

## Staff Association Minutes

March 13, 2019, 3:00pm

### Blum Union Junior College Room

**Senators Present:** Kathy Kelly, Fred Nesslage, Marissa Steimel, Betsy Wright, Jessica Poet, Nikki Robertson, Derek Evans, Louise Mills, Hawley Rumpf, Kathy Gammon, Jena Williams

**Senators Absent:** Andrea Collins-Keller, Jessica Frogge, Shelle Browning, Lisa May, Barb Harris

**Staff/Faculty Present:** Quentin Laws, Julie Jedlicka, Sara Freemyer, Kelly Sloan, Brandon Card, Tara Vides, Rachel Lundy, Jackie Burns, Susan Garrison, Ryan Addington, Hannah Herrera, Jessica Agnew, Dr. Doug Davenport

### Invited Guests

Dr. Vartabedian, President  
Dr. Davenport, Interim Provost  
Sara Freemyer, Director of Human Resources

### Dr. Davenport Report:

- President Vartabedian is in Fort Worth with a new grandson!
- President-Elect Matthew Wilson; will be meeting him again on March 18th
- Budget Advisory Council met yesterday for the first time; a lot of conversation about the purpose of the council; Jerry spent time talking about financial circumstances; talked about how we move forward next year and the year after; list of budget challenges is lengthy; minimum wage was brought up; expectation is to meet regularly; thinking about the budget process - how to be transparent with the budget decisions, so even if you don't agree with it, you at least know why the decision was made; will be sharing information through Goldlink to be more secure
- Jennie McDonald announcement: There will be a call for commencement volunteers; it's an all hands on deck event; Susan Bracciano has stepped in to also help, as have others; appreciate all of the support; we need more people involved
- A senator asked about whether the budget meetings would be open at any point. Dr. Davenport stated that they wanted to keep the meetings closed because the conversations cover tough topics; they need it to be a safe space for people to share their thoughts and feel comfortable sharing their ideas; if it's an open meeting, they would be doing damage control with some things that may be misrepresented.
- A question was asked about how selections were made about who is on the committee. Dr. Davenport responded that it depends on the committee; it's often written into the by-laws of the committee; Tim Kissock is on the committee, as are all of the VPs; there's always going to be the idea that we should have included someone from this department or this department; the point about making sure we're including voices that aren't usually heard on a committee is duly noted. It was brought up that the staff senators exist as an avenue to bring up concerns that can be brought to the budget committee.
- Questions were asked about the president-elect's opinion on paid parental leave and the provost search. Dr. Davenport said he didn't have an answer about the paid parental leave policy, but he did know that Dr. Vartabedian didn't want to make any permanent decisions about the provost position before he retired.
- A senator asked what was it about Matt Wilson that put him above, or what was it about his CV or resume that made him stand out from the other candidates. Dr. Davenport stated that he couldn't weigh in on that because he's not a member of the board. Looking at the announcement, Dr. Davenport thought that the president-elect's experience serving as a president and his financial turnaround at Akron are probably two things that stood out to the board.

### Old Business

## January and February minutes

### January Minutes:

- Louise Mills was present, so update that.
- 2nd page - "see February 2019 minutes for clarification this topic" on whether Salary & Fringe committee had reached a consensus.
- Approved with changes

### February Minutes:

- Clarification under "Other Business" third section down: Shelley's name should be spelled correctly;
- Don't use names during discussions: February minutes and on
- Table the February minutes

### Sara Freemyer:

- Asked to come here about the Great Colleges Survey; encouraged to take it; one staff member didn't receive it, so let us know whether you did or did not
- This survey was done in 2016; 243 employees completed the survey; those results led to three pieces of our strategic plan.
- Important to get as much response; helps us see trends; this is an national survey through the Chronicle of Higher Education
- We do not see names, it's anonymous; place for comments
- Fifteen Categories in the survey
- We really want your feedback, so please pass on to your fellow co-workers
- Someone asked if there was a deadline because they couldn't find one
  - Deadline in the email from college survey
- Someone asked if the information would be shared
  - Cabinet level sees the responses; not sure if 2016 data was shared; they might be shared at the same time
- We had to pay to open it for everyone on campus, so we would really like to get a high response rate
- Tomorrow in Popplewell - computer lab open for everyone from Physical Plant to come over
- If you don't have computer access, let us know and we can help reserve a space for you.
- Someone said you don't need to take it all at once; you can save it
- There were 281 institutions who took the survey in 2016; 189 were four-year institutions
- We could be designated as a "Great College to Work For," which would look great on our job applications.
- Center for Teaching & Learning:
  - Part of our strategic plan as a way to create professional development.
  - Has turned into five sub-committees: It is highly faculty. There are only two staff members on one of the committees. We put together a survey to send out, but it was primarily faculty questions. Even the faculty said we were too heavy on faculty. It held up the process because they didn't want to send it out without staff represented. Sara Freemyer wanted to see the Professional Development Committee here have a member on every committee. She asked for staff to step up.
  - Five Committees: Spring Forum, Fall Programming, Senate Plan Day, Resources That We Have, Best Practices
  - At the winter retreat, we asked staff what kind of professional development they would like to see. We can share those responses.
  - How do we want to approach staff involvement? Is that the Professional Development committee?
  - Can we have the chair of the Professional Development send out an email to solicit representation from all staff?
  - Only have six staff represented out of the whole 26 members.

