



Leave with pay was part of Ringeisen's hiring deal

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THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

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Richard Ringeisen's contract when he was appointed chancellor of the University of Illinois Springfield in 2001 guaranteed him a year of paid administrative leave when he eventually left the chancellor's office.

A letter sent in 2001 by then-U of I President James Stukel also envisioned that Ringeisen, who announced earlier this week he would retire as UIS chancellor on Oct. 31, could return to the ranks of tenured faculty members after that leave of absence.

When Ringeisen **announced his retirement earlier this week**, however, Ringeisen and U of I interim president Stanley Ikenberry agreed that, instead of a year's paid leave, Ringeisen would serve as consultant for long-range planning and special assistant to the president for 14 months following his retirement. He will receive an annualized salary of \$273,500 as a consultant and adviser, the same pay he gets as chancellor and the same salary he would have drawn if he had taken the promised leave, according to U of I spokesman Tom Hardy.

The U of I board of trustees is scheduled to consider Ringeisen's retirement agreement at its March 10 meeting.

It is "standard practice in higher education" for someone in Ringeisen's position to take a leave of absence after retirement, then return to the faculty, Hardy said.

"That won't be the case here, as he has agreed to forgo the tenured faculty position," Hardy said. Ringeisen holds the rank of professor in UIS's mathematical sciences program.

Tih-Fen Ting, UIS environmental studies professor and chairman of the Campus Senate, said she understands why people would raise questions about the agreement, given the fiscal situation at the university. UIS administrators, faculty and staff members are being required to take unpaid furlough days, and some layoff notices have been sent out because the state is behind in its payments to the U of I.

"This is the agreement, and it needs to be honored," Ting said. "But I understand people's concerns in terms of the monetary aspects."

Hardy said Ringeisen wouldn't be subject to any waiting period between retiring as chancellor and becoming an adviser because he's not leaving the university's employ.

"He's just moving from one position to another," Hardy said.

Ringeisen, 65, won't start to draw a pension until 2012, when his term as an adviser and consultant ends, Hardy added.

Ringeisen's new duties would include making recommendations for the Springfield campus's development, aiding the transition to new leadership, and planning development activities and other events to promote UIS.

Ringeisen also would be an adviser to the next U of I president. Ikenberry is interim president, but the university has yet to name a permanent successor for former U of I President Joseph White.

According to the proposed retirement agreement, Ringeisen would be "subject to any salary adjustment program applied to comparable level university administrators during the period of this agreement."

The agreement isn't intended to circumvent other university policies, including possible imposition of unpaid furlough days and payment of any unused vacation days, the document says.

Ringeisen also will be eligible to be reimbursed for normal travel expenses.

Chris Dettro can be reached at 788-1510.

Comments (7)

KGB1957

2 hours ago

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I am shocked that there is only one comment posted on this fleecing of the taxpayers here in Illinois. Professors are taking furlough days, the U of I rejected the pay raise increases sought by the Graduate Assistant's Association by stating they cannot afford it and now this? Ringeisen gets to 'retire', stays on salary as an advisor, gets his travel back and forth to Springfield paid for by the taxpayers and is so important that he cannot really leave to university. Sure he did a great job as Chancellor during his nine year term but he is not the Chancellor or President of Harvard or Yale.

What bothers me most about this is Tom Hardy's (an overpaid spokesperson) statement that 'this is not an unusual type of agreement' for senior administrators. How many other professors in the Illinois system are on this type of deal? No wonder their budgets are broke and the administration is crying for 10% tuition fee hikes at the U of I. They have too many of their professors on these sweet-heart deals and not enough is going to the education of the students.

Give Ringeisen a nice gold watch, his wife some nice red roses, throw him a party and send him on his way with his nice pension package and tell his thanks. Make some other overpaid professor do the Long Range Plan and make them earn their money instead.

Gramps

2 hours ago

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Why in the world would anyone get a package like this, upfront? Just goes to show how out of touch these Trustys are with the real world.. Hire some one with a package like this.

grsetze

1 hour ago

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As I stated yesterday, these academic folks are living in their own little world. They are paid extreme wages and perform very little work. It's no wonder it's prohibitive to attend college.

DRB

37 minutes ago

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Ringeisen should do the right thing given the state budget disaster and turn down the money. He has to be wealthy given his income through the years + the retirement package. He simply does not need the money.

NoSpinHere

31 minutes ago

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For starters that salary is way out of line for the work that is performed. I know someone who hold this position at another institution and gets paid nowhere near this salary. Gee, is there any wonder why it costs as much as it does to go to college? Ridiculous.

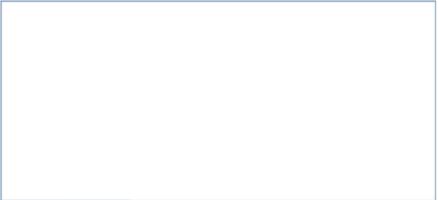
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