

Staff Council Meeting Minutes, Armstrong Boardroom, September 11, 2012

Present: Jayne Blewitt, Stormy Burns, Kathy Butler, Jessica Copeland, Nancy Fox, Kathy Gonzalez, Bethany Grubbs, Mark Lee, Annette Megneys, Joseph Sharman, Brenda Soto, Weston Taylor

Not Present: Naomi Trujillo, Andrew Watson

***Note:** Kelly Tinan resigned 9/11/12, leaving a non-exempt opening on Staff Council

Visitors: Farrah Bernardino, Lisa Brommer, Libby Rittenberg, Linda Petro, Jill Tiefenthaler, Marj Webster

1. Libby Rittenberg, Ombudsperson, to discuss the Ombuds office and the forthcoming year
 - Libby introduced herself; she arrived at CC in 1989 and taught in Economics
 - In the 1960s, ombudspersons helped students communicate with administration
 - The Ombuds office is confidential, independent, neutral, and informal (Libby keeps no records of meetings or even of her schedule); it is not a formal channel for issues
 - The Ombuds office can serve as a go-between and otherwise “do things”
 - An ombudsperson can identify trends and problems across areas of the College
 - Libby wants to work with Staff Council, since we serve in much the same function
2. Linda Petro, President's Office, to discuss the In The Loop meetings
 - The first meeting will be September 27 at 8:00 AM and will focus on strategic planning
 - The other dates are November 15 3:30 to 5:00 PM (due to the next week being Thanksgiving Break), February 14 8:00 to 9:30 AM, and April 18
 - Jill said that the FAQs were well-received before and asked if we should offer them every time; Bethany suggested that we collect FAQs ahead of time; Jill noted that we take the most common questions and answer them at the meetings
 - i. The FAQs are posted online after the meeting (video and transcript)
 - ii. Joseph suggested, and Marj affirmed, that the online FAQs include all questions asked, whether or not they were answered during the meeting
 - In the Loop meetings will be videoed, and workstudy students will transcribe the videos and post videos and transcripts online
 - Bethany suggested that future meetings include a budget presentation; Jill affirmed that and suggested the April meeting (Wake Forest's CFO did that annually)
 - Jill said Sandy Wong may talk about Dean's Office issues
 - Lisa Brommer suggested that HR give updates at a future meeting; Joseph suggested HR could discuss performance evaluations
3. Plan meetings for staff who want to participate in the Strategic Planning process
 - These will be Thursday, October 4 at 11:00 AM; Tuesday, October 16 at 2:00 PM; Friday, October 19 at 4:00 PM
 - Lyrae Williams from the President's Office confirmed with Weston that these dates and times work
 - Weston confirmed that members of the steering committee and possibly members of some or all subcommittees will be present at these meetings, following Mark's question
 - Jill said the Strategic Planning budget can provide a sack lunch for one of these meetings
 - Staff Council may provide cookies or refreshments at the other meetings
 - Jill wants to get the campus talking about strategic planning, suggested Staff Council address it in a future meeting; there will be an on-campus retreat about strategic planning January 17th and 18th, 2013

4. Temporary Staff Council Budget Committee formation
 - Kathy noted that Staff Council left \$2,500 unspent from its budget last year
 - Mark, Jayne, and Kathy will meet together to draft a 2012-13 Staff Council budget that the Council will discuss and vote on at the Block 2 meeting
5. Election of SC Officers
 - Following discussion, there was only one volunteer or nominee for each officer opening: Nancy as non-exempt Co-Chair; Bethany as Secretary; Kathy as Treasurer; Jayne as Events Coordinator
 - Joseph suggested the Committee Liaison officer be tabled, since the Election Officer has been doing duties assigned in the bylaws to the Committee Liaison
 - Joseph moved, Annette seconded, that the officers be appointed by voice assent; approved
6. Vote on bylaw wording change regarding members' terms
 - The current language of Section II Number 6:
 - i. If a member leaves in mid-term, the Election Officer will then work in conjunction with the Co-Chairs to bring names of potential new members to the Staff Council for approval. The selected new member will serve out the year until the next regular Staff Council election, and will then be eligible to be elected to a full staff council member term.
 - Proposed new language for Section II Number 6:
 - i. If a member leaves in mid-term, the Election Officer will then work in conjunction with the Co-Chairs to bring names of potential new members to the Staff Council for approval. If possible, those names should be selected in the order of votes received from the most recent Staff Council election. The selected new member, at her or his choice, will either serve out the year until the next regular Staff Council election, or she/he can serve the remainder of that year plus an additional two years.
 - Following discussion, Joseph moved, Annette seconded, that the change be approved; approved
7. Remarks Weston will deliver at President Tiefenthaler's inauguration
 - Jill noted these are officially "welcome" remarks from different constituencies
 - Marj suggestion: hope for greater harmony and transparency
 - Stormy suggestion: hopeful that our voice be heard as staff
 - Jessica suggestion: applaud listening and encourage President to continue listening
 - Lisa suggestion: expect partnerships between groups on campus, good communication
8. Set the date and form a subcommittee for the Staff Welcome Back Party
 - Bethany and Brenda, along with Events Coordinator Jayne, will discuss when and where and report back by email to Council (especially if the event will occur before the next meeting)
9. Discuss and select temporary subcommittee members for 2012-13 agenda items
 - Campus Climate Survey
 - i. Jill said it was important this be done well, since it will establish a baseline in the College's efforts to become one of the "Best Places to Work in Higher Education" [see the Chronicle of Higher Education, <http://chronicle.com/section/Great-Colleges-to-Work-For/156/>]
 - ii. Jill wants Staff Council to work with the President's Office and HR
 - iii. Subcommittee: Bethany, Weston, Farrah, Annette, Kathy, Nancy

- Staff Amenities Brochure
 - i. Lisa said that HR will convene a working group October 2 from 10:30 to 12:00 regarding onboarding, or assimilating new employees over their first 1-2 months
 - ii. Brenda suggested the onboarding process could revive the CC Ambassador Program, which she thought was a good initiative
 - 1. Brenda and Jessica plan to attend the onboarding working group
 - iii. Subcommittee: Nancy, Mark, Lisa (from HR)
 - Compensation
 - i. Subcommittee: Joseph, Brenda (who is on the Compensation Committee), Marj
 - Staff Advocacy or Arbitration Process
 - i. Jill noted that these subcommittees should first find out what others are doing and what is possible before making recommendations, since we want to avoid duplicating work or making suggestions that cannot be followed
 - ii. Lisa said that HR is working on some related issues to bring the College into Title IX compliance, but Title IX mostly only applies to gender-related issues
 - iii. Subcommittee: Mark, Nancy, Stormy, Jessica, Lisa (from HR)
 - Children's Center fees and parking fees
 - i. Discussion noted that the sliding scales may need adjustment, since there is often not much price differential
 - ii. Jill noted that the Children's Center is already heavily subsidized
 - iii. Subcommittee: Jayne, Jessica, Annette
 - Listserv for staff councils at other liberal arts schools around the country
 - i. Subcommittee: Joseph, Weston, Jayne
10. Budget Committee Report (Marj)
- The Budget Committee hasn't met yet; its meetings will be the 2nd 4th Wednesdays of each Block
 - Marj would like to know how to get more timely feedback to/from Staff Council
11. Meeting adjourned at 1:05 PM