

Winthrop University
Staff Conference Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2019
Dina's Place

Staff Assembly Present: Megan Baggaly, Kara Cauthen, Thomas Cornelius, Katie Gawronski, April Hershey, Chris Johnson, Lydia Johnson, Jessica Martin, Kirk McSwain, Brittany Neely, Linda O'Connor, Tanya Pettus

Absent: Johnathan Brabson, Claire Mooney-Melvin

Staff in attendance: approximately 65

Call to Order

Linda O'Connor, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Leadership Q&A

1. *Why are students allowed to walk through Johnson's faculty and staff parking lot? It is an accident waiting to happen. We enforce crosswalk rules; why does this not apply to the parking lot?*
 - a. Lt. Charles Yearta of Campus Police explained that South Carolina does not have separate laws specifically for parking lots, and they are generally treated as roadways. Pedestrians are required to use the crosswalks and have the right of way. Generally, if an accident does occur, the police will take into consideration the speed of the vehicle, the direction of travel, and whether the pedestrians were within the line of sight of the vehicle. He reminded everyone that the speed limit in parking lots on campus is only 10 mph. Campus Police are looking into creating educational videos for students regarding pedestrian safety that could go out next summer or fall.
2. *Can anything be done to make it more obvious that the removed parking spaces are no longer spaces? Someone received a warning for parking in one, and hadn't even realized the spaces were removed because the way the sun was shining, the black paint looked the same as the normal garnet paint for F/S spaces.*
 - a. Lt. Yearta said that when taking spaces away or reassigning them, there are only two options: the lines can be painted over or sandblasted. Sandblasting is far more expensive, and can still leave the appearance of lines that can be misleading. There is the possibility of using yellow paint like on the fire lanes, but that could also look like parking spaces. He said Campus Police understands the confusion, and is working with Facilities Management to identify other possible options. Parking Enforcement officers will be issuing warnings for faculty and staff, and work to educate everyone about the changes in parking spaces.
3. *We often see the Campus Police riding and walking around campus. With recent hires, few of us know who they are. Can Chief Scoggins bring officers to the assemblies and introduce them? We will be able to learn their names and faces and can properly welcome them to Winthrop. It is also a great way to increase police/staff relations!*
 - a. Lt Yearta said that the police department works 24/7, 365 days a year, and new hires tend to be the ones assigned to work the overnight shift from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. This

makes it difficult for any of them to attend Staff Conference. He presented a slide with the names of some of the newest officers and a little information about each of them.

4. *Can there be a feedback period before an upper level staff member's first year is up? Is there a probationary period for all faculty and staff? It seems as though HR or the President should gather feedback from those that work with folks like VPs, Deans, etc. to see how they are doing and what they could improve on. This reminds me of the 360 evaluations we used to have, but those don't seem to exist anymore.*
 - a. President Dan Mahony said that some evaluations do happen for upper level administrators, such as Deans. The Athletic Director is also evaluated yearly. He said he does not believe these have ever been tied to the first year of employment, but that this was something to look into.
5. *As we have had a budget reduction, does it make sense to err on the side of caution and budget low? And then if we have improved numbers and increased funding, then a unit/department/program/college could then have a budget increase?*
 - a. President Mahony said that enrollment is up about 16% for new freshmen, and 16.5% for graduate students, but that retention for undergraduate students is down. We do not have the final numbers yet. We have budgeted very conservatively for this year, so we may actually be looking at a more favorable situation than what was originally expected. We are also doing things very differently this year: in the past, Winthrop may have had \$1 million in the budget originally that later needed to be cut due to unexpected things coming up, but now we have \$1 million set aside for those contingencies that may come up.
6. *We were told renovations were happening over the summer so Thomson would be unavailable for orientation/camps, but nothing changed? What happened?*
 - a. Bryan Harriss, the general manager for Sodexo, explained that a "refresh" is in the works for Thomson. This means no construction, but new paint, flooring, lighting, branding, etc. This was planned for the summer, but they were still in the stages of determining scope and pricing and realized that the work would not be completed by the end of summer, so it was put off. Over the next few weeks, they will be reviewing the scope and pricing, and work is scheduled to begin over the holiday break in December. Anything that cannot be finished then, will be completed at the beginning of next summer.
7. *Why is the dishwasher still broken from spring semester? Using paper plates and plastic cups and cutlery for so many months has to be bad for the environment and also expensive for Winthrop.*
 - a. Bryan explained that the dishwasher is typically fine; the problem has been with the boiler that provides the hot water. There was a problem in the spring where the boiler had to be down for 3-4 weeks, because it took that long for the necessary parts to arrive. From time to time, there may still be hiccups with the boiler that necessitate using paper/plastic for a day, but Facilities Management and Sodexo work very hard to get everything back up as soon as possible.
8. *Why did the price for F/S meals go up so much?*
 - a. Bryan said there was a 3% increase this year, because the price hadn't gone up in a long time even though the costs of food and supplies have gone up. He encouraged staff to consider purchasing a F/S meal plan for considerable savings in the cost of a meal.

