

March 2022 Staff Conference Minutes
Tuesday, April 19, 2022
2pm / Dina's Place, DiGiorgio Student Center

In attendance: about 60 members

John Kroft called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

I. We began the slide show presentation.

A. Reviewed where minutes can be found.

B. Lisa Cowart, VP of HR joined us and began by introducing the HR staff since they have had some turnover. She came today to tell us about the guidelines for developing a telecommuting policy. The Board made it clear Dr. Searna will have input before we move forward. Following that, the policy would be submitted to the State for approval and we would have to develop internal processes. We have to show the State cost savings and efficiencies. If approved, it would be for staff and requests would be considered on a case-by-case basis. She shared a list of benefits for Winthrop and for employees to consider allowing telecommuting. It's not for everyone or every position. It requires a large commitment from the employee and the supervisor. She shared the characteristics of appropriate telecommuting positions and successful telecommuting employees. She noted that telecommuting would not be a substitute for child/elder care.

C. Patrice Bruneau then joined us to give an update on IT projects. We have begun replacing the approximate 275 security cameras on campus via federal funding. We are about 90% done in the residence halls. Academic buildings and parking lots will follow. We are also working on replacing some emergency phones because we are running out of spare parts. We are also upgrading Wi-Fi starting with residence halls to be followed by academic buildings. Old wiring is an issue in some spots. Patrice reported they have created a pilot classroom in Kinard and are working to refresh most classrooms. Finally, the phone system has been stable recently. We are on an old circuit but what we are trying right now seems to be working. He pointed out that learning MS Teams can be very beneficial. On the Technology homepage, there is a link where you can view projects and updates.

D. Committee updates were shared. The Professional Development Committee hosted a yoga session. The final two DEI Certificate dates were shared for May and June.

We welcomed new staff. Miranda introduced each staff member nominated for March 2022 Staff Member of the Month. She shared a brief piece from each person's nomination. The March 2022 winner was Brandon Braswell! Media and Communications Committee is collecting pictures of our beautiful campus for the next newsletter. Campus and Community Involvement Committee needs volunteers to help with Bags to Benches. There is another litter pick up on 4/22. There is a food drive 4/15 – 5/10. Elections and Nominations will be holding elections soon for new terms. Please consider serving or nominating! All committee contact info is in the slide show.

E. The new Light Board Recording Studio Kimarie Whetstone told us about last month is up and running in 307 Bancroft Annex. You can sign up to make a presentation there through the Office of Online Learning.

F. Debbie Garrick took a moment to recognize John Kroft for serving as chair this past year as he won't be here in May due to him and Sam welcoming a new baby!

Thanks, John!

II. The next meeting will be May 17. The meeting was adjourned at 3:12pm.