



4C's MONTHLY UPDATE: October 2007

Those who have attended the recent chapter meetings have been told of funding problems we are facing with regard to promotions, Willis, and Long Term Disability Insurance for those members who are participating in the Alternate Retirement Program. For those who have not been able to attend chapter meetings, have not yet had meetings at their college, or may not yet understand the problem, we thought it would make sense to share with you several of the questions and answers that have been discussed.

Q. How are promotions, Willis upgrades, and Long Term Disability funded?

A. Promotion and Willis are funded through our contract specifically under Article XXI section F (1). This section funds promotions, "changes in duties" (Willis), and grievance adjustments. This funding, a percentage of base payroll, creates rolling dollars, dollars which increase the gross payroll each year.

Long Term Disability is funded through transfers of cash, accumulated money which is not spent in a given fiscal year, or lump sum dollars which are designated for other purposes in the contract but have not been used. These allocations are also found in Article XXI Section F. These are things such as sabbaticals, retraining, professional development, computer/information literacy, the Minority Fellowship Program, and unused grievance adjustment monies. Of these cash pots, the grievance monies, retraining, and computer/information literacy have been the ones in which the largest amounts of cash have accumulated. Grievance monies are the most commonly used funds for transfer.

Q. Why is this a problem?

A. Throughout most of this past decade the union has not negotiated enough rolling dollars in Article XXI Section F (1) to pay for promotion and Willis upgrades, and the cost of the Long Term Disability Insurance has increased dramatically, from between \$20,000 to \$30,000 in the mid 90's to over \$160,000 per year.

Q. Why didn't the union negotiate enough rolling dollars?

A. Traditionally, the union negotiated .67% of base payroll to fund promotion and Willis. For many years, this was more than enough rolling dollars. In fact, because promotions were limited due to slotting, there were surpluses in rolling dollars and cash. When the union negotiated an end to slotting and ranking, it agreed to use the surplus rolling dollars and asked for less money in our contracts. The union never estimated the increased cost of promotion resulting from the end of slotting and ranking. There were also a large number of Willis upgrades earlier in this decade for which there were insufficient rolling dollars. The straw that may have broken the camel's back is a result of the concession agreement. In that agreement, we gave up promotions and funding for it (.5% of base payroll), yet the union agreed to the employer's offer to promote members even though there were no rolling dollars to pay for the promotions.

Upcoming Events October

Thu., Oct. 4
HCC Chapter Meeting
3 PM, Room A208

Thu., Oct. 4
ACC Chapter Meeting
3:30 PM, Cafe II

Mon. Oct. 8
Columbus Day

Wed., Oct. 10
NCC Chapter Meeting
2:30, Cul. Arts Rm

Sat., Oct. 13
Delegate Assembly
10:30 AM, 4C's Office

Mon., Oct. 15
GWCC Chapter Meeting
12:30 PM, Rm 160

Fri., Oct. 19
MXCC Chapter Meeting

Thu., Oct. 25
TXCC Chapter Meeting
2:30 PM, Rm 201

Thu., Oct. 25
MCC Chapter Meeting
3 PM

For other events, check
the calendar on the
4C's website.

Q. If there were insufficient rolling dollars negotiated to fund promotions and Willis, how were these items paid for?

A. Primarily through cash (this is called “bridging”). There was sufficient cash in the grievance fund, retraining fund, and computer/information literacy to pay for these items until the recent negotiations where the parties, through memorandums of agreement, agreed to negotiate a resolution to the problem (i.e. negotiate more rolling dollars for promotions and Willis – enough to pay for current promotions and upgrades as well as to pay for past promotions and upgrades which were funded through cash).

Q. Did the union and the employer negotiate enough rolling dollars in the recently negotiated and arbitrated contract to deal with the issue?

A. No. In fact there was never any proposal from either side to do so. The union did propose and won in arbitration .67% of base payroll, the amount negotiated throughout most of our contracts in the past.

Q. Is the .67% of base payroll enough?

A. No. The amount negotiated was more than enough when there was slotting and ranking for promotions. However, we no longer have slotting and ranking, and we have eliminated time in rank as a bar to promotions. The union never, when it made its proposals, estimated the increased cost of the elimination of slotting and ranking, and then, never estimated the cost impact of eliminating time in rank.

Q. Are there enough rolling dollars for future promotions?

A. We don’t know yet. There may not be enough.

Q. What is the current union leadership doing to address the problems?

A. The union leaders are going to approach the Comptroller’s Office, with the help of our fellow SEIU locals, to ask that the Comptroller pay for Long Term Disability Insurance. The Comptroller already pays for this insurance for those who participate in the Alternate Retirement Program who work for UConn and CSU’s. This would mean that about \$500,000 in cash that would be needed for Long Term Disability Insurance could be used for promotions and Willis. Second, the union will make proposals for additional promotion dollars in the Allied Health/Dental/Nursing and in the Program Coordinators/Department Chair re-openers. Third, we will delay any decisions to use cash for other purposes before we know how much cash will be needed for promotions and Willis. In past years, cash was used to give additional monies for professional development: \$100,000 was transferred from retraining to professional development last year. Also, about \$330,000 was used over the past seven years to buy release time for a union official, and tens of thousands of dollars were transferred for use by the Center for Teaching.

Q. Will that be enough?

A. Again, we don’t know yet. We are in the process of assessing future needs. We have made a Freedom of Information request to the Board of Trustees to get details as to how promotions and Willis were funded (i.e. how much money was rolling dollars and how much was cash for each of the last 10 years), and we will estimate the cost of future promotions.

Q. Will you keep the members informed? How?

A. Yes. Through our web site, the Chronicles, email, and Chapter meetings.

Q. If there are decisions which may impact members’ rights in the contract, will we be consulted?

A. The members will be involved throughout and nothing will be done which may alter anything in the contract without the ratification of the members.