



Staff Council Retreat and Meeting Minutes  
1/10/2017 | 2:30 PM | Murphy Room

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**Attendees:** Rory Hill, Troy Field, David Wong, Samantha Cocco, Debbie Nixon, Ruta Marino, Megan Wilson-Reitz, Salomón Rodezno, Eddie Carreon, Andrew Fronczek, John Brautigan, Marianne Cicirelli, Adam Green, Brian Hurd, Mary Ann Hanicak, Eric Eickhoff, Lisa Brown Cornelius

**Absent:** Courtney Farver, Jane Evans, Julie Myers, Jamie Spitznagel, Connie Brooks

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## 1. Call to Order & Opening Comments

- November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

## 2. Assessment

- The group reviewed the results of the Communication Committee's assessment work.
- Troy Field led the group through a summary of the survey results (additional summaries and charts also handed out at meeting).
- Overall satisfaction: 39.5% very satisfied and 49.5% satisfied; overall the staff is happy with the work we are doing.

Common themes that emerged in results:

- Desire for more professional development
- Desire for Staff Council to have more impact with senior leadership; policy changes
- Desire for more timeliness - meeting announcements, election dates, minutes
- Human Resources received a lot of acknowledgement across the board in the survey - respondents appear to be confused about the difference between HR projects and Staff Council. The two clearly need to be more clearly differentiated.

Questions:

- E. Carreon: What was the response rate?
  - Sent to about 400 staff members
  - Around 80 fully completed surveys received - some were not all filled out; responses seemed to drop off near the end of the survey.
- E. Eickhoff: Any other specific elements you noticed?
  - The large number of HR comments were a surprise
  - Food trucks were a big point of awareness - folks loved that.
- Fronczek: is it our charge to do things like provide professional development training? Let's face it; we're a young organization, we still don't know what we do.
  - M. Hanicak: we can definitely advocate for it; however, we will discuss today far more intentionally whether this is our job.
  - R. Hill: it's clear from the survey that some folks really do see us as having an HR

- function; we need to help clarify and communicate our function to staff at the university.
- J. Brautigan: 20% response rate is pretty low; when people are given the opportunity to have their voices heard, they don't respond to share their ideas. How do we get a better response from staff?
    - S. Cocco: I do a lot of surveys for our department and a 20% response rate is pretty average.
    - T. Field: it was also a long survey. The open ended questions were important; we should provide people next time with a shorter, more structured survey that addresses these areas. Next time we should focus on the specific topics that were raised this time.
  - E. Eickhoff: some of the responses and response rate may point to a visibility issue. We don't often get to speak on behalf of Staff Council in our division meetings; do others get that opportunity?
    - Some Council members do not have a role in divisional meetings.
    - R. Hill - we also have a siloed structure here such that some departments don't have much contact with others. We have to be attentive to reaching across those silos.

### 3. Constitution

- Current Committees, as they stand, are:
  1. Chair and chair elect (R. Hill; L. Brown Cornelius)
  2. Communications (S. Cocco)
  3. Staff Development (M. Hanicak)
  4. Staff Recognition & Community Building (E. Eickhoff)
  5. Membership, Governance and Finance (D. Wong)
  6. Mission, Advocacy and Orientation (B. Hurd)
- Proposed Changes to Committee Names and Responsibilities – this is proposed largely to reflect that HR is doing more and getting more credit for the projects they are doing -- we should not be doing programming; we should be passing along ideas from staff to HR.
  1. Chair and Chair Elect
    - Add Budget development to this area
    - Add Affinity group oversight - we should set up some process for establishing these groups
  2. Communication and Assessment
  3. Recognition and Morale
  4. Community Building and Networking
    - New employee breakfast
    - Other programming
  5. Membership, Governance and Finance
    - Ensuring a diverse and representative staff council each year
    - All committee heads have terms up this year; how do we ensure sustainability?
  6. Mission and Advocacy
    - We are dropping the orientation piece from this committee, as HR is taking this up.
- Our plan right now is to change this in the constitution, so as to have a new document to send to Rich Mausser, so that we can request a budget and hold elections.
- E. Carreon: clarifying question – what is presently on the table for proposed changes - nothing around term limits, communications, etc.?
- E. Eickhoff: additional suggestion was made to have committees meet twice per semester, or as deemed necessary by committee chair.
- E. Carreon: are we considering separating bylaws from constitution?
  - Bylaws = How we operate: procedural votes, when we meet, cancellations, etc.
  - Constitution = what we are about

**A motion was made and seconded to divide the constitution into two documents, constitution and**

**bylaws, and to develop an ad hoc Constitution and Bylaws Committee to implement this change as well as other proposed revisions to the constitution.**

Discussion on the motion:

- M. Hanicak: in my experience, other organizations are moving away from formal constitutions and towards bylaws instead, to eliminate redundancy. Some are also changing or adapting the use of Robert's Rules of Order.
- S. Rodezno: in our original constitution, we modeled after faculty council. They use Robert's Rules because it's a good way to arrive at decisions as a group. We need to replace it with something else if we're going to do away with it.
- E. Eickhoff: the issue is really not about whether we have bylaws vs constitution, it's about whether or not we follow them.
- E. Carreon: we don't presently have a means articulated in our constitution for how to present a resolution. A lot of organizations like ours have the ability to censure; we have to be able to articulate how we would go about doing it. Right now we are still in the process of creating ourselves; now what are we doing to create a process for doing what we need to do?
- S. Cocco: if we make changes to the constitution, it will have to go through Rich Mausser and then to Fr. Niehoff; if we had bylaws, would it be possible to be able to write those things in without sending it up the chain?
  - E. Eickhoff: we are convened at the pleasure of the President; I think any changes to the documents must go up the chain. One of our main worries was that this process, sending changes up the chain, would create annoyances at the top -- that is why we set a specific time (i.e. Fall) for changes to happen.
- J. Brautigan: we have to have it structured for the people coming forward. I see constitutions as permanent documents; bylaws are the fluid "living portion" of that constitution that allow us to keep moving forward.
- S. Cocco: it would be good to get specific precedents set in writing.
- D. Wong volunteered to take this to R. Mausser and ask for his recommendation. He may still ask to see changes to the bylaws.
- E. Carreon: we can use bylaw changes to change the way that we express ourselves.
- L. Brown Cornelius: our constitution is basically the same as Scranton College's bylaws.
- S. Rodezno: when we first developed the constitution, people were concerned that it had no 'teeth' - this would be a chance to change that.