9. *Several different people told me they had gotten ill after eating from the salad bar or international/stir-fry stations, and that this had happened on multiple occasions during 2019. A faculty member said students in her class were talking about feeling ill after eating at Thompson as well. Are fresh ingredients being left out too long/at the wrong temperatures?*
- a. Bryan said that they do receive reports of this from time to time, but that there is a significant focus on food safety. The temperature of food is checked and documented before it goes out and every two hours to make sure it is safe. DHEC will come in and do unannounced checks, and we have done very well on these over the past year. We also have a 3rd party come in and audit for food safety. If a food is ever at the wrong temperature when checked, it will either be reheated or tossed depending on what it is. He asked that everyone please let Sodexo know if they ever feel unwell after eating on campus, so that they can investigate and track the problem to find out what happened.

Dining Services Presentation

Aba Hutchison, marketing specialist for Sodexo, gave a presentation with additional information about Dining Services:

- Faculty and staff can purchase a block of 20 meals for \$110, which is a significant savings. Meal plans cannot be deducted from paychecks, but are available for purchase through the Marketplace Mall.
- There are new, reusable take-out boxes in Thomson that can be purchased for \$5, rinsed out, and returned for a new one.
- Grubhub and Bite are two apps that can be used with Dining Services locations. A Winthrop ID can be connected to Grubhub to pay with café cash.
- Sodexo offers many options for people with dietary restrictions. Individuals can even request to meet with Bryan and the chef to discuss particular needs and learn what campus options are available.
- October 1 is World Vegetarian Day, and Sodexo will be celebrating with extra vegetarian options and a visit from a dietician.
- Renderings for the current renovation plan were shared. There will be new tabletops (with the old bases), and reupholstered chairs and booths.
- Details were shared about the food safety regulations that Sodexo follows.

Committee Updates & Announcements

Media & Communications: Kara Cauthen announced that the next staff newsletter will be sent out in the first week of October.

Campus & Community Involvement: Linda reminded everyone that Food Truck Friday is this week. They still need volunteers, and the first 200 Winthrop IDs will receive \$5 in Food Truck Bucks.

Elections & Nominations: Linda announced that her position as Finance & Business representative would need to be filled soon since this is her last Staff Conference. This committee also needs a new chair to help with the election.

Professional Development: Linda reminded everyone that the slides from the summer's Professional Development Conference are now available through the Digital Commons. Marcia Willis spoke about the

upcoming South Carolina Women in Higher Education event, and encouraged everyone to spread the word that faculty and staff are welcome. There will be discussion of developing a partnership with SCWHE for future events, and a chance to win one of two Clothes Mentor gift cards.

Staff Feedback: The next meeting for this committee is Monday, September 23 at 4 p.m. in 116 McLaurin. Any staff who are interested are welcome to attend.

Recognition: Miranda Knight announced the nominees for Staff Member of the Month. The winner was Tracy Holbert.

Brittany Neely announced the new staff hires.

Anyone who is interested in serving on the Homecoming Committee should reach out to Jessica Martin.

The new Bachelor of Professional Studies program is starting in the spring. There will be an informational session September 24 at 6 p.m. in 114 Digs.

Katie Price encouraged everyone to get their tickets for the Alessia Cara concert early, and announced that our eSports team has their first tournament this weekend.

Brittany Cromedy announced that staff can begin making changes for Open Enrollment. She also reminded everyone of the upcoming Benefits & Wellness Fair on October 1, and said to keep an eye on the Daily Digest for more HR and wellness related information.

Laura Foster announced that there will be a blood drive on September 25-26.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m.