

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time:	March 16, 2022 1:30PM	Location:	Zoom and OL250
Meeting called by:	Staff Council Exec.	Type of meeting:	Staff Council Monthly Meeting
Facilitator:	Staff Council Exec.	Note taker:	Gina Smith
Attendees:	Troy Brady, Tony Christian, Selena Foreman, Alexander Sanderson, Kala Dixon, Sierra Rains, Helen Konstantopoulos, Melissa Chesnut, Ben Rogers, Lisa Crater, Julie Robertson, Michelle Drake, Barb Weybrew, Marsha Martin, Amanda Dempsey, Krista Barcus, Clarence Green, Becky Meneely,, Katy Schwartz-Drowns, Adam Randles, Elainabeth Russo, Jill Kain, Brittany Roberts.		

Agenda Items

Organizational Structure Support & Strategic Operations Reports

The March 2 budget presentation by Stacy Carrick was attended by 57 employees. Stacy will be happy to review the presentation with anyone who was unable to attend, and may offer another presentation in the future. Selena will speak with Peter Adam to coordinate faculty concerns with staff concerns raised by the presentation. Dr. Adam and Selena Foreman will be on the March 29 NLT agenda to present.

Leadership Advisory Team – Clarence and Krista

- COVID update: moving to an operational basis hopefully by summer so we won't be in crisis mode; COVID will be endemic.
- Finance is working through closing gaps in the projected budget; a presentation was made to Student Senate for increasing the student employment wage rate. A vote on the increase will be taken on Tuesday, March 15th. The increase was passed by vote yesterday; the issue will now be taken to the Board of Regents for establishment of a \$10.30 per hour flat rate instead of the current tiered rates.
- Presentations are planned on the People Excellence strategic planning focus.
- Northwest is exploring a public-private partnership (P3) to address issues with the aging central plant and to explore heating and cooling systems improvements.
- Looking forward to Staff Council and Faculty Senate presentations of University themes.

Faculty Senate – Gina

- Faculty review of employee engagement survey results show that lowering the cost of health care is the highest priority among faculty in 10 of 11 units; the second highest priority is salaries and cost-of-living increases.

Student Senate – TBD; currently no Staff Council representative attending Student Senate meetings.

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Board of Regents – Gina

- The next work session is scheduled for March 17th.

Benefits & Wellness Committee – Elainabeth Russo. No update from the committee, next meeting scheduled for?

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Ally Affinity Group - Helen Konstantopoulos: The guest speaker at the group's meeting yesterday, Dr. Laura Kauzlarich, discussed intimate partner violence prevalent among college students. Missouri is third in the nation behind Oklahoma and Kentucky for rates of IPV. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion has several upcoming activities scheduled; a flyer listing the activities and dates will be sent out with these minutes. The next meeting is April 12th and if anyone needs an Ally t-shirt, please contact Terra Feick.

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Office of Diversity and Inclusion - Brittany Roberts: No report.

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Old Business Items: None.

New Business Items

- Gender requirements/restrictions for recreational sports teams; staff members attempting to register for recreational dodgeball were told that equal numbers of males and females are required for teams. Greg Hansen will be asked to clarify whether this is accurate and whether it applies to staff.
- Piano music during the workday in the Administration Building presents a problem for employees attempting to work and conduct meetings, and for student ambassadors attempting to give tours. Clarence offered to take on this issue to develop a solution.
- Mileage rate for travel; an adjustment is desired to reflect the recent rise in fuel costs. Krista noted that Mary Collins is working to align the current rate with the state rate and the budget.
- Can the "use it or lose it" model for vacation leave be changed? Michelle Drake explained that liability issues are involved if a staff member donates sick leave, then ends up needing the time; sick leave also has to be reported to MOSERS for calculating years of service. There also is a cap on sick leave because it has to be paid out when an employee departs, which could present a significant expense. Manual tracking would be required if hour-by-hour donation is involved. A suggestion was made to upgrade Northwest's payroll technology to align with institution's needs. The current software doesn't accommodate what we want to do. Michelle explained that because the payroll system is not concurrent with work schedules the possibilities are limited.

Committee Reports

Employee Engagement and Recognition Committee – New co-chairs are Melissa Chesnut and Colin McDonough. Melissa reported that the "Poppin' in the Spring" event will take place with popcorn preparation at three locations – Administration, Facilities, and the Union - on Wednesday, March 23rd between 1:00 and 3:00p.m; volunteers are requested to help with popping. The Bearcat Bash is scheduled for April 27th; help is welcome. Melissa Chesnut will reach out to see if Faculty Senate wants to partner on this event.

Outreach Committee – Marsha Martin – Four recipients were selected for the Staff Council scholarships; each will receive \$400.00 for a total of \$1,600. The order form for Staff Council T-shirts and hoodies is now live online; orders will be taken for two weeks, and the order form will also be placed in the HR bulletin, on the last Thursday of the month. Orders placed will be sent daily to the Student Body.

Policy Committee – Julie Robertson – Update on the upcoming election. She has been busy managing the elections process and apologizes for confusion on incorrect information sent out due to matrix issues. Some

processes need review. Some newer AVPs were uninformed about the representation and election processes for Staff Council. Three areas with more than one nominee held elections; all other areas were not contested, so no elections were needed. Kelley O'Riley won the election to represent Wellness Services, Julie was re-elected to represent TRIO, and Matthew Muston was elected to represent Auxiliary Services-Residential Life. The Council will need a new chair-elect and secretary.

Engagement Survey Action Items

- Planning for future increases in health care costs and premiums. Amanda Dempsey reported that a coworker sent her an email proposing a four-day flex week, or work from home some days or weeks, which could be beneficial as a mental health boost.

Employee Suggestions/Comments/Concerns

- Gina Smith explained the impending drop in enrollment of first-time freshmen expected to begin this fall due to demographic population shifts, and warned of the expected economic impact of the drop on Northwest and other state higher education institutions.

Announcements / Area Reports Troy: In celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day in April, an initiative will be launched to inspire more recycling during the month (and beyond). Barbara Weybrew thanked everyone for their patience while the Custodial second shift is down five people. Julie Robertson is hiring college students for summer positions with Upward Bound and UB Science and Math; please inform any student employees who may be interested. KXCV also is now hiring student employees for summer and fall.

Next Meeting

April 20, 2022 1:30pm- 3:30pm – OL250 and Zoom