

Staff Senate Para/Professional Roundtable Minutes

December 5, 2022, 1:00pm

Twenty-one members attended in person. Seventeen attended by Zoom. Senators present were Lynn Andres (moderator), Jonathan Kirby, Mark Murphy (President), Traci Venni and alternate Patricia Savitts (minutes).

Lynn Andres opened with welcome and prayer. Land acknowledgment statement was read.

Submitted questions for Don Bergman, Chief of University Police and Cathy Sanderson, Parking Services Coordinator

Review what parking will look like when Monroe project begins?

More permits are sold than spaces. Don said this is standard practice, but you don't want to sell double the number of spaces available. 84 extra people parking per day. Students in need of a closer, safer space to park in the evening and early morning hours. The campus is landlocked and not in a position to add additional parking facilities. A parking consultant to be brought in. U of S will review their proposal.

Frustration over parking violators was acknowledged. Importance of following rules was stressed. Cost of parking is comparably reasonable. Cost of a consultant is worthwhile. Visitors for events take away from availability. This hasn't happened as often recently due to the pandemic, but may again as things get back to normal.

Do University Police give out tickets to violators?

Yes. There is a Parking appeals committee.

Are freshmen and sophomores allowed to have cars on campus?

No. They are not allowed to have cars in the city of Scranton either.

Are there plans for additional parking on campus?

No. Parking garages are expensive to build and maintain. Faculty spaces are contractual and can't be changed.

Are decals replaceable if you get a new car?

Yes. Remove the old decal which most likely will end up in small pieces and return to the Parking Office. There is a small charge for a new decal.

Submitted question for Julie Brackeva-Phillips, Tech Support

Will there be additional Teams Training?

In the Spring, there will be additional Teams Training online. Waffle Wednesdays will be introduced where waffles will be served and there will be reviews of various waffle apps. Training sessions will be held by request and there will be open hours available.

Submitted questions for Patti Tetreault, Vice-President Human Resources

Discuss vacation rollover. Will the University take away vacation time from those who have excessive time?

Excessive amounts of time rolled over are subject to review and can be seen as a liability when they end up being paid at a higher salary level than originally planned. Patti has worked out vacation plans with staff when it becomes a problem.

Are we switching to a new system of time reporting?

A committee was formed to look at a new system of time reporting without paper timecards for non-exempt employees. The 35 hour week caused an issue. More to come as they move forward. Nothing is changing for exempt employees time reporting.

Will there be an increase in the amount of paid family leave that is currently at two weeks?

We should be grateful for two weeks. Short-term disability also available at 100% pay. You can use sick time to take care of a sick family member. FMLA provides protection for job security. Not seeing an increase happening any time soon.

Question from attendee: Expand on using family sick time.

It can be used for dependents, spouse or parent.

Will there be a cost of living increase?

CPI-U skyrocketed to 8. For U of S to match the cost of living is not feasible. Finance is preparing the first pass of the budget. Goal is to have the budget go to the Board of Trustees in May.

What is the status of the staff compensation plan?

In 2017 the plan was to fully implement it in a few years. Due to Covid-19, we are unable to add money to that plan and there is no financial flexibility. We will continue to look at it and the cabinet will continue the conversation. It is fully active but not implemented.

What is the status of the remote work plan? Rumor has it that anyone who submits a request for working remotely will be denied.

HR wouldn't be wasting their time working on a policy that they would end up ignoring. While we need to have people working here on campus, many people discovered that they enjoy working from home. The "Great Resignation" has affected us but turnover has stabilized now. The question remains, how can some semblance of remote work work for us? There is a need to listen to feedback and find a way to do this equitably. A committee of Staff Senators is working on drafting a policy. There is an opportunity for staff to work remotely part-time during Intersession.

Question from an attendee: What if you feel like you could work remotely but your supervisor is not onboard?

Supervisors should have a policy to frame that decision.

Submitted questions to – Mark Murphy, Staff Senate President

What Senates are on campus?

There is a Faculty Senate, a Staff Senate and a Student Senate, all falling under the University Governance Council.

What positions fall within?

Mark Murphy gave clarifications for Staff Senate.

Open Discussion/Questions

Can you talk about the Alternate Work Schedule Policy for Staff?

P.T.: An alternate work schedule is a short-term rearrangement of one's schedule to relieve tension from work/life balance. It's in place since 2014 and can sometimes be used for taking a class or teaching a class.

Upcoming Staff Senate Events

Staff Senate Meeting – Thursday, December 15, 2022, 2pm

Staff Senate Christmas Luncheon – Wednesday, December 14, 2022, two sessions available

You must sign up for a session.

Meeting adjourned at 2:20pm.