

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: October 21, 2020 2:30PM Location: Zoom
Meeting called by: Staff Council Exec. Type of meeting: Staff Council Monthly Meeting
Facilitator: Staff Council Exec. Note taker: Gina Smith
Attendees: Selena Foreman, Bob Machovsky for Joel Kosch,,Travis Kline, Helen Konstantopolous, Elainabeth Russo, Troy Brady, Natasha Young, Ben Rogers, Kiersten Orton, Julie Robertson, Connie Murphy, Barbara Weybrew, Amanda Lager, Evan Rand, Melissa Cook, Jack Bucy, Brooke Hull, Michelle Drake, Krista Barcus, Clarence Green, Melissa Chesnut, Jenny Bucy, (Ashley Strickland was unable to attend due to NACADA presentation), Gina Smith, recorder.

Agenda Items

Organizational Structure Support & Strategic Operations Reports

Leadership Advisory Team – Clarence Green reported that Karen Daniels visited campus last week to look at sites for the proposed student resource center. A campus discussion about the center with students, staff and faculty is planned. Changes to the health insurance premiums also will be discussed; the decision was to support the recommendations from the Benefits and Wellness Committee. Troy explained that the university’s budget shortfall will require a premium payment increase to employees with amounts depending on their situations. Concerns will be taken to Lockton and Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Faculty Senate – Gina Smith reported highlights from the Faculty Senate October meeting: Graduation in the fall will be a much smaller event held in the Performing Arts Center with restrictions on the number of guests, or graduates can defer to Spring participation. The university sent a survey out to the prospective graduates; the responses will determine the number of ceremonies held.

A team has been put in place to evaluate software intended to replace Northwest 360.

The Senate tabled a proposal to change the load requirement for graduate school from 16 to 18 hours. Additional changes to graduate study include a requirement for the overall grade point average to be 3.00 (“B”) or above in the major study area. All graduate coursework taken at Northwest must average 3.00 or above, with no more than six hours of “C,” and no hours of “D” or “F”. Transfer credit grades do not apply to calculating the 3.00 GPA in courses taken at Northwest. The Specialist in Education degree requires a 3.25 overall GPA at Northwest. For competency-based programs with an alternative grade scale, please refer to the program for minimum grade requirements.

The justification for this change: the maximum of two grades of C has become a challenge to many students in recent years due to scheduling. Students having more than two grades of C but had maintained an average GPA of 3.00 or above sometimes have to wait a semester or two before they can supersede the third course with a grade of C because of course rotation.

Student Senate – Natahsa reported on the following:

Many events are being planned during LGBTQ+ history month: Intersectionality workshop, Safe Zone Training, and movie night discussion (watching Boy Erased). Will be doing something for Native American History month.

Currently recruiting members for the NW NAACP chapter.

Tri Sigma is having Rockin For Robbie Lip Sync Battle on Oct. 26 at 7pm at Pavilion. Can pay \$3 at door. Proceeds go to Children's Play Therapy

Karen Daniel came to campus on Oct. 13 to look at a potential space for the Black Student and Friends Resource Center.

Board of Regents – Troy reported that the board will meet tomorrow from 1 to 4 p.m. Clarence announced a million-dollar-plus grant for Brown Hall. The board also will discuss their by-laws and the spring academic calendar, planning to go forward with the published calendar, which could change in January according to conditions; there may be changes with regard to spring break.

Benefits & Wellness Committee – Elainabeth Russo is now the new representative. She has not yet received information from HR; the transition usually takes place in January. Troy reported that home delivery of prescription medications will change to require opt-in or opt-out. Coupon value benefits will be adjusted by prescription. Work is being done to clarify the in- and out- of- network policy. A twenty percent plan premium increase has been proposed and forwarded. Brooke Hull thanked Troy and announced that expanded open enrollment begins November 2 and ends November 20. Michelle Drake announced that flu shot clinics and Health Risk Assessments begin tomorrow (October 22).

