that people just consider salaries. People do not come or stay due to other reasons, such as lack of transparency, entrenched top-heavy administration, etc.
22. It would probably be more effective to "sell" the whole compensation package. The notion that you are going to offer less and expect people to like it more is idiotic. If you really sell it and encourage candidates to research their other offers we'll do better.
23. First I need to know what these changes are about.
24. Attract – already competitive. Maintain – maintaining overall cap with benefits and the tier salaries to OK study average excellent. Above average!
25. I don't see how this can be true.
26. It depends on the career stage of the candidate.
27. The process needs to be managed to keep costs at a level that MTU can handle.
28. Strongly NO.
29. Absolutely Not!!!
30. It's problematic when the representatives of the team do not understand what was already promised to their constituents. i.e. The 2 year coverage of dental/eye care that some opted for last year. It is a major worry when the institution itself has such a short institutional memory.
31. #3 and #4 are the real questions.
32. B.S.
33. Many of us cannot understand this statement. This does not make sense. Do they think we are stupid???

34. Here is one for you. Why is Northwestern a peer institution for fringe benefits and Oklahoma State is a peer for salary? It looks like the administration is shopping around.