

Staff Association Agenda

May 10th, 3:00pm

Eder 213



Attendees: Amber Halstead, Alana Tackett, John Vanderpool, Emily Ludwig, Kasey Schmoe, Derek Evans, Debbie Vaughn (zoom), Roberta Dias (zoom), Jessica Frogge (zoom),
Absent: Aubry Carpenter (excused), Amanda Kimler (excused)

Invited Guests

- Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, President
 - Commencement:
 - “I don’t know about you, but the first time I do something it is nearly never that is goes 100% the way that I want it to”
 - There were some positive things and some very negative things. The day started rainy and ended hot and 90 degrees.
 - It gives us the opportunity to step back and say what are some things that we didn’t anticipate – like who would have thought that the graduates’ friends and families would have threatened violence? – I certainly wasn’t expecting it, I don’t think anybody was. It’s not necessarily something we want to plan for in the future, but what can we do to mitigate that?
 - For those of you that were at the spring Commencement last year, you recall the last student did a backflip when he got up on the ramp. This year the name cards had a note that said no backflips, no jumping, etc. Less than a handful of folks did some elaborate routines, but they were doing it on the floor not the ramp.
 - Reality is we’re not going to change societal response, but that doesn’t mean we have to condone it or put our people in situations where they are fearful or potentially dangerous.
 - Other things happened that are beyond our control so we will look into those – I think the stage was about 64 sq. ft. bigger than what we needed and I really hadn’t thought about serving BBQ at commencement. So there were just all kinds of things.
 - From my perspective the disruptions for the students were minimal. If you think about commencement in Looney we had a big group sitting behind the stage that came in late and were loud leaving before the ceremony was over. We also had fewer students leave after crossing the stage. The students were hot, but we can work on that.
 - The other thing is, we’ve started to pay attention to what the budget is; what are we spending on this, what are we charging students, and making sure it makes sense.
 - From the press that was there, I heard from a lot of people how beautiful it looked.
 - We learned a lot, we’ll see where we are, and we’ll keep getting better.
 - I appreciate everyone that was there and spent the whole day, or a few days, or however long you were there because it is so important. It’s commencement, it’s a culmination of what we do.
 - Budget:
 - Kudos to Ron and Staff
 - Headlines are saying “nearly 8% increase to tuition” but when you read the article its only about \$18. Even though we’ve done probably the highest percentage,

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because for so many years the university didn't increase tuition, we're still very, very affordable and that's where we want to be.

- With declining enrollment, we don't have enough students. We have two sources of revenue primarily; 30% of our revenue is coming from the state, and the rest is how I describe as kind of on the backs of our students- its tuition, fees, its auxiliaries with rooms and board, those kinds of things. So, if we don't have enough students coming in then we have to think about what are we doing to make sure that we have enough money in the budget to do what we need to do.
- I'm confident the governor will be signing the budget which will also give us that 7% core increase which is really great. And you know we've been working with the governor, he's been really supportive of higher education, our state reps and senators have been very good, council on public higher education has been very helpful, coordinating board, all of those folks have really put the emphasis on supporting higher education.
- If I recall we have 634 students signed up as of Monday for Griffon Orientation. So that's encouraging! We had a great Griffon Experience day so I am really confident with some of the new things we'll be doing for Griffon Orientation on the academic and nonacademic side of the house.
- Very pleased that we're looking at who's living where in the residence halls and what kind of support that we can give them.
- For some of the academic initiatives, how we can bring in Advising and CAS and all of those things to do Kickstart and FIRST (new projects). I'm thrilled about that because as an open access public regional we should be doing those. That's our responsibility. And if we can get some best practices up and running we will make the difference in our students lives.
- It's really about our way to help students maintain good progress towards a degree because obviously, we want them to graduate, start their careers or go to grad school, etc. But it's also in my mind an ethical responsibility because the sooner you get done, the less you have to pay, the less student loans you have, the less debt, and you know being the most affordable is great but if we're not doing anything to keep that momentum and ensure that students are making good progress.
- Chiefs:
 - We can talk about it now or wait, but we are excited about it! We have the two-year contract with the Chiefs. We are having conversations with them in terms of when they come they like certain things to happen certain upgrades and those kinds of things, and we've been working very closely with the county folks, commissioners, city mayor, city council and city manager. Some of the things have to happen this year, and its not a huge chunk of money but its some money, so were looking for assistance from our city and county folks. Assuming we negotiate and get more years, there are some bigger commitments that we'll have to make and that's where we turn to the state folks.
 - The university is really moving to work with Mosaic, the city, the county, and the Chamber to look at what are we doing as a city for Chiefs camp. What can we do to make this a destination for families to come and stay instead of only come for

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a few hours during the day?

