

TO: Staff Senate

FROM: Catherine Murphy  
Secretary, Staff Senate

DATE: September 21, 2009

SUBJECT: Minutes from September 16, 2009 Meeting

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In attendance: Ms. Bealla, Ms. Boock, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Costello, Ms. Cullen-Brown, Ms. Fetsko, Mr. Gaylets, Ms. Gownley, Mr. Grigorescu, Mr. Harris, Mr. Hurst, Ms. Hynosky, Ms. Jachimowicz, Ms. Knott, Ms. Mascelli, Ms. McCrea, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Pilger, Ms. Rupp, Mr. Schofield, Mr. Skutnick, Ms. Stavisky, Ms. Vaccaro, Ms. Watson, Ms. Day.

Guest: Ms. Botyrius, Ms. Davis, Ms. Evans

Mr. Murphy opened the meeting at 10:05 am in the PNC Conference Room in Brennan Hall by welcoming everyone to the September 2009 meeting of the Staff Senate. The opening prayer was given by Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy announced that Mr. Pilger will be voting for Mr. Parry and Ms. Hynosky will be voting for Mr. Wetherell today.

1. Ms. Murphy reported that there was an addition to the minutes and that she will send an updated version to everyone. Mr. Skutnick made a motion to accept the minutes and Ms. Cullen-Brown seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.
2. President's Report: Mr. Murphy reported that the next meeting of the University Governance Council will be September 29<sup>th</sup>. He reminded the senate officers that if they are unable to attend the meeting they can ask another senator to take their place.

Mr. Murphy reported that the last meeting of the Executive Committee was a very positive and productive meeting.

- He announced that the University's crisis response committee continues to work on the H1N1 crisis.
- He reported that the Election and Membership committee has been placing staff members on University committees as requested. He said that Ms. Winslow contacted Ms. Adera with our recommendation for members of the Inclusion Committee. He said that sign-up sheets for those who would like to volunteer to serve on the Board of Trustee's sub-committees will be passed out.
- Mr. Murphy congratulated Ms. Vaccaro on being awarded the Sursum Corda Award.

3. Senate Liaison's Report:

- Ms. Day updated the Senate on the University's planning for the H1N1 flu. She reported that the AC along with the task force chaired by Dr. Carilli continue to make plans. She said that communication is key and that the Provost and Dr. Carilli both sent out memos to the faculty and students respectively regarding current policies.
- Ms. Day reported that the AC continues to finalize the details of the 09-10 budget.
- Ms. Day thanked the Senate particularly the Recognition and Award committee for their assistance with the Sursum Corda awards. She said that the Awards committee appreciated the part the senate played.
- Ms. Day introduced two new Human Resources employees. Ms. Patricia Tetault, Director of Compensation and Benefits and Eileen Notarianni, Human Resources Senior Assistant.

4. Guest Presentation: Ms. Day, VP for Human Resources was the guest presenter. Ms. Day began her presentation by stating that the purpose of a human resource department is to recruit, retain, develop and reward talent, and to ensure that procedures and practices are in legal compliance.

Ms. Day said that in reviewing the findings of the Climate Study several themes emerged and as she rebuilds the HR department her goal is to address those themes.

Ms. Day said that the biggest change is that the department now reports directly to the President. She said that this change makes the department part of senior management with representation on Administrator's Conference.

Ms. Day reviewed positions the HR department has, as well as, positions she would like to fill in the future. She reported that the department had been understaffed and that she has been putting together a team that not only brings experience and technical expertise, but a team that will focus on customer service.

Ms. Day reviewed the office renovation plans and new software package designed for HR. She said that the most important physical change is that offices will be set up to ensure confidentiality, there will be a reception area, and a training room. She explained that the new software will allow the HR department to develop an online job bank which allows for function and flexibility.

Ms. Day outlined some of the functions of an HR department which include benefits, compensation and HRIS, recruitment and employment, employee relations, and learning and development.

a) Benefits

- Review and evaluate benefit program
- Administration of benefits
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Design benefits around workforce
- Open enrollment period

b) Compensation & HRIS

- Ensure compensation benefits are in line with mission and goals

- Comply with State and Federal laws
- Ensure that package is fair and competitive
- Create overall compensation strategies
- Evaluate positions
- c) Recruitment and Employment
  - Posting vacancies
  - Screen applications
  - Reference Checks
  - Background checks
  - Orientation for new employees
  - Manage temporary staffing needs
- d) Employee Relations
  - Orientation program for new employees
  - EAP program
  - Resolve workplace issues
- e) Learning and Development
  - Improvement, growth and development of employees
  - Professional and leadership development
  - Create a tool kit for managers and supervisors