**The motion passed by majority vote.**

Discussion: formation of ad hoc Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

- **E. Carreon was nominated to head this committee and accepted.**
- **L. Brown Cornelius and S. Cocco volunteered to participate as committee members.**
- Question: shall non-staff-council members be allowed or invited to participate?
  - J. Brautigan suggests permitting that the committee be open to inviting up to 2 additional members from the staff.
  - E. Carreon asked the Executive Committee to allow the ad hoc committee consult, as an ad hoc committee, with other staff members not currently on Staff Council. Executive Committee agreed to this request.

**A motion was made and seconded to make the following changes today:**

- a) **To request approval for adoption, for the present, of certain minor practical changes/revisions to practices required by the Constitution (such as waiving requirements about specific dates and times for committee meetings, and requirements as to who shall take minutes at meetings), and**
- b) **to change the names and responsibilities of the Staff Council committees to the new list as proposed.**

Discussion on the motion:

- Committee name and role changes - discussion.
  - Suggestion to change to "Recognition and Morale" to simply "Recognition."
    - This committee will no longer handle staff development work; the work of advocating for staff development from other institutional areas will move to Mission and Advocacy.
  - Suggestion to add to Membership, Governance and Finance committee's role that it would oversee the new ad hoc Constitution and Bylaws committee.

**The motion passed by majority vote.**

- **S. Cocco will write up the changes for the committees, including new names and charges. She will have these ready for the executive committee meeting.**
- **Suggestions for changes or adjustments to minor practical matters in the Constitution that should be made immediately should be submitted to D. Wong, who will submit in turn to R. Mausser for approval.**
- **Larger proposed changes to structure of Constitution and Bylaws should be submitted to the ad hoc Constitution and Bylaws Committee.**

#### **4. Committee Reports**

Membership, Governance, and Finance (D. Wong):

- Nominations for Staff Council elections are due mid-March
  - **Everyone here please nominate at least 1-2 new council members**
  - We need to be attentive to diversity of the group membership, strive for representation of all divisions on Council.
- Meet & greet for candidates in the second week of April
- Election will be on or around April 15 - the week after the return from Easter
- Those whose terms are expiring at the end of May will receive an email from David
- Annual Budget: \$11,000; \$2,308 has been spent so far
- Does not include upcoming Cavs game event
- Report from last meeting of Board committee: There has been some discussion about forming an enrollment ad hoc committee of the board.
- A tuition hike has been proposed and is under discussion. The heavy discount rate means that this is only the posted rate, however, and may not mean much increase in revenue.
- The 2017-18 university budget will be discussed at the March board meeting.
- The budget will be very tight over the next few years because of this year's enrollment dip.
- Applications are up from last year, but our target is very ambitious: 800 freshmen for Fall 2017.

Communications Committee (S. Cocco):

- Jan/Feb newsletter: Focus on Ignatian heritage, staff highlight
- We will include a link to staff council nomination form
- April/May: last newsletter for the year
- **Please let Samantha know about any other things you want us to include in the newsletter.**

Staff Recognition & Community Building (E. Eickhoff):

- Staff Happy hour is coming up
- Cavs game: 420 students, alums, faculty/staff, etc. all going to game
- We will meet soon to discuss the staff awards process.
- Food trucks: we'll invite East Coast Custard back; maybe one additional if there is money left at the end of the year

Staff Development (M. Hanicak):

- we are now coordinating the monthly morning socials 8:30-9:00 on first Fridays -- each month will be hosted by a different area/office
- Jan. 20 will be first for the semester, Faculty Lounge (faculty are invited)
- Feb. 3 Dean of Students Conference Room
- Mar - CSSD
- Apr - Athletics
- May - Chemistry Dept.
- Working with ITS and HR on a monthly tech series; first is February 8 in BR 43 at 2 pm. All about Google suite: Drive, Forms, Sheets, etc.
- Staff lunch discussions – these are small but mighty; those who attend really value them. There are one or two people who always attend but lots of different people come to each one. It's been a good opportunity for networking and discussion. We're always open to suggestions for that one. We send out a short article in advance for the discussion.
- The suggestion was made to try moving the program to a different day in order to gauge interest. We have money to pay for the extra lunch cost if it's not \$5 Friday.

Announcements:

- Congratulations to S. Rodezno, who has been hired as the new director of the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion!
- Mike Moran is leaving – his final home game will be mid-February, and an event will be planned for a farewell event.
- Tom Arth is leaving the university.

Next meeting:

- The All Staff meeting will be 2 pm on Tuesday, Jan. 17 in Donahue Auditorium: we need to get the agenda out soon so **please add any additional agenda items as suggestions on Basecamp.**
- Current agenda for this meeting:
  - Staff service awards
  - Ignatian heritage week discussion
  - HR presentation
- **Samantha will get dates for future Staff Council meetings on the calendar on Basecamp.**
- Next Staff Council meeting: March 2017.

Meeting adjourned 4:47 pm.