

## **Staff Council Meeting – September 9, 2008**

**Attendance:** Matt Reuer, Lynda Smith, Dave Reed, Joan Taylor, Millie Brence-Austin, McKinley Sielaff, Stephanie Daigle, Diane Cobbett, Terri Akse, Nancy Luther, Beth Brooks, Lee Dougherty

### ***1. Beth Brooks speaking about the Ombudsperson program***

Beth overviewed what an Ombudsperson is and what kind of role that would play at Colorado College.

She was seeking Staff Council's advice on effective ways to roll it out to campus and positively be received.

Two main questions asked were why do we need this role and how can Beth be in this role as well as advisor to the President.

The board of Trustees initiated the idea as they would like to make sure that everyone on campus is being treated fairly. It is not meant to be a 'whistle blower' program but a way in which employees of Colorado College can seek information and advice.

In May 2008, the board approved a draft charter for a one year pilot to see how it would be received and utilized on campus.

Anyone can come to Beth with any type of issue; she explained that the four principles of an ombudsman are confidentiality, neutrality, independence and informality. Staff who come to Beth in her capacity as an ombudsman are referred to as "visitors".

Some examples of concerns that might be brought forward to her are:

- Supervisory issues
- Discrimination
- Perceived unfair treatment
- Discipline issues
- Fear of retaliation
- Working condition issues
- Unclear expectations
- Workplace disputes between constituents
- Safety problems
- Harassment

No written records will be kept. All conversations are private. The only exception to this would be if there is any imminent risk of harm.

Beth spoke about the neutrality aspect of the position. In her role as Ombudsman she would not be affiliated with any other role on campus.

This program has the potential to be an informal channel in which the Ombudsman can help resolve issues or give direction informally. It is a safe place for people to vent and is meant to empower the visitor to solve problems,

Beth's role is not to solve the problem but to give the options and resources available to help the visitor move through channels if necessary. The hope is to create a stronger institution in general. This is a place to resolve issues..

The program is set to kick off on October 1<sup>st</sup>. A separate space has been set up in Cossitt for meetings and will be by appointment.

## ***2. Staff Voices and Staff Council Welcome Back Party***

Staff Council has planned the Welcome Back Party for Thursday October 2<sup>nd</sup> and Staff Voices will be on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Venue to be determined.

Staff Council agreed that we should lead by example and manage the budget and expenses wisely.

## ***3. President Celeste's Working Group on Stewardship and Cost Containment***

President Celeste has organized a new ad hoc group to address Stewardship and Cost containment. The charge to create this group came from the Board of Trustees, and filtered to Senior Staff. The goal of this ad hoc group is to permanently reduce the budget in the amount of \$500,000 by looking campus wide for places in which expenditures could be reduced.

Dave Reed will be on the working group as a Staff Council representative. Joan Taylor will help gather data.. She encouraged all Staff Council members to ask their divisions for suggestions and ideas which are to be forwarded to her to compile and submit to the working group. The feedback Staff Council receives will be submitted as suggestions only without names appended.

Staff Council's goal is to come up with carefully thought out ideas that will assist the ad hoc group to achieve the \$500,000 mark without reducing services, without negatively impacting program quality, and without cutting personnel.

Dave noted that in a conversation with President Celeste he stated that to achieve this \$500,000 cost containment no staff jobs would be cut. Dave

believes, however, that we need to be proactive in this process to ensure that staff cuts stay off the table.

#### ***4. Bookstore changes***

Stephanie highlighted some of the changes taking place at the bookstore. She assured everyone that the changes taking place are positive for CC and the staff.

Follett is partnering with the bookstore and will manage Tigers on Tejon and the World Arena location. Any new hires needed will be back filled with Follett. Those employees will work for Follett and not CC. Current employee's work for CC.

The CC bookstore has not outsourced, CC still owns the bookstore, and Follett will simply own the inventory and equipment under a three year contract.

With this new partnership the prices in the bookstore are likely to decrease since merchandise is purchased at better prices and the savings can be passed along to the customer.

At this time there are no plans for the main bookstore to move. It will stay in the same location.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.