

Staff Council Meeting

Minutes 10-12-10

Attendance: 12 members present, 4 guests (Jessica, John, Michelle, Dennis, Jane)

- Approve minutes and treasurer's report
 - Not discussed
- CCLA presentation (about 30 minutes)
 - Project to better college community: They took surveys that were done regarding campus climate and are following up on the information. They didn't want to complete another survey, just to do something with the surveys. 2 campus climate surveys were done and 1 faculty survey. They also did focus groups to get more information.
 - Handouts were given to staff council that summarized the results and provided recommendations.
 - Who would follow up on the recommendations?
 - Met with senior staff last spring, out of that meeting came some recommendations. The CCLA group continues to meet to work through some of those recommendations. For example: a Mellon Lunch to readdress the college mission and core values. Oct and Dec town meetings are likely to happen—out of a recommendation for this group. Replicating a fall conference during half block. Some conversation is happening around this, but no final decision.
 - The CCLA's goal was to bring the recommendations forward and to present to various groups like staff council and the FEC.
 - Transparency (create a central area for things to be updated and referred to more readily) for example: the staff council website has a list of committees—but it's not every committee on campus (because staff council doesn't oversee this)—some people would read that list and think it's incomplete. Should meeting times for committees be posted on the website as well as notes to what was discussed?
 - The Electronic Town Square- there is a potential new version up and running and it is being tested now. Pseudonyms will be used and there will be voting options as well
 - There is another team of CCLA who is carrying on this task. There is a new team that is hoping to explore these recommendations and move forward with some of this stuff as well.
 - There was a survey from the Chronicle of Higher Education that was a tool that was looked at—but it's expensive and doesn't include non-exempt staff.
 - Many staff would be interested in hearing the results of this group.
 - What do you see can be done from here?
 - If nothing else, keep the issues on the table.
 - Senior staff agreed that these things are worth pursuing.

- They were very open to hearing the feedback and agreed about the transparency. President Celeste's take-aways from the group would be "transparency and governance."
- How is policy made at CC? This is unclear as well. This would be a good thing to make more transparent.
- Is there anything that staff council would be interested in taking on and working with in this area?
 - CCLA group would be willing to help out if needed/wanted.
 - How to best use our resources? We don't want to reinvent the wheel, or add anything to anyone's plate.
 - Take things in small chunks and do what's possible in the time we have. Be realistic.
 - For example: have one or two key decision making committees post their minutes or agendas on the website for people to review if they have interest.
- Is there possibility in getting the new CCLA group to buy into this project and all of them go to senior staff together?
 - Yes, for buy-in. They are interested...but they deserve to have their own project as well—it's what CCLA is about.
- Would the group be okay if we posted their handouts on our website?
 - Yes, please do! This speaks clearly to transparency.
 - Could post the link to the digest a few times as well to get more information out.
 - Weston will scan it and send it to Mark to post.
- What is the reason for people being so concerned about transparency?
 - It's really hard to get at the root of the concern. It could have been at the heels of the budget situation. Systemically, they are not certain there is a common denominator. It's helpful to have mixed groups, but sometimes it makes it hard to find that common denominator. We don't really have a policy handbook that shows us what we have to follow, that doesn't really fit in with the culture. People had a hard time identifying WHY/WHERE their concerns were coming from.
- The value of the mixed focus group should be continued on campus. It was a good experience to hear views, and it seemed somewhat therapeutic. There were very low stakes and everyone spoke their mind.
- Could staff council be a hub for this website transparency? There are outlook public folders.
 - It is a bigger issue than building a website—everyone has to be on board with adding and updating it.
 - Would ETS be a place that could work? Something more internal so that the public can't read through stuff.
- The CCLA group is happy to continue these discussions with a subcommittee of staff council. Even just something small like posting

when they meet and if it is open to staff. McKinley is willing to get this portion started (working with Kimmy.)

