

3-24-98

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Student Recreation Center to the Faculty Senate

Charge: Resolution # 97-28, passed at the 9 September, 1997 meeting of the Faculty Senate: Study the plausibility of providing faculty and staff with a fee-subsidized membership to the Student Recreation Center through the employee benefits plan.

Report date: March, 1998

Members:

W. Scott Thomson, Associate Professor, Education, Chair
Stewart Mixon, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
Nancy Mize, Director, Student Recreation Center
Stephen Dock, Associate Professor, Foreign Language
Ken Wilson, Associate Professor, Sociology
SGA designates three members (who did not attend)

Visitors:

David Emmerling, Director, Academic Support and Counseling Center, Medicine

The committee met three times as a full committee and on one other occasion in sub-committee.

The committee discussed and reviewed faculty and staff wellness, referring to documents with titles such as The Direct and Indirect Financial Impact of Physical Inactivity on Musculo-skeletal and Circulatory Claim Costs in North Carolina, (Presented by the North Carolina Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health), and Did the state make us couch potatoes?: Coalition says North Carolina nearly flunking in efforts to keep us fit (The Charlotte Observer, Feb. 22, 1998).

The Student Recreation Center Director reported that currently approximately 500 faculty and staff members are enrolled as fee-paid members of the center. She stated that the center currently averages between 2,500 and 3,000 guests per day, apportioned between students, staff and faculty.

The committee examined at length whether a third party provider, such as a health insurance company, could subsidize the annual fee for faculty and staff use of the Student Recreation Center. In a letter dated June 25, 1997 The AVCHR informed the Faculty Welfare Committee Chair that a program of this nature did, in fact, already exist at ECU. Individuals who had elected to participate in the Healthsource HMO as their health insurance option could select the Working Wonders program, which provides for a co-payment of \$150.00 for member enrollment in a preventative wellness program.

As AVCHR, Stewart Mixon investigated the implications and possibilities that all of the benefits providers: State Employees Health Insurance, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, or Healthsource HMO, could partially underwrite the \$240.00 annual expense of the faculty staff membership in this manner. This idea did not prove to be feasible for legal reasons. NC statutes regulate benefits, and no individual state agency [read institution here] can craft a benefits structure that exceeds the benefits structure legislated for all state employees.

The AVCHR indicated that he was willing to carry this question to the next meeting of the State Benefits Committee which meets at a later date. Only if the North Carolina State Benefits structure is legislatively amended would it be possible for the previous recommendations to receive further consideration.

A subcommittee composed of the Committee Chair, the AVCHR and the Student Recreation Center Director then asked for and was granted an audience with the Chancellor to further discuss and examine any possible solution that had, as yet not been considered. At the conclusion of the meeting it was the consensus of this group that there is not currently a solution that is internal to the institution. The Chancellor suggested, and the subcommittee agrees, that there is always a possibility that an external solution could be possible, should the faculty and staff identify a philanthropic body willing to underwrite the reoccurring expense of faculty staff participation in the Student Recreation Center.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Scott Thomson