

STAFF SENATE Minutes
2420 North End Center
February 20, 2014
Noon – 1:00 pm

Attending: Bonnie Alberts, Susan Archer, Dan Cook, Ashley Folcik, Lori Greiner, Velva Groover, Anna Hawthorne, Valerie Henderson, Dennis Herron, Cathy Hill, Robena Hughes, Maxine Lyons, Alex Parrish, Katie Reaves, Wyatt Sasser, Becky Saylor, Robert Sebek, Llyn Sharp, Louellen Sharp, Amy Tanner, Sue Teel, Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, Tom Tucker, Christine Watkinson, Tami Watson, Sally Wieringa, Jon Wooge

Excused: Judy Alford, Donna Raines, Ashley Roberts

Guest: Sandra Mullins, Steve Myers, Sally Shupe, Nora Stover

Opening: Adoption of Agenda. All minutes have been sent out electronically.

Announcements: Please send Leslie Thornton-O'Brien (lthornto@vt.edu) a note if you will not be in attendance at the Staff Senate meeting so that she may mark you excused.

-Staff Senate Standing Committees - All Senators are expected to sign up for one standing committee, per Staff Senate by-laws.

- VTStaff listserv is another way to stay informed

- Laura Neff-Henderson has added a survey to the HR webpage and would like people to participate.

(<https://vthr.optimalworkshop.com/treejack/humanresourcesnav>)

- Staff Senate Standing Committees - Updates

Policies and Issues – Anna Hawthorne *Haven't met in a few months, currently scheduling a new monthly meeting and we are currently discussing spousal hires.*

Communications Committee – Robert Sebek *If you would like to be added to the Staff Senate listserv, just email Robert Sebek and he will add you to the listserv.*

Elections and Nominations Committee – Jon Wooge *Still collecting names for University councils, committee's, etc. There have been several articles in VT news and nominations will close March 14th.*

McComas Leadership Seminar Planning Committee – Dennis Herron & Sally Wieringa *This year's seminar will be at the Inn at Virginia Tech and Dr. Steger will be the keynote speaker on May 5, 2014.*

-Updates from Hal Irvin

There will be an organizational climate survey on February 26, 2014 during the "Our VT Series" where Jack Finney and Hal Irvin will be presenting. Go to the HR website, click on Jack Finney's picture, and you can watch virtually.

Staff achievement awards - Retiree's that worked here ten years or more can be nominated. This award came out of CSPA and it is a \$1000 award.

Program – Dr. Ellen Plummer, Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs

Shared Governance 101: Why should I care?

- **Where you work matters**
- **Expansion of higher education, moving from northeast, 100's of years of history**
- **~4500 institutions across US; from beauty schools to Harvard**
- **We are a land grant – unique mission and profile**
 - **Resulted from federal government giving land to educate in agriculture and mechanical arts (now engineering). In our DNA as an institution are engineering and agriculture**
 - **Agriculture morphed into extension; there are extension agents at all the land grant institutions**
- **We shifted in the 1800's from the "Harvard's" educating the elite to massification (we will educate everyone; it is a right and a privilege)**
- **VT is unique**
 - **Land grant, the Morrill Act of 1862**
 - **Privilege/Prestige is the currency of the realm**
 - **Two land grants in the Southeast, VT and VA State**
- **What is a land grant university?**
 - **Teaching and learning, research and discovery, outreach and engagement**
 - **We get money allocated to use for the outreach and engagement (UVa does not)**
 - **We are unique also because we have the Corps of Cadets (Texas A&M is the only other land grant that has a Corps)**
 - **We have presence in all the counties of VA**
- **Our history and heritage shape our values and culture**

- For example, Promotion and Tenure is central to a faculty members existence
 - Evaluated by peers, college, etc.
- Processes are slightly different from institution to institution but they are very similar between land grants
 - Example: peer review
 - Tenure
 - Teaching and research
- All of this flows into governance
- The structure is a marriage between the values and culture and our university structure
 - Our two key chunks are
 - Administration: Board of Visitors and the President of the university
 - Academics: Provost
 - What goes on in Richmond is VERY important
- Shared Governance has to do with how the administration, faculty, staff, and students make decisions. Shared governance has to do with democracy.
- We don't do full and open communication well because we are so decentralized – you can't send one message and everyone hear the message the same way. Communication is one of the biggest challenges we have across the board here.
- Each of the commissions are tasked with handling a 'chunk' of an issue.
- Senates are CRUCIAL.
- Governance is contextual:
 - What and who Governance is depends on time and who is asking
 - No standard definition for governance; it is dependent on the institution and where you sit in the institution
- Higher education has its own language... "The President" instead of Dr. Steger.
- Adjunct professor use has exploded over the last few years. In states where there are unions, they have a union for adjunct faculty. At this institution, we are silent on adjunct faculty in governance.
- Why should we care?
 - On a good day, it's about us running ourselves
- 3500 staff members; 47% university staff, 53% classified staff
- We have an avenue through staff senate to express our opinions, ideas, and needs.
- We have someone to ask questions of when we're concerned about something.

Next meeting:

March 20, 2014

Speaker: Laura Rugless, Executive Director, Equity and Access

Location: Hillcrest Dining Room

Respectfully submitted,
 Leslie Thornton-O'Brien
 Senate Secretary

University Athletics Committee Meeting

February 11, 2014

- Guest speaker was Chris Riley, Head Volleyball Coach
- Reviewed SAASS Fall Grade Report & Direction
- Facilities Report, Tom Gabbard
 - reviewed completed projects
 - reviewed planned or under construction projects
 - took tour of new medical area, oasis, and Cassell video boards/studio

Robena B. Hughes