- Do we just tell you that we want to be involved?
- Betsy Wright will solicit volunteers and take those names to Sara Freemyer.
- Sara will let her committee know that we are finding more staff members.
- Betsy would like a description of the committees - Jessica Poet will forward that to Betsy.

#### Paid Parental Leave proposal (action required)

- It has been decided to send it to the GAC committee, so we need to provide an action whether we support or don't support.
- One person came forward with a suggestion asking whether we needed to have a safety net of having an agreement that the staff/faculty member would come back and work for two years.
- Faculty Representative:
  - Developed the policy from Missouri Southern's policy in order to move it forward
  - There is a one-year waiting period - have to be employed
  - Mother would get six weeks of paid leave
  - Everyone else, including adoption, gets three weeks.
  - As far as enforcing people to stay after, that seems tricky.
  - It does say if someone is terminated, they don't get to take the leave with them.
- What got this started was the governor's executive order in 2017 - wanted to give people the fundamental right to bond with their child; he signed an executive order that all executive employees would be given paid parental leave
- We have been moving from bottom up, instead of from the top down.
  - Been meeting with HR and the President.
- Sara Freemyer pointed out that the state's executive order designates primary and secondary, but Missouri Southern and ours do not. The state also does not cover foster, but ours does. A lot of the information the faculty used was from FMLA because this runs concurrently with this. We also looked at the crisis leave policy, which we've had to tweak a few times. When you create a policy like this, it's hard to cover everything. On the crisis leave, you have to work here for one year; on this policy, it doesn't say you have to work one continuous year. This policy allows for intermittent leave. We will need to tweak a few of the pieces.
- Faculty pointed out that it does say you need to work 12 months prior to taking the leave.
- Sara wants us to realize the concept of the policy is good, but this may not be the exact wording that goes through.
- The president has already started to run it by the Budget Advisory Council to get their opinion since it's a new benefit. It will have to go to the board for their approval. There are a few more hoops besides the president and the GAC that it needs to go through.
- What we're voting on today is whether to include staff or not.
- President has said several times that he thinks the new president is the one who should move this through. It's not going to happen before July 1st.
- Several concerns:
  - On average, people are already taking six weeks off.
  - If we add paid leave, they may just extend the time, which will make thin departments struggle.
  - FMLA - allows for twelve weeks, but it's not paid; people have historically used their sick days just so they still get paid
  - Is fostering being reimbursed? That could range from a few days to years; some people may take advantage of it.
  - Birth mother - if we give them six weeks, the birth mother is no longer under the care of a doctor after that; using sick leave after that would be inappropriate
- Missouri Southern has only seen two faculty use this each semester
- In principal, the policy is good because it helps employees be family-oriented.
- Motion made to include staff in the policy. It went to a written vote.

- Affirmative Vote.

### **Committee Reports**

- Salary & Fringe
  - No report
- Constitution & By-laws
  - No report
- Welcoming
  - Nikolaus Harris - Events/Groundskeeper - Physical Plant
  - Dane Eckert - Academic Computing Coordinator - IMC
  - Dustyn Holland - Degree Audit/Systems Coordinator - Registrar's Office
- Election
  - No report
- Grievance
  - No report
- Professional Development
  - No report
- Special Events
  - No report
- Advantage
  - No report

### **President's Report –Fred Nesslage**

- Presidential Search Committee – Search Update
- Board of Governors
- Budget Advisory Council
  - MWSU has been oozing two million dollars each year
  - Even though enrollment is up, a large part of that has been discounted rates (Griffon Rate) to attract students, so it hasn't been a huge jump in revenue.
  - There was a question about land development, which is currently stalled due to differences in expectations between the developer and MWSU.
  - Kathy and Fred also suggested starting to come up with ideas for either cost savings or revenue potential, as BAC would likely be soliciting those soon.

### **First Vice President's Report – Kathy Kelly**

- Go to the forums for the VP of Financial Planning!
- Budget Report - \$3,637.30

### **Other Business/Open Discussion/Announcements**

- Discussion about the policy about pre-payment for travel for students. There are some discrepancies on some departments being able to charge a P-Card while others cannot.
- Wellness Screenings next week! Bring your phone with you. If you registered, bring your confirmation number. Let your constituents know. Our insurance covers it - just register over the phone. We will be doing some extra prizes, in addition to the Garmins. We will take walk-ins.

**Mark your calendars:** Next meeting will be Wednesday, April 10th, at 3:00pm in Blum Union JCR.