



Senate of Academic Staff
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To: Charles W. Sorensen
Chancellor

From: Dennis Lee Shaw
Chair, Senate of Academic Staff

Date: November 27, 2006

Subj: Senate of Academic Staff Response Regarding the Criminal Background Check Policy

Chancellor Sorensen,

In an e-mail letter dated October 23, 2006 Provost Furst-Bowe requested the senates review and provide comments about the UW System Draft Criminal Background Check Policy and Stout's Implementation Plan.

As you may know, the Senate of Academic Staff has discussed the documents at our October 31, 2006 meeting, and appreciate that Wayne Argo, Doug Mell, and Donna Weber took the time to participate and answer questions from senators and guests.

At that October 31, 2006 meeting the Senate of Academic Staff, the UW-Stout Senate of Academic Staff unanimously passed a motion approving of the Drafts of the UW System Employee Criminal Background Check Policy (Policy Number: 06-61) and the UW-Stout Implementation Plan for the Policy.

The senate also wished to include the following comments and concerns we would like to see addressed:

Comments related to the UW System Policy:

- While we support the goal of making the campus safer for students, employees, and visitors, we are concerned about the costs associated with it, resulting in it being an unfunded mandate in a time when department budgets are already stretched.
- We would like to see a date, possibly one or two years in the future, where this policy should be reviewed to see if it is still necessary and accomplishing the purpose intended.

Comments related to UW-Stout's Implementation Plan:

- We are concerned that the plan would include students and even volunteers in some cases as well as LTEs. This will increase costs significantly and cause delays. Is this wise? What is considered a reasonable delay?
- Can the campus utilize the allowed discretion to exclude specific types of employees in specific jobs, such as student employees cashiering or handling cash where effective checks and balance systems are in place?
- We understand that the Chancellor can approve departments to allow a person to start work before the results come back. This might be necessary in many cases involving LTEs, Emergency Hires, Student Employees, and Volunteers. Can the Chancellor issue a blanket waiver (hire contingent on background check) for certain positions ahead of time?
- We are concerned that we may not have the infrastructure in place to handle these checks in a timely basis. Is there a plan to address this quickly if Human Resources finds they are overwhelmed?

We hope this feedback helps. Please feel free to call on me if you or any of your staff addressing this issue need any additional information about the discussion by the Senate of Academic Staff.