

**Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs**

325 Burruss Hall

August 18, 2009

3:30 p.m.

**Present:** Judy Alford, Robin Atkins, Catherine Caldwell, Hal Irvin, Cindy Koziol, Maxine Lyons, Robin McCall-Miller, Beth Osborne, Melissa Simpkins, Don Taylor, Tom Wertalik, Connie Wilkinson

**Absent:** Lay Nam Chang, Carolyne Dudding, Mike Naff, Brett Shadle, Kathy Webb

**Guest:** None

**Recording Secretary:** Melissa Ball

Chair Maxine Lyons called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. and welcomed all new members to the Commission. Commission members introduced themselves. The agenda was approved as presented. There were no minutes from the May 2009 meeting to approve due to the recording secretary being absent from the May meeting.

**1. Future Meeting Dates and Times**

Possible dates and times for the upcoming year's meetings were discussed. It was decided that the meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 2:00-3:30. Melissa Ball was asked to take care of the room reservation and send an email to all members confirming the dates, times, and locations of the upcoming meetings.

**2. Items to Work on This Year**

**Winter Closing**

The Benefits Committee has brought the winter closing issue to the Staff Senate again. The Staff Senate feels there should be a vote by the Staff Senators to express support or opposition on whether to proceed with a proposal. Commission members feel it would be a good idea to get a copy of the resolution and the supporting data from last year from the Staff Senate. Maxine Lyons is going to ask Tom Tucker, Staff Senate President, for a copy of the resolution and the supporting data for the Commission to review.

**July 4<sup>th</sup> Closing in 2010**

Concern has been expressed over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday for this coming year. Since July 4 will fall on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed on Monday, July 5. Freshman orientation has been scheduled for July 5 making it necessary for some non-essential staff to be required to work. This goes against what is stated in the holiday section of the University's leave manual. It states that the University will be closed with only essential personnel being designated to work. Non-essential staff

who have been asked to work feel the University was wrong in scheduling freshman orientation on the holiday. Maxine Lyons is going to contact Dr. Ed Spencer, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, to get more information. The issue will be discussed again at the next meeting.

### **Rumors of Budget Reduction Making Layoffs Necessary**

An employee expressed concern to Maxine Lyons about the possibility of staff layoffs due to budget cuts. She feels that more faculty are being retained while more staff are being laid off. She wanted to know what the Commission plans to do to support staff. The employee suggested proactive ways to prevent long-term effects such as furloughs and asked that Maxine bring her suggestion to the Commission. There was much discussion about the possibility of layoffs; however, until the University learns the full impact of the budget cuts next month from the Governor, a lot of planning cannot be done. A suggestion was made to make the employees more aware of the lay-off policy; however, most felt that might cause unnecessary panic throughout the University. Maxine will let the employee know what was discussed during the meeting, and the issue will be addressed after learning more about the budget cuts next month.

### **Other Suggestions the Upcoming Year**

With the introduction of the new performance management system, it was suggested that getting assurance for the additional funding for merit increases would make a positive impact on employees. Since there is currently no money for merit increases, the possibility of giving paid time off in place of an increase was suggested. Also using other forms of non-monetary rewards to try and improve morale and motivate employees was discussed. Hal Irvin is going to ask Kirk Wehner, Director of Compensation and Performance Management, to come and talk to the Commission about the employee awards process and what departments are doing to reward their employees.

### **3. Other Business**

Mike Naff had volunteered to be the Commission's representative on the Commission for Equal Opportunity and Diversity. However, Mike is AP faculty and the representative has to be staff. A new volunteer was requested and Melissa Simpkins volunteered to be the representative if she gets approval from her supervisor. She will send Maxine an email to let her know if she can be the Commission's representative.

### **4. Announcements**

- The organizational climate survey will be going out to all employees in September. The survey will be repeated every 18 months.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.