

Winthrop University
Staff Conference Meeting Minutes
Nov. 20, 2018
Dina's Place

Staff Assembly Present: Jonathan Brabson, Nicole Chisari, Thomas Cornelius, Rachel Glover, Cheryl Gomez, Terese Green-Thomas, Lydia Johnson, Wes Love, Kelly McGinnis, Kirk McSwain, Alicia Marstall, Linda O'Connor

Absent: Brittany Neely, Julia Fockler

Vacancies: Student Affairs

Staff in attendance: Approximately 40

Nicole Chisari, chair, called meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

The October meeting minutes were approved.

Q & A with President Mahony

1. We understand the necessity of holding back on the budget in the first semester of the school year. But with so much scheduled programming and planning beginning for the spring, we really need to know in advance so we can plan and spend accordingly. Additionally students have already been hired for certain jobs, and we don't know if we can promise those jobs now. Is there a date on which we will have the funding? Do we anticipate cuts? When the next fiscal year approaches, will this be the process, or will budgets be known earlier?

Answer: Justin provided an answer to Nicole, who stated that the FY19 budget was unique since we had to transition due to lower enrollment numbers and a new CFO. The budget reductions were the result of the lower enrollment this year. Funding will be made available by winter break. Some departments will face budget cuts. The FY2020 budget review will begin in January 2019. Each department has to justify their spending and the approval of the budget will go before the BOT in June of 2019.

2. With the significant decrease in enrollment this year, why does Winthrop not offer a discounted tuition to employee's and retired employee's children to attend Winthrop? This would help maybe with attrition here at Winthrop. Morale is at a very low point no matter what is said at the top of administration.

Answer: President Mahony explained it's a state law that we cannot provide free tuition and/or discounted tuition. The budget is being reviewed to see if we can provide scholarship dollars to students of F/S members. He pointed out that the administration has never said the morale was high, and that it needed to be improved. The survey done previously stated that employee satisfaction is good and higher than it was before, but the university is still not where it wants to be.

3. What is the reasoning we have the lowest freshman enrollment in recent years? What are we currently doing to fix that problem for the upcoming year?

Answer: The president stated that Eduardo gave a one-hour presentation to the BOT regarding this issue. We have hired consultants to review our financial aid program and we are awaiting their results regarding leveraging the dollars. We are currently considering adding new programs. Freshman enrollment has declined across the U.S., so this is not unique to Winthrop. Athletics is looking into

adding eSports, which would add more students to campus. New recruiting strategies are being discussed and we should expect an increase in enrollment. We have had a 30% increase in applications to Winthrop. Staff Feedback Committee will be looking into this subject as well.

4. With Winthrop introducing new concentrations, minors and majors, are there any plans to add a mechanical engineering or any kind of engineering degree?

Answer: This is not likely due to massive upfront costs. We would need a facility and faculty to teach such a program. We are currently looking into a RN to BSN program that would be online.

5. President Mahony mentioned the Winthrop Plan action groups at the State of the University address. Would it be possible to put on the Winthrop Plan website a list of meeting dates and notes from each group's meeting? We haven't heard much about the conclusions of work that these groups have done.

Answer: This is a good suggestion and it is being looked into adding this information to the website.

6. A department ordered new nametags with the new logo from Ryder. They received an email that they will be charged a "royalty fee" of 12% since the university is now charging Ryder to use the logo. The questions are: Where is this 12% going (to the university or to the company who did our licensing)? What other items with the new logo will have royalty charges?

Answer: Nicole answered this, as it was mentioned last meeting. Ryder should not be charging the royalty fee to the university. This charge is for outside persons purchasing items with our logo. If you are charged or have been charged, please contact Katie Price at pricek@winthrop.edu. The 12% fee comes back to the university.

President Mahony then announced that the holiday gathering at the President's house would be December 4. A formal invitation will be forthcoming.

He also mentioned that Sen. Vincent Sheehen is introducing a bill in which the sales tax from online sales would be allocated to higher education. This would mean approximately \$125 million dollars would be used for colleges and universities. This bill would have to go through the process before it is approved, but it would mean additional dollars for Winthrop.

Nicole announced that there would be no meeting in December. In place of our monthly meeting, there will be a Holiday Social on Dec. 12 at 2 p.m. in the Richardson Ballroom. Refreshments will be served.

It was announced that Linda O'Connor is now Vice Chair of Staff Assembly.

New Perks program was presented by Terri Haynes in HR. A notice was sent in the Daily Digest. You will need to register for this program, print the card and show it at various locations for a discount. Restaurants, dry cleaners, movies and travel are included in this program. You can also purchase gift cards online with a 15% discount on those. There is also a cash back award program. You can save up to 70% on travel. The website is Winthrop.perksconnection.com.

Standing Committee Reports:

Campus & Community Involvement – Pam was unavailable today. Nicole announced that the food drive is in progress and the holiday social date of Dec. 12 at 2 p.m.

Kelly Scott announced that Sullivan Middle School is involved in a toy drive. She will be collecting new or gently used toys at her office 102 Tillman from Nov. 26-Dec. 7.

Elections & Nominations – Becky sent out an email announcing an opening in Student Affairs since Laura Johnson has left Winthrop.

Media & Communications –Kara reported that the next Staff Stuff would be out in December. There will be no newsletter in January. Please send your milestones to her. If you are not receiving the Staff Stuff newsletter, please let Kara know and she will add you to the distribution list.

Professional Development – Nicole thanked everyone for attending the Marketplace training and the Banner training. The Banner training was so successful that another session may be presented in the new year. Check the TLC website because on Dec. 6 Sodexo will be presenting a Healthy Holiday Eating session.

Staff Feedback – Rachel stated that the enrollment numbers and information would be researched and added to the website when completed. Please check the website and if you have a topic, please let Rachel know.

Eduardo Prieto from Access and Enrollment Management provided some information on the enrollment numbers. He stated that the interest in Winthrop is there, the issue is that the students apply but then do not attend Winthrop. He is currently meeting with the deans to discuss programs offered. We are unable to provide the scholarships that we used to; these were reduced for long-term financial reasons. We have to believe that we are worth what we are charging for tuition. Most students, at least 50%, have been recruited for 2 years or more.

Recognition Committee – We had five nominations this month and the winner was Amanda James from Access and Enrollment Management.

Katie Price showed us the new Winthrop license plate that is now available with the eagle head instead of the Tillman tower. The cost is higher than a regular plate, but \$40 of the costs come back to the university for scholarships. You can go to the DMV website for additional information.

Please let Nicole know if you have any ideas for topics, concerns you may have, as we are working for you.

There is no Staff Conference in December, so the next Staff Conference will be at Dina's Place on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.