#### Questions and Answers:

- Are background checks are conducted on all new employees?  
Ms. Day said that is the policy.
- Can the employee handbook be altered by supervisors?  
Ms. Day said that the handbook (in print) is out of date. She said that a more current one is on line. She said that any employee/supervisor should call HR if they have any questions about the handbook.
- If an employee were late for work can they use personal time to make up the time?  
Ms. Day said if the employee's sick time was used up they could use personal time. She also said that it is fact specific.
- Is a corrective action final?  
Ms. Day said the corrective actions are guidelines. She added that based on the severity of offense the first and second steps can be skipped.
- What should employees do if they feel that they are being discriminated against because of age?  
Ms. Day said that two consequences of people feeling that they are not being treated consistently is anger and job dissatisfaction. She said that any employee that believes that they are being discriminated against should come to the HR department for assistance.
- Is there some way that staff can contribute days to a bank to be used for others that need help.  
Ms. Day said that this has begun to be discussed and that she will be bringing it to the AC for review.
- Can there be a continuation of tuition remission benefits after an employee of 20+ years retires?  
Ms. Day said that is not as easy as it may seem. Typically, benefits are designed to help recruit and retain employees. She said that if there is enough interest she will take it to the AC.

- The professional staff life insurance policy is double the insurance policy of the clerical/maintenance staff. Is it possible to bring it more into line?  
Ms. Day said that the amount of the policy is driven by average salaries, but that HR will be reviewing it.
- If an employee feels that they are not be treated fairly can they come to you? Will you investigate?  
Ms. Day said that it is HR's responsibility to investigate although they are not the only office to investigate claims. The Office of Equity and Diversity, and Safety committee also investigate.
- If someone comes to you and vents and doesn't want any action taken do you have a legal responsibility to follow up even if the employee doesn't want if followed up?  
Ms. Day said that it is fact specific. She said that if the information being shared puts that University at risk legally or is a safety concern she has a legal responsibility to investigate but will do everything she can to protect employee confidentially.
- Is there any thought being given to hiring an ombudsman?  
Ms. Day said that she had some preliminary discussions with Fr. Pilarz before she was hired and that the senior leadership and the Board of Trustees have some reservations about this and that at this juncture they decided the best way to address many of the Climate Study concerns is to revamp HR. She said that a fully functioning HR department should be able to handle these issues.
- You mentioned rewards for personal contributions; what do you mean?  
Ms. Day said that all kinds of things are open for review and discussion including a merit pay system.
- Is the training you referenced for staff improvement or supervisor training?  
Ms. Day said both. She said that training in general is being looked at in a comprehensive strategic way.

Mr. Murphy thanked Ms. Day and her staff for their time and informative presentation.

#### 5. Committee Reports:

##### Election and Membership Committee:

Mr. Cawley reported that he has received a request from the Board of Trustees for staff senate representation on their subcommittees. He said that a sign-up sheet is being passed around for people to sign if they are interested in sitting on one of the committees. If more than one senator expresses an interest the Executive Committee will decide at its next meeting.

##### By-Laws Committee:

Ms. Cullen-Brown said that she has made the changes discussed at previous meetings and that she is bringing the new language for approval.

Ms. Cullen-Brown made a motion to approve the new language regarding the filling of alternate positions. Mr. Gaylet seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. Cullen-Brown made a motion to approve new language regarding the filling of officer vacancies. Ms. Winslow seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. Cullen-Brown made a motion to table the discussion on Article VIII until the next meeting. The motion was seconded. Mr. Murphy asked senators to review the information and be ready to discuss at the next meeting.

Finance Committee:

Ms. Winslow reported that Lisa Bealla, Tom Cawley, and Margaret Hynosky are members of the Finance Committee. Ms. Vaccaro made a motion to approve the membership of the Finance Committee. Ms. Cullen-Brown seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

By-Laws Committee:

Ms. Cullen-Brown reported that she made the changes to the by-laws making the By-Laws Committee a permanent committee and adding the Financial Committee to the list of Senate Committees.

Social Committee:

Ms. Vaccaro reported that the committee met briefly to discuss the October 13<sup>th</sup> retreat. She said that she will be sending out emails with specifics about the retreat. She said that the committee tried to schedule a thanksgiving breakfast again this year however, because of scheduling problems the committee is considering hosting a breakfast/luncheon on December 15<sup>th</sup> with a holiday theme.

Communication Committee:

Mr. Skutnik said that his report is self explanatory, but He asked senators to save documents that they are sending out as an attachment in the old compatible format. He reminded everyone that not all offices have upgraded software.

6. Ms. Cullen-Brown made a motion to approve Mr. Gaylets as Parliamentarian and Ms. Winslow seconded the motion. The senate unanimously passed the motion.

Ms. Cullen-Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Vaccaro seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectively Submitted by:



Catherine Murphy  
Staff Senate Secretary