UGARA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

UGA Foundation Conference Room
394 S. Milledge Avenue
Monday, April 11, 2016
10:00 a.m.


Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Lauth who introduced our guests, Dr. Mary Ann Johnson, Interim Director of the Institute of Gerontology, and Dean Phil Williams, College of Public Health, along with the four newly elected council members whose term begins with the September 2016 meeting: Jim Cobb (History Department), Tom Eaton (Law School), and Laura Dowd (Arts and Sciences). Nancy McDuff (Admissions Office) was not able to attend the meeting. Current members of the Council also introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

After noting that the date for the May reception should be May 5 rather than May 6, the minutes from the March 14 meeting were approved.

Committee Reports

• Treasurer’s Report. The current balance remains at $15,017.61.

• Benefits. Mark Eason reported that the Georgia Legislature ended their session on March 24. There were no bills passed that directly impacted retirees. Senate Bill 335 passed which talks about the investing and co-mingling of funds and is awaiting signature of the Governor. All other bills sitting on the table expired. There will be a Board of Regents meeting on April 13 and it is a budget meeting of the amended FY 2017 budget, but there was nothing listed in the agenda that was related to benefits.

• New Retirees Reception. Lindsay Copus reported that invitations should be mailed no later than April 12 with a RSVP date of April 27. A list of all retirees who do not RSVP by the deadline will be contacted by phone. A sign-up sheet for UGARA members willing to make phone calls to those retirees not responding was passed around the room. Copus will contact those volunteering via email with the names and numbers of retirees who should be called along with a script of bullet points to be included in the phone call. This follow-up will hopefully help to increase attendance at the reception.

• Nominations Committee: At the March meeting the position of secretary had not been filled. Freda Scott Giles has been recommended to fill that position for the coming academic year. Following a motion, second, and vote, she was elected as secretary.

• University System of Georgia Retirees Council (USGRC). Brahm Verma reported that Tom Lauth will be representing the University of Georgia on this Council for the coming year. Verma also noted that Ray Chambers (Bainbridge State College) has been elected to the position of secretary for the USGRC.

Old Business

• UGA Retiree Health Insurance and Advisement Center. Although Travis Jackson was not able to attend the meeting, he reported via email that USG is allowing Human Resources to enroll any non-responders that they come across on an individual basis. HR has been able to enroll 7-8 retirees that missed the deadline as well as backdate USG coverage until they are able to be picked up the Aon plan. Kurtz, who was a retired employee who was re-hired to work at the Advisement Center, reported that it was his
understanding that the Advisement Center would open again in the Fall during open enrollment for both new retirees and those existing retirees who might wish to make changes.

New Business

- President’s Report. Institute of Gerontology Study.

Institute of Gerontology Study: As reported and discussed in past meetings, Lauth has had several meetings with the Interim Director of the Institute of Gerontology and the Dean of the College of Public Health regarding interest in conducting a scientific study on the impact and transaction costs associated with the new method of providing health care insurance to retirees. Both Dr. Mary Ann Johnson and Dean Phil Williams were invited to attend today’s meeting. Lauth then asked Johnson to speak to the UGARA Council.

  o Presentation by Dr. Mary Ann Johnson

  Johnson gave the group a broad overview of the Institute for Gerontology and what it does. Johnson noted that the Institute employs a Model of Successful Aging and its mission is to prepare scholars, practitioners, and citizens for a rapidly aging society using research, teaching and outreach. Johnson then discussed the potential study of retirees.

  Aims of a study:

  (1) Estimate the transaction costs of the new health insurance plan on current UGA retiree.

  (2) Determine what programs were beneficial in lowering these costs including town hall meetings, counseling center at UGA, and company phone representatives.

  Overview of the Study:

  (1) Survey methods that might be used such as (a) Online, Qualtrix; (b) Mail; (c) Phone.

  (2) Types of survey questions.

  (3) The team involved in such a survey.

  (4) A timeline that such a study might be completed with a goal of disseminating the survey by September 1 (prior to open enrollment) with a return date of mid-October. Data analysis will continue through the end of the year. A brief report will be given to UGA and USG Human Resources by February 1, 2017.

  A copy of Johnson’s complete PowerPoint presentation may be found at the end to these minutes.

  o Discussion of the Study

  Johnson answered questions about the proposed study. One question broached was the possibility of a combination of type of survey methods with many Council members feeling that both a regular postal email and an email survey would be useful although the costs would be higher.