- GAC
 - Last year we had some conversation in GAC about graduate school tuition. For graduate tuition we had something for employees we were doing 50% reduction and we moved it up to 70%. Also, spouses and dependents would get 25% reduction. Doing some analysis on how many people are using this benefit and what's the financial impact. Could this be a recruitment/retention tool for employees? Other universities are all over the board with reduction policies. Tuition reimbursement is a big issue and if we can sweeten it a little bit for graduate that might be a good thing. So were looking at that, and hopefully we'll be able to finish that up this summer. Not sure if it will be done in time for Fall, but we are looking at it. If you want to talk to your constituents, just anonymous feedback like you did for commencement, is helpful.
- Dr. Laura Reynolds, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - Thank you in advanced for GO!
 - That will be a collaborative operation this year, more than probably ever before. We are all hands on deck. Faculty are excited, they are all signed up for the different days. I really appreciate the way Derek's group (Advising) and everybody has been super helpful in helping us understand and try and really get our students set to be successful and understand the processes that they are going to enter into academically.
 - Trying to get after the melt rate – so that we make sure (of the 634) that we keep as many of those peeps as we possibly can. One thing I want to mention – if you stumble upon or get a phone call from anybody who says they are transferring here, connect them with Norma in Provost office. We have transfer GO days, but some of them want to just come and get their stuff because they already understand college.
 - Enrollments
 - Summer and Fall enrollments look good, looking cautiously optimistic. What we continue to do is want to make sure our students who were enrolled in the Spring are enrolled in the Fall. So if you come across any of them now that haven't enrolled yet, please send them to Advisors to get registered.
 - Channeling Becky Dunn: We still have needs for Griffon Ambassadors – it's a great summer job! If you know of any folks that are looking for summer jobs, send them that direction.
 - Of the 10 faculty positions we were hiring for, we have hired 7. Which is pretty awesome. I'm very appreciative of the folks that came to all of the talks that were a part of those search processes because it's a whole campus cell.
 - Two of the really important hires are the developmental English instructor and a new Math faculty member who is very oriented towards developmental math.
 - Really moving toward addressing that retention actively, trying to collect some data but post Covid we don't have a lot to reflect back on because the times that we would are not at all the same as what we have now.
 - So we have two pilots: Virtual mostly hybrid Bridge program that's running, and we have FIRST which is looking at the classes with high DFW rates and pulling

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in some Rockstar faculty to help us think about what interventions across these classes work and thinking about how faculty can work together across multiple classes with Advising with CAS, and with Staff that really form relationships with these students to get them to feel that belonging but also experience success.

- Ron Olinger, Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration
 - Budget was approved by Board of Governors.
 - There will be a 7.5% increase on tuition (credit hour goes from \$240 to \$258)
 - A 1% salary increase across campus from the compensation plan (increase is for Faculty, Staff, and Cabinet, excludes President)
 - Note: We pay an awful lot to Mosers which is a big challenge.
 - Departments should see budgets loaded by the end of May
 - In the process of putting out bids for CTAC on West Campus.
 - Everyone is getting ready for Chiefs Camp.

Faculty Liaison Report

- Dr. Ed Taylor (Faculty Liaison)
 - From GAC: Faculty Senate has a proposal to adjust membership and dates for their General Studies Committee.

Previous Meeting Minutes Approval

Alana Tackett motions to approve, John Vanderpool seconds the motion. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Committee Reports

- Salary & Fringe
 - No report
- Constitution & Bylaws
 - No report
- Welcoming
 - We welcomed 9 new employees! Working on getting new meal cards, the ones we have left are expired.
- Election
 - Voting will open once all nominations are accepted or declined. Ballot will come through as a Google Form – form will only allow you to vote once, it will still be anonymous but you will have to log in with your Missouri Western username and ID. Once that election is done, the newly elected senators and returning senators will meet in June to elect Eboard for next year. Then EBoard and Senators will look at committees and their members to make sure all of that is in order for next year as well.
 - Thank you to all of those who were nominated! Whether you accepted or not. Remember you don't have to be a senator to be on a committee, so if that is something you are interested in, let us know!
- Professional Development
 - No report
- Employee Engagement

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- Wanted to remind everyone of the corporate challenge that is taking place for sign ups right now. Information was shared at the Spring Fling cookout. Its open to faculty and staff, email Emily Ludwig if you are interested! An email with dates and events will go out soon just as a reminder to everybody and for those who may not attended the cookout. It is free! All you have to do is participate in one of the events, you don't have to participate in all of them. President Kennedy's office is supplying us with team shirts. The first event is May 20 on campus – Fishing at the pond.
- Care
 - No report

President's Report

- Just a clarification: In our last meeting when we talked about the 1% salary increase across campus, the way we first understood it was a 1% raise for Faculty and Staff, no administration at all. It is actually a 1% raise all the way across campus except for Dr. Kennedy, so people on the cabinet, those administration positions; deans, VPs, AVPs, all that, they will get that 1% raise as well.
- There will not be another Staff Association meeting until August or September depending on Chiefs and the new EBoard.

First Vice President's Report

- No report

Other Business/Open Discussion/Announcements

- Emily Ludwig – We have an Esports Director!

Derek Evans motions to end the meeting, seconded by Alana Tackett. The motion passes unanimously.

Mark your calendars: Next Staff Association meeting is TBD (August or September).