



STAFF SENATE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

JANUARY 11, 2011

1:30 PM

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, ROOM 622

ATTENDEES	Members: Katrina Branson, Brandon Bruscato, Kirby Campbell, Camile Currier, Susan Duggins, Catherine Estis, Laura Knotts, Cindy Leath, Anthony Malta, Gail Parker, Roslynn Pogue, Chris Ringo, Pamela Saulsberry, Mary Schmeer, Cori Scroggins, Robin Taylor, Bryan Thorn, Lindsey Wilkerson Liaison: Lillian Brown
ABSENT (EXCUSED)	Tasha Fisher, Stacy Lamb

Agenda Topics

CALL TO ORDER	A regular meeting of the Staff Senate was held on January 11, 2011 in the University Library Room 622 and called to order at 1:30 pm by Susan Duggins, President. Roll call by Katrina Branson. A quorum was present.
MINUTES	Minutes of the previous meeting held November 9, 2010 were reviewed by the committee. Gail Parker moved to approve the minutes; Anthony Malta seconded. Motion passed.
DISCUSSION	<p>President's Report: <i>News-Star</i> website has published information about how Governor Bobby Jindal is reconsidering higher education cuts which are projected to be less. Revenue Estimating Committee is scheduled to meet tomorrow and can be viewed online. Legislature will have input. Encouraged to visit the State Legislature website for upcoming meetings. President Nick Bruno may re-activate ad hoc committees, such as Strategic Resource Allocation Committee (SRAC) to address budget issues.</p> <p>Communication with Chairpersons to assess Staff Senate goals for the remainder of the year and inventive ways to broaden the Senate's outreach and activity. What is our obligation to the staff at large and how will the Senate represent the needs of the staff? Share ideas and suggestions, along with recommendations on implementing initiatives.</p> <p>Staff Senate meeting date for March was moved from the 2nd Tuesday to the following Tuesday, March 15. There were no objections from the Senate.</p> <p>Committee Reports:</p> <p>Communications: Committee stressed that we have less people and more work, and wanted to look at ways to improve overall morale. Employees feel stressed and bogged down. We need to make sure their concerns are heard. Committee felt there should be a place employees can bring their concerns so they can be communicated with the Senate. Committee said there should be a better feeling of unity between faculty and staff by perhaps inviting them to our meetings, and vice versa.</p> <p>Elections: Staff morale was one of the main areas of focus. Suggested faculty/staff luncheon during University Week. Recommend that No Smoking Policy in put into place for Fall 2011. Suggest work toward creating a procedure for merit raises so that when monies become available at a future time, funds can be prioritized.</p> <p>Cori Scroggins mentioned nominations will begin February 1. Requesting report for elections with eligible list from Katrina Branson, Human Resources, prior to that date. There will not be very many seats available as there were for the last election. For example: Chris Ringo will have automatic renewal in Business Affairs as he moves from President-Elect. There is nothing in the Constitution & Bylaws that addresses when a member's or officer's term expires. Needs more clarification. Susan Duggins will reach out to Anna Hill, Faculty Senate, to see if they have had similar issues and how they were able to substantiate the position. There should be no more than five (5) in any one division.</p>
DISCUSSION	

Staff Welfare Committee: Discussed a few initiatives that may be possible to increase employee morale. Public Recognition Week, May 2-8, 2011, in conjunction with ULM Employee Recognition Reception held in April. Monthly drawings for employees via the Staff Senate website. Books, key chains, free meals, etc. Invite Faculty Senate member to Staff Senate meetings, and vice versa. Professional Development for staff members, perhaps inviting guest speaker from on-campus or off-campus with topics of interest to employees.

DISCUSSION

Issues with employee morale are evident as expressed by the committee. Want to find ways to make employees feel appreciated and acknowledged. Advocacy and communication should be the purpose of the Senate, not grievances. (1) Professional development and how to assist employees in their jobs and how to promote activities on campus. For instance, professional development could be training on how to do certain things and procedures on the computer. (2) Developing ways to bridge the gap between faculty and staff for unity, and for the betterment of the students. Often we do not understand where each other is coming from.

Set long-term and short time for the semester. Each committee should voice concerns, thoughts and suggestions. Questions concerning monthly drawing and how names will be determined. Suggestion to choose a name from employees who login on the website.

Long-range goals could include commemorating Public Service Recognition Week. Door prize or "happies" for employees in an effort to increase morale. Volunteers needed to ask for donations. Several Senate members volunteered to ask for donations from Auxiliary Services and Athletics as well as off-campus merchants and restaurants. Kirby Campbell mentioned Athletic ticket policy as guide for offering season tickets and single ticket giveaways. Campbell will review Ethics laws for compliance on these and other types of donations.

Reasonable requests for donations once a month or one-time donation, depending on merchants. Awards could be given once a month. Senate could store collected items and use as needed over the course of the year. Raising Cane's has allowances for more generous donations. It was suggested Senate wait until there is large gathering and ask for sizeable contribution for food and beverages.

Staff eligibility is established according to Constitution & Bylaws. Elections Committee moving to the point of nominations and the initiatives could bring a heightened awareness.

Duggins asked how to encourage employees to participate. Discussions on how best to communicate the initiatives perhaps by sending an email to Staff Senate email distribution list. First award could be Activity Center membership for the month. Would need to be sure the membership is not a donation of public funds. Susan Duggins and Cindy Leath will collect donations as they come in.

Catherine Estis mentioned a survey that employees can complete. Faculty has done surveys in the past. Duggins will check with Hill to see where they are and perhaps do a joint survey with common questions for the staff. Distribution of surveys would be divided among the Senate for each division. Will take into consideration; further thoughts on how to initiate and implement. May begin by the end of the semester. Estis mentioned at best 37% of surveys would be completed. Lindsey Wilkerson mentioned the university's professional membership with Survey Monkey. Any group on campus may use the service.

Suggestions on professional development topics that may interest employees, or motivational speakers in the community. Estis suggested Beginner/Intermediate Level Microsoft Office training may have a broader reach. Pursuing grant opportunities and learning about financial aid were other topics Estis mentioned.

Camile Currier mentioned Banner training for departmental budgets. Banner training for student schedules was another topic of interest among the Senate. Review the calendar to determine best time to schedule Banner training. Contact Computing Center to see if they could conduct training sessions on the myULM portal. Computer training can be held in the Library so participants can login and follow demonstrations. Schedule three training sessions and employees may choose which day is convenient.

Unfinished Business:

Questions regarding what needs to be done to pursue No Smoking Policy. Duggins will confer with Hill, Faculty Senate, to schedule a meeting with President Bruno.

Next regular meeting – February 8, 2011 @ 1:30pm, Administrative Conference Room, Library 622.

CONCLUSIONS

There being no further business, Laura Knotts moved to adjourn. Chris Ringo seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
N/A		

DRAFT