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Ally Affinity Group - Helen Konstantopoulos reported that the group met last week and discussed an article describing how to become better allies; the movie The Thirteenth will be screened tomorrow with N'Ninah Freelon leading a discussion in the Mary Linn PAC. Next meeting will take place via Zoom on November 10th at 4 p.m. and on December 9th (the second Tuesday of every month).

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Old Business Items

- Troy: Open enrollment for benefits as previously discussed and handbook revision regarding policy changes; changes have been rolled out as far as Facility Services goes. Travis pointed out the policy library on the Northwest website linked to the Policy Committee page; it's also on the open website, available to everyone. Melissa Evans in the president's office is the policy contact .

New Business Items

- Discuss on- and off-campus incidents reported by students and staff which contribute to a negative social climate. Possibly have ally groups reach out to assist in cases where the university cannot officially respond.
- Skyfactor Survey sent to students and employees; responses are due October 31. Melissa Cook described this as a campus climate survey to help the university as a whole, emphasizing that to provide a clear picture of what's happening on campus Institutional Research needs a higher response rate.
- Hate Speech Committee update. Travis explained the concerns about climate on campus as a member of the Hate Speech Committee, which will be student-centered because faculty and staff already are

covered by other policies. He asked the group to get the word out about Bearcat Equity to students so they will trust the process.

Committee Reports

Employee Engagement and Recognition Committee: Selena Foreman: Thanked everyone for their help and described the response to the recently concluded Employee Appreciation event. The committee is now thinking of having a Movie Day in the Hughes Field House with refreshments just before the winter break. Natasha Young recommended checking with Student Affairs staff about securing rights to the movies planned to be shown. The committee was commended for doing a great job. Travis mentioned that they should reach out for help and not have just the committee members shouldering the complete burden; it was agreed that this effort by all members also should apply to activities planned and executed by other committees.

Outreach Committee: Travis provided the report in Ashley Strickland's absence. The committee is narrowing down fundraising options for the scholarship; working with Brooke Bowles in the Foundation office to amend the scholarship agreement. Troy stressed the need for creative fundraising ideas since the traditional Bake Sale can't take place.

Policy Committee: The group worked primarily on the responsibilities section. The next employee engagement survey will be in September 2021; the first meeting on the survey will take place in June 2021. Staff council responsibility for the survey will be as note takers rather than as providers of information. Potentially require each staff council member to work one hour for each event to help out the committees and avoid having a limited number of staff shouldering the burden. Travis noted that having a calendar or planner will facilitate this effort. Melissa explained that everything on the flyers from this year will be transferred to the calendar for next year. Natasha will send out the excel sheet/calendar to all of the committee chairs. Melissa asked to be informed of other responsibilities to be placed in the charter if desired.

Employee Suggestions/Comments/Concerns:

Natasha asked if the customary all-employee meal and service awards event will be happening this year. Krista Barcus and Clarence told the group that HR is working with Spencer Martin to figure out what to do – box meals? Food carts? Do we get the year of service groups together? More to come. Melissa Cook suggested a Publisher's Clearinghouse style surprise ceremony for each service award recipient at their office or work station.

Julie Robertson put in a plug for the Leadership Northwest Missouri program. Applications are being taken for next year's class. Class meetings take place on the third Thursday of every month at locations spread around nineteen or twenty Northwest Missouri counties. The programs feature guest speakers and class projects. There is a cost, but scholarships are available, Northwest has supported employees who have participated in the past.

Melissa Cook described a survey being sent out to all undergraduates who have 110 credits or more; it's a first test of this survey, which is intended to help tell us what makes a successful student at Northwest.

Helen mentioned the annual KXCXV-KRNW fund drive, send in your contribution; fund drive ends this week.

Michelle Drake urged everyone to take the required Sexual Harassment and Title IX trainings, which must be completed by the end of the month.

Troy, returning to the topic of the service awards event, asked whether livestreaming or Zooming the "Prize Patrol" is possible for the service awards in place of attendance at a meal.

Announcements / Area Reports: (see above).

Next Meeting

November 18, 2:30pm- 3:30pm via Zoom