Staff Council Minutes

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

1:04PM – 1:55PM0

Members present: Bryn Best, Gloria Butz, David Huebner, Terri Kendall, Megan Knox, Claire Sinvil, Caitlin Woolsey, Abby Yates, Rebecca Yates

Guest Speaker: Tricia Teagan from Admin Senate

Members absent: Carolina Soria, Frank Nagy, Kelley Collazo

Retreat began at 8:05AM.

Prior Business:

- July minutes – roles clarification
    - We need to know who is acting in what capacity.

Old Business:

- Reflected on the year's challenges and accomplishments
    - Discussed importance of dialoguing with parties prior to developing proposals
    - Discussed the potential to grow the Staff Council Recognition Award
        - It was historically held in Carter Hall and a larger affair.

Guest 2024-2025 Chair of Admin Senate, Tricia Teagan, speaks:

- Open Admin Senate meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of the month from 3–4:30pm.
- Admin Senate is recently working on two IFC's with President Bridges.
    - Bereavement Policy – adding cousins to Part B
        - Caitlin says the policy needs updated and references a case study.
            - Caitlin motions to send the support of Staff Council.
                - The proposition is seconded by David Huebner.
                - The motion is passed.
    - Tuition Benefits may need another week or two
    - Also employee sickbank for starting employees
        - Maybe start them with a 2-day sickbank or bereavement allowance
            - If we have ideas, feel free to reach out!
- Events & Relations
    - First Year Instruction, Rice Library, Recreation
    - Make sure employees know about resources available to them
        - Slow getting orientation packets rolling
- They're hoping to make desserts for a monthly employee luncheon to build community.

Commented [BE1]: I am not sure what I meant in this passage.

Current Business:

- We are still finalizing the duties of Treasurer
    - Once we have accomplished this, it will move to the President.
    - It will not be official until the next fiscal year and will require a bylaws update.
    - When consulted, Sarah said she could give advice but not have power over stuff.
        - Bylaws were last updated around 6/21/23.
        - We had Don serve on a role in a past point.
- In 2021 or 2022 the name of the Economic Benefits & Communication committee was adjusted; maybe it needs changed?
    - Abby will think about it.
    - Caitlin agrees.
- Ad-hoc committees
    - Nomination Committee
    - Bylaws Committee
- David notes that some rules may have been proportioned to the size of Staff Council.
    - We note that we have had trouble maintaining 20 people; historically, there used to be recruitment in Spring.
        - Abby notes that there is too much going on in the Fall and that 8-10 people will not develop our best results.

Committee Reports:

- Old Business
- Meeting with Sarah
    - Staff council felt that having someone from HR as an advisor would be tricky, especially the HR Director. We agreed it was kind to offer, but it may not be best.
- New Advisor: Who we will have as advisor if not Sarah Will?
- Seeking Objectives: we could look at work-from-home policy
- Student Workers Wage Increase
    - Next action: maybe ask Sarah who advocates for students
        - Is this Student Affairs, SGA, the Dean of Students?
    - Historical Context:
        - Faculty Senate looked at making things $14 / hr; it didn't work. They also looked at helping with reclassifying positions.
            - Starting a process to reestablish rank could help improve wage.
                - We can try to start, but we may be behind; the method could take up to three years.
    - The Ask: +$2 is a good way to keep people. It's not competitive, but it's better.
    - Who will reach out?: Abby will get back to us; she says we definitely need to.

- Work From Home
    - Executive leadership & HR can approve you for 5 days a week
    - Staff Council had mixed feelings:
        - David notes he prefers here to home.
        - Caitlin notes that it seems like there are a lot of unnecessary rules.
            - Work from Home can be used very effectively in the summer.
        - It's noted as well that custodial staff are not able to use this benefit.
- Nominating Committee
    - Becky and Bryn are doing well with recruiting!
        - We're sorry to see Becky go.
- University Committees
    - We have not heard back from the Development or Safety committee; we *have* heard back from the wellness committee.
    - For the substance abuse committee, we can consult them but do not have a seat.
- Abby will meet with Faculty for SB 102 soon.
- Rule to not wear stuff on clothes like a cross or tied to PRIDE.

Commented [BE2]: I do not recall the full context of this note.

New Business

- O: Drive from Caitlin
    - The aim is to make sure we have a good system going forward. We'd like to center documents so that there's not lost knowledge and it is as easy as possible to pass information on.
        - We're hoping to return to something more cohesive & thrive rather than just hang on.
    - Previous minutes and agendas can be seen here.
- Fall Food Drive:
    - Claire is putting out drop boxes on Friday so that it starts on Monday.
        - Orr Center: it'll be in the hall at the main entrance
        - There is usually another one across from the advising center.
    - We can contact Claire Simil if it looks full & needs picked up.
- Spring: maybe another contest / championship can be brought back.
    - It was discovered that the cans for the food drive trophy were not empty.
        - This has been deemed a hazard.
            - We will make a new trophy and use cans without food.
                - If we want to help, reach out to Abby.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:55PM.