- Jane Cauvel – discussion of SC’s role
 - Passed out document with her contact information. Office hours are only 1/3 of her time—please don’t hesitate to contact her if you want to meet out of office hours.
 - Her major role is to convey information as to what is concerning members of our staff/faculty.
 - Who does staff go to? They don’t have a union, or anything other than the staff council. Staff Council doesn’t have a dean like the FEC does. Who and how, and what group REALLY speaks for the staff? She knows several staff who don’t know about this committee.
 - How can Staff Council make themselves more known and more powerful?
 - For example: be more forthcoming. Make needs clear. Get involved. How do we reach out to the rest of staff? They need attention; they have had a hard time in the last year and a half.
 - We are lacking the presence of academic staff on our committee.
 - Jane hears a lot of talk of lack of trust. Our national average says that 60% of our country lacks trust in our government. We are surrounded by mistrust. How do we help build this and make people feel safe? Jane also hears stuff about lack of communication.
 - We need to forget about “the good old time” and move ahead and make things good for what we have.
 - Weston- would it be appropriate to take some CCLA topics and work on them. Could we also invite an academic staff person on campus to invite to each meeting?
 - Maybe we could set up focus groups or do personal outreach.
 - Request to Jane: please encourage people to come to us. She requests the same of us.
 - If we invite staff to vent grievances, we need to be prepared to address them.
 - This could give us a ton of work. What are our priorities for the year?
 - As we review the staff council handbook, it will become more clear.
 - Disagreement that the handbook will provide this. Maybe we need to look at our handbook and see if our mission statement needs to provide us more direction.
 - Information is power- that is why McKinley wants to update the committee profiles on the webpage. We should have a link to Jane’s office on our website. Making staff pertinent information from digest posts and other e-mails available on our webpage.
 - Include committee minutes in our minutes on the webpage.

- The new president may or may not have their own ideas, so that makes it hard right now too. (as far as the policy committee was concerned)
 - We have to be careful that it not look like staff council has an agenda for issues.
 - Should we get some focus groups started and do this?
 - We need to invite everyone, not just the leaders. We need people to feel welcome.
 - We should do both. Invite specific people, but also invite everyone. It would be good to target people we don't hear from.
 - Should we do the speed meeting more often? We need to help build more of a sense of community. The hard part is to get people to attend these sorts of things. Try to do more things at lots of different times.
 - Is building community one of the priorities that we should work on? If so, let's make that agenda clear. We should identify things that are important to us, and work on those things.
 - We need to create results, visible results.
 - Mark moved to set up a strategic plan for this year; that is brief and highlights our goals.
 - Weston seconded and made an amendment to discuss at next meeting and resolve it.
 - Shaleen asked that we discuss with our departments and divisions to hear the priorities.
 - Anymore discussion on motion? None
 - All in favor.
 - Everyone reach out and gather information from staff and bring it back to meeting next block.
- Staff compensation philosophy
 - Question raised at staff council event: Why do we receive the letters at the end of every year that states our position and compensation? Seems that the letter is hinting that they may have not hired you back. It seems that this is because it's a yearly contract. It also addresses any salary adjustment. The wording might need to be readjusted. Should it come from supervisor? McKinley- suggests we don't because this could create more inconsistency. Who makes the decisions to send out the letters? Different letters are for exempt, non-exempt, etc. Somewhere online or in the handbook it states that your appointment is year to year. This letter is important for that reason. The letter could be rephrased, but should give the letter to confirm salary.
 - Shaleen will follow up with Pam Butler and follow back to us.
- Mellon luncheon

- They are thinking about doing more Mellon luncheons
- Updates or review on:
 - Budget Committee- no discussion
 - Handbook revisions
 - The minor revisions that were in turquoise
 - Mark moves that we approve the minor changes (in turquoise)
 - Weston seconded
 - No discussion
 - All in favor
 - Hockey ticket prices
 - Weston, Randy, and Terri- are going to meet with Athletics to discuss. Seems that student tickets were being sold to staff at the time.
 - Presidential search- no discussions
- New Business
 - Town Hall Meeting October 20th
 - Anything else to discuss besides budget?
 - Advertising needs to go out soon. Can they send a meeting request out to the whole campus? Linda will ask Beth.
 - Mention of the presidential search and process