  Lauth noted that we can’t go forward with this study without both the President of the University of Georgia and the Chancellor of USG knowing about the study. Lauth and Eason have drafted a letter to both President Morehead and Chancellor Huckaby which was read to the Council by Lauth. The draft letter informs Morehead and Huckaby of UGARA’s plan to collaborate with the Institute of Gerontology to conduct a study of the impact on retirees of the USG insurance policy change and outlined how the study might take place and how the results of the study would be disseminated. The letter stated that both the USG and UGA Human Resources Offices will be invited to submit questions that they feel should be included in a survey. A copy of the letter sent to President Morehead and Chancellor Huckaby is included at the end of these minutes.

  Some concern was expressed about the ability to adhere to the study’s projected timeline should there be a delay in receiving feedback from Morehead, Huckaby or the Human Resources’ offices. There is a sense of urgency in getting this study completed before the next open enrollment, but as time passes
it is not as easy to get answers. Lauth, however, anticipates a fairly quick response from both
Morehead and Huckaby once the letter has been sent and that the HR Offices will be made aware of
the approaching deadline once we move forward. Hannon recommended that information about the
research team and timeline should be included with the letter to Huckaby and Morehead in order to
help establish the credentials and the sense of urgency in moving forward.

Aderibigbe expressed concern about objectivity or independence of such an academic study if the
offices of UGA or USG Human Resources provide input and recommend changes or questions to the
survey. In response Lauth stated that what goes into the final survey will be the prerogative of the
research team but the Council is mindful of seeking a balance of (1) what might the HR offices say
that might be useful to us and (2) not having these offices fearful of our conducting a study. Having
the study published in peer-reviewed professional journals will authenticate its objectivity. This will
also serve as a formal report to both UGA and USG will provide information that may be useful to
the Offices of Human Resources.

Question about the amount of UGARA funds committed was asked. While the Council committed
$2,500 at the March meeting, there may be a need to commit additional funds if we move forward
with a mixed survey of email and mail. Departments or colleges associated with performing this
study will provide in-kind faculty research support. All funds will be used for supplies and a small
amount of hourly support. Dean Williams indicated that he would be willing to support the study with
some small amount, but no amount was specified.

The letter to Morehead and Huckaby will go forward and the assumption is that this study will also
move forward. Should there be a need to have a meeting before September to further address the
study a meeting will be called.

- **Facebook Page.** Hannon requested that anyone interested in taking over the UGARA Facebook and
  Website pages for the coming year stay after the meeting to talk with her.

- **Save the Date: New Retirees Reception – May 5, 2016.**

- Lauth thanked the Council members who are rotating off for their service. Meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting:** Monday, September 12, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharron C. Thompson, Secretary (2015-2016)
UGA Institute of Gerontology

Mary Ann Johnson, PhD
Interim Director, Institute of Gerontology
College of Public Health
Flatt Professor, Dept. Foods and Nutrition
College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Model of Successful Aging

- Minimize risk of disease and disability
- Maintain physical and cognitive function
- Positive spirituality
- Continue engagement with life

Adapted from Rowe and Kahn, 1998, Crowther et al. 2002
UGA Institute of Gerontology

- Prepare scholars, practitioners, and citizens for our rapidly aging society
- Research
- Teaching
- Outreach

Dr. Kerstin Emerson
Assistant Professor

Dr. Heidi Ewen
Assistant Professor

Dr. Whitney Bignell
Post-Doctoral Associate

UGA Institute of Gerontology

- Courses
- Graduate Certificate of Gerontology
- Master of Public Health in Gerontology
- Dual Degrees
  - MSW/MPH in Gerontology
  - PharmD/MPH in Gerontology (pending)
UGA

More to come!

College of Public Health, Institute of Gerontology

3 Gerontology Faculty
23 Faculty Affiliates
11 Departments
7 Colleges, Schools, Institutes
6 Gerontology core courses
>15 courses campus-wide

College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

College of Pharmacy

School of Social Work

College of Education

Retirees and Institute of Gerontology

Teaching

Guest lectures
Practicums
Internships

Research

Volunteers for psychology, dementia, caregiving, food assistance, health promotion, surveys on housing, finances, health insurance

Clinics

Law
Kinesiology
Psychology

Outreach

Meeting rooms
Faculty speakers
Wellness Programs
12 Area Agencies on Aging
Athens Community Council on Aging
Georgia Gerontology Society

Whitney Bignell
web1975@uga.edu
Addressing the Impact of Changes in Health Insurance on Retirees

- 2015 policy changes presents a unique opportunity to study how retirees responded to and accommodated a significant change in their health insurance plan

- **Proposed research study – aims:**
  - Estimate the transaction costs of the new health insurance plan on current UGA retirees
  - Determine what programs were beneficial in lowering these costs including town hall meetings, counseling center at UGA, and company phone representatives

