

Winthrop University
Staff Conference Meeting Minutes
Sept. 18, 2018
Dina's Place

Staff Assembly Present: Nicole Chisari, Julia Fockler, Wes Love, Rachel Glover, Cheryl Gomez, Linda O'Connor, Thomas Cornelius, Terese Green-Thomas, Brittany Neely, Kirk McSwain, Alicia Marstall, Laura Johnson, Johnathan Brabson

Absent: Kelly McGinnis

Vacancies: None

Meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. by Nicole Chisari, chair

The August meeting minutes were approved.

Several questions were submitted by staff and President Mahoney/the appropriate staff person answered:

Q1. *Why are the answers to the questions never put on the web page?*

A. Nicole answered that the minutes include the questions and answers which are linked on the website.

Q2. *Is there a possibility of a raise for state employees in this fiscal year or next?*

A. President Mahony informed us that it is too early to say as it is often dependent on the state budget decisions. He did say that election years tend to see a higher chance of compensation increases but truthfully, it's just too early to say.

Q3. *Do we foresee or project any budget cuts to departments or furloughs for employees in the coming months?*

A. President Mahony responded that they are looking at a wide variety of options for ways to adjust the budget without making cuts to department budgets and that furloughs were never mentioned in talks to date.

Q4. *The Student Payroll Adjustment form (used when a student misses the deadline to enter their time online via Wingspan) requires three signatures. Level 1: supervisor; Level 2: dean/department head; and Level 3: vice president; and then the provost. Is this an effective use of time for someone at that level? Perhaps Level 2 should be chair/department head, and Level 3 dean.*

A. Lisa Cowart would be the appropriate person to answer this question and was unable to attend. Will get an answer and share at a later date.

Q5. Banner 9 is an absolute joke that is slow, cumbersome, and NOT user-friendly. What is being done to either replace the horrible system or substantially improve the software so the speed and ease of Banner 8 is reflected in Banner 9?

A. Patrice Bruneau addressed the Banner 9 issues. He explained the Banner 8 will no longer be supported by Ellucian as of Dec. 1 and so the move to 9 was required. There was no option to remain and too costly to change systems. Companies typically stop supporting older platforms because with changing technology, older systems become hard to support and maintain. Banner 9 has increased management and security which is necessary to maintain.

A follow up request came from an attendee to have some TLC training sessions to assist staff in learning to navigate the new Banner.

Q6. (2-Part) Would the university consider turning on the A/C earlier in the mornings for the custodial staff, as well as the heat in winter? There are several elderly custodial staff members who struggle with the temperature in the buildings when they arrive at 4 a.m. to clean. They've been working in very hot conditions, and health is a big concern.

A. Wes Love answered in Justin Oates' absence. Wes explained that it just isn't cost-effective to have the buildings running at different times than they are currently set. To have the building temperatures be at their optimal, they would have to start heating/cooling a few hours earlier. He explained that the university does have set min/max temperature set points and the system will automatically kick in if temperatures fall outside of those zones. He reminded us that many buildings are old and that weather can dictate a lot of what the building temperatures feel like and that sometimes those are out of their control.

(2nd part of question) Also, when a staff member in this division is off or out for a period of time, there are no replacements sent in their stead to help with their duties, which leaves the remaining staff to work extra hard and in hot temperatures. The morale has been down recently due to this, and it has been noticed by many how seemingly unfair it is.

A. Wes explained that the university has staff that work as floaters to fill in when someone is out, however, it is rare to be fully staffed and sometimes more people are out than they have floaters- so gaps are unfortunately common. During these gaps, we might find that our facilities staff will focus on the more critical items during this time and they ask for your understanding on those days. Nicole also reminded staff to take ownership of their campus by helping out if they see litter or other issues that could be quickly picked up. Every little bit helps out our hard-working facilities staff.

President Mahony thanked everyone for their flexibility and response during the potential hurricane. He appreciated the extra work that many had to put in as a result.

Introduction of New High-Ranking Staff Members

- Shelia Burkhalter, Vice President, Student Affairs

Shelia shared a little bit about her personal history before coming to Winthrop. Professionally, since arriving at Winthrop she has begun working on her department's strategic plan, working to align it with Winthrop's strategic plan. She has also been performing budget analysis within student affairs to ensure they are making the best use of the funds to achieve Winthrop goals and objectives. Lastly, much of her time was spent with the on-boarding of the new dining services company that started in August, and is still working with them on the transition to our campus.

- Adrienne McCormick, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

After sharing a little bit of her personal and professional history prior to her arrival at Winthrop, Adrienne shared with us what she is currently working on, including developing their strategic goals for the College of Arts and Science, as well as focusing on some areas of improvement. Those areas include: advisement, student readiness, capitalizing on areas of Winthrop's uniqueness, articulation of skills to future employers, professional development for faculty, and classroom needs.

Enrollment Trends – Eduardo Prieto, Vice President for Access & Enrollment Management

- Enrollment is down but applications are up – Indicating high interest in Winthrop University
- Challenges include “sealing the deal” and keeping them – both numbers are down.
- Goal achieved this year – Financial sustainability. Winthrop has the funds to pay the awards given. An important goal that they have met.
- Eduardo encouraged us all, when talking to others, to not apologize for the cost. Winthrop is a great value and we must remember that.
- Access & Enrollment are launching some new initiatives, including SLATE and leveraging Financial Aid. More information regarding those is forthcoming.
- Prieto gave an overview of some new staff hires and positions to help achieve these new initiatives –
 - Ty Robbins – Admissions Counselor
 - Paula Garofalo – CVPA Admissions Counselor
 - Whitney Campbell – Campus Visits and Events Coordinator
 - Tadean Page – Community Outreach Coordinator
 - Gabe Paxton – Admissions Recruiter
 - Jessica Van Cleave – Digital Content Specialist

Staff Committee Reports

Campus & Community Involvement – Pam Varraso

Food Truck Friday volunteers needed, free food included. Looking for other committee members.

Elections & Nominations

The new representatives were introduced: Linda O'Connor- Finance & Business Affairs; and Thomas Cornelius and Terese Green-Thomas with Academic Affairs.

Media & Communications – Kara Cauthen

Next Staff Stuff will come out in early October, reminder to join the Facebook group, reminder to continue to send milestones, news, etc. to cauthenk@winthrop.edu.

Professional Development Committee- Nicole Chisari

The committee is looking for a chair. Members will also hold 2 sessions about Marketplace in October. More information to come.

Staff Feedback- Rachel Glover

Committee will be discussing Margaret Nance parking lot signage and questions about wages/raises next month.

Staff Member of the Month

The August Staff Member of the Month is Howard Seidler, Residence Life.

Staff Advocate of the Month- Tina Vires

The August Staff Advocate of the Month is Chris Rousseau, Operations.

Final Announcements

Preventative Wellness Screenings are coming in October. Contact Brittany Cromedy in HR for more information.

The Staff Appreciation Lunch is Oct. 15 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. in Thomson Cafeteria.

Next Staff Conference will be at Dina's Place on Oct. 16 at 2 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:57pm.