Transaction Costs:
Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time

- Initial reactions
- Choosing the right plan
- Signing up for the plan
- Experiences with new plan
### Survey Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>N and $</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online, Qualtrix</td>
<td>Random from those with email</td>
<td>1000 at $2,500</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>Random from those without email</td>
<td>100 divided by response rate (e.g., 30% response rate requires mailing 300), $5,000</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Random from those with phone number</td>
<td>100 completed calls, $100 each, $10,000</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Survey Questions

- **Demographics**
- **Emotional:** Degree of stress in switching physicians and providers
- **Physical health:** Ease of access to needed care, physicians, prescriptions
- **Financial:** Changes in costs of health care, premiums, paperwork
- **Time:** Paperwork, travel for care
- **Future:** What resources would be helpful

- **Initial reactions**
- **Choosing the right plan**
- **Signing up for the plan**
- **Experience with new plan**
- **Helpfulness of town hall meetings, counseling center, benefits advisors**
Team

UGA Human Resources
Northeast Georgia Area on Aging (if needed)

UGA Faculty Researchers
Kerstin Emerson, PhD, CPH
- Institute of Gerontology
- Dept. Health Policy and Management

Swarn Chatterjee, PhD, FACS
- Dept. Financial Planning, Housing, and Consumer Economics

Heidi Ewen, PhD, CPH & FACS
- Institute of Gerontology
- Dept. Financial Planning, Housing, and Consumer Economics
- Dept. Health Promotion and Behavior

Robb Nielsen, PhD, FACS
- Dept. Financial Planning, Housing, and Consumer Economics

Mary Ann Johnson, PhD, CPH & FACS
- Institute of Gerontology
- Dept. Foods and Nutrition

Timeline

Research meeting – weekly
- Design survey
- Stakeholder input
  - UGARA Council, human resources
- Revise survey
IRB submit by June 1
IRB approval by Aug 1
Disseminate survey by Sept 1
Return before Open Enrollment – October 15
Data analysis through December 31
Brief report to UGA and USG human resources by February 1, 2017
Peer-reviewed publications and full report through 2017
April 11, 2016

Jere W. Morehead  Henry M. Huckaby
President  Chancellor
The University of Georgia  The University System of Georgia
Administration Building  270 Washington St., S.W.
Athens, GA 30602  Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear President Morehead:
Dear Chancellor Huckaby:

We are writing to inform you that the University of Georgia Retirees Association (UGARA) Council is collaborating with the University of Georgia’s Institute of Gerontology to conduct a study of the impact on UGA retirees of the recent change in the method by which the University System of Georgia (USG) provides supplemental health insurance benefits to its retirees.

This 2015 policy change provides a unique opportunity for the Institute of Gerontology to study the manner in which its subject (aging) population responded to and accommodated a significant change in an important aspect of their lives. Although the scope and method of the study are still being determined, it is likely to involve an email survey of a random sample of UGA retirees for whom email addresses are available and a mail survey of a random sample of UGA retirees for whom only residential addresses (but not email addresses) are available. The study will be conducted by a research team from the Institute of Gerontology with nominal funding support from the UGARA Council. The UGARA Council will inform retirees in a cover letter that it supports the study and will encourage UGA retirees to participate in it.

The purpose of the study is to inform the gerontology scientific community about the impact of a significant public policy change on its subject (aging) population, and to inform the UGA and USG Human Resource offices of the strengths and weakness of the manner in which this policy change was implemented. To these ends, the Institute of Gerontology research team will prepare a paper or papers for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals, and will also...
deliver a report to the UGA and USG Human Resource offices. Such a report might be used to inform future implementation of the supplemental health insurance benefits policy, or other similar policies. In this connection, the UGARA Council and the Institute of Gerontology invite the UGA and USG Human Resource offices to submit questions or topics for possible inclusion in the survey instrument. Decisions about the content of the survey will be the prerogative of the Institute of Gerontology but every effort will be made to accommodate suggestions for inclusion in the survey. It is our expectation that as a scientific study, dissemination of the results will occur in several steps. A brief summary of the results will be sent to the UGA and USG Human Resources offices. The overall results will remain confidential until they are published in a peer-reviewed academic journal at which time they become public knowledge. A detailed report also will be provided to the UGA and USG Human Resources offices.

We will be pleased to meet with you to discuss this matter and answer any questions you might have, if you would find that useful.

Thank you again President Morehead for your generous support of UGA retirees through the establishment of the University of Georgia Human Resources retirees information center in Athens.

Thank you again Chancellor Huckaby for your response earlier this year to our several questions about this new policy.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Lauth
President, UGARA Council, 2015-16

Marcus A. Eason
President, UGARA Council, 2016-17

cc: Philip L. Williams
Dean, College of Public Health