A. Administration

Members Present: Josh Doak, Gary Edwards, Mike Fox, Darren Fullerton, Erik Hilgendorf, Greg Killingsworth, Greg Needham, Ann Quade, Olive Talley, and Ted Wright.

Members Absent: Debbie Woodmansee, Excused

Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order by Darren Fullerton at 9:00 a.m.

Establishment of Quorum: At quorum with 10 members present, and 1 member absent.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the August 12, 2009 meeting were distributed and reviewed. Motion to approve by Josh Doak; seconded by Erik Hilgendorf; motion passed.

Darren Fullerton asked if the Senate felt that posting the minutes on the website prior to approval would be acceptable; replacing the minutes with a revised version should one be necessary. It was determined by the Senate that for the purposes of open communication with the constituency, that the minutes would be posted prior to each meeting with a disclaimer that the posting is “unofficial until approved by Senate”.

Administrative Comments: Darren Fullerton relayed administrative updates provided by Dr. Theresa Agee.

- Health Science building – The contractual deadline is the end of December, 2009; some delays may move the completion date to January 2010. The structural integrity of the building has been verified and plans are in progress to move into the building during the Spring 2010 semester and classes will be scheduled for the Fall 2010 semester.
- Total Payment of Fees – Dr. Agee reports that the implementation of the “Drop for Non-Payment of Total Fees” has resulted in as few as 100 drops this semester.
- Enrollment – The residence halls are at capacity; record textbook sales; enrollment numbers are up.

MSSU Staff Senate 2009/2010 • 3950 East Newman Road • Joplin, Missouri 64801-1595
B. Committee Reports:

a. Sick Leave Policy Committee – Cheryl Dobson, Judy Wilmoth, Ann Quade, Erik Hilgendorf, and Josh Doak comprise the committee. Ann Quade stated that the committee has almost completed the policy and plan to present for Senate review at the next meeting.
   i. Erik Hilgendorf stated that the policy needs to include a finer explanation of the FMLA act; more clearly defining what constitutes vacation, sick leave, and employment requirement.

b. Communications Committee – Debbie Woodmansee and Greg Nedham (of the Senate) asked Liz Ford from University Relations and Marketing to join the committee.
   i. Greg Needham commented on committee discussions regarding the use of the Senate website as a pre-meeting communication to encourage attendance and an explanation of the role of constituency guests, I.E. they will sign-in on a guest log and will be asked to participate in introductions. It was determined by the committee that this information prior to the meeting day would alleviate possible consternation upon arrival.
   ii. Ease of Contact – the Communication Committee would like for each Senator to have an email link, picture and telephone number on the website.
      1. Greg Needham will discuss the preferred picture format for the website with Liz Ford.
      2. Josh Doak will set up a “picture day” (possibly at the next Staff Senate Meeting); provide the camera and the photos for Liz Ford.
   iii. Newsletter – the Communication Committee proposes that a ‘regularly’ published newsletter be developed and posted on the website. The newsletter could explore future goals of the Senate.

c. Insurance Committee – To date, the Staff Senate does not have an Insurance Committee. Greg Needham, Staff Senator, is a member of the Campus Insurance Committee. Mr. Needham provided the following report:
   i. The President’s Council has approved $400 for health insurance per employee for this fiscal year.
   ii. The insurance committee reports that efforts are underway to address cost controls and to explore implementing a health savings account (similar to the Cafeteria Plan, but with roll-over).
   iii. MSSU experienced a 9.1% increase in benefit claims resulting in 2.5 million dollars in payout last fiscal year. In researching the determining cost factors in obtaining benefit coverage, Greg stated that the MSSU median age (43-44) is higher than in the public school systems. The MSSU group does include retirees; however this group is not included in the median age factor, but are included in the claims cost totals.
      1. Greg Needham shared that 47% of health care claims were derived from 1.7% of the covered population. Whether or not that figure includes retirees is not known.
   iv. The question of why MSSU has not bid our insurance/benefits package has was also explained; bid descriptions and specifications carry an institution’s history for the past three years. Companies are reluctant to bid on history because they are required by law to reimburse any overages incurred due to miscalculation.
      1. Discussion ensued regarding the overall perception that “wellness” is key in the reduction of health care benefit costs.
         a. Darren Fullerton announced that MSSU might possibly not offer a wellness fair this year. The MSSU Wellness Program was notified that Freeman Health Systems will be charging for the services that they have provided at the annual health fairs. If MSSU continues to offer the health screenings, faculty & staff would have to pay a $0 fee for the routine blood work. It is hopeful that in the
future, the cost of wellness screenings will be considered as part of our individual deductible; billing our benefits provider for coverage to document. MSSU will need to be approved as an ‘In Network Provider’ in order to process insurance claims for wellness screenings conducted on campus.

   i. The MSSU Wellness Program has not been contacted to participate in the HR hosted Wellness Luncheons.
   ii. Wellness programs can be utilized to lower rates by offering company exercise programs, screenings, and early detection education. A sliding scale (credits) either individually or as an institution could be implemented if an approved program could be negotiated with the insurance provider.

   1. Further discussion ensued exploring the possibility of using MSSU nursing students for the blood draws, etc. Darren Fullerton informed the Senate that the cost of the screenings is incurred on the actual analysis of samples in the laboratory, not necessarily the labor for the blood draws.
   2. Greg Killingsworth stated that he feels that on behalf of the employees of MSSU, a comprehensive wellness program that will reduce costs should be proposed to administration.
   3. Darren Fullerton stated that recommendations to combine break times and/or lunch hours to allow employees adequate time for workouts during the work day using MSSU facilities has been submitted in the past, but has not been approved. The Faculty Welfare Committee has been diligently working on this issue.
   4. The Human Resource Office is hosting wellness information lunches during the noon hour. Many employees have reduced lunch periods and others cannot attend during that time for a variety of reasons. The retirement seminars are conducted at times other than the noon hour and it was suggested that the Staff Senate use that precedence to request that wellness information be disseminated similar times.

   iii. Erik Hilgendorf asked if the Faculty Senate has ever addressed sick leave. Darren Fullerton responded that the faculty hours are different than the staff hours, and as such, they have not addressed a sick leave policy.
   iv. In an effort to focus our wellness education on the health concerns that are paramount at MSSU and are elevating the cost of benefit coverage, it was suggested that a confidential survey be conducted to determine the health issues employees at MSSU are facing. A diagnostic could be established for informational purposes only, if it could be determined that a wellness program would lower the overall costs to both the institution and its employees.

2. The Senate was reminded that employee’s are permitted to and should utilize the ‘nurse’s hotline’ provided by Blue Cross / Blue Shield. Referrals from the hotline ensure non-denial of payment.

3. There is a representative/patient advocate who resides in Springfield, MO who is willing to visit MSSU once a month (as necessary).

4. The President’s Council has approved a cap of $400 per employee for benefits coverage and is in the process of structuring a 3 or 4 tiered scale for employee expenditure for
individual coverage. This phase of the process is ongoing with no finalized decisions in place at this time.

5. After inquiring about the possibility of removing Mayo Clinic from the institutional policy to save coverage costs Gary Edwards reported learning that any Anthem provider is considered “in network” and removing any given provider does not reduce costs.
   a. In light of the financial climate, it was stated that the various representative groups on campus should petition administration to refuse approval of any health coverage plan that defers additional costs to employees.

d. **Staff Development** – Darren Fullerton, Mike Fox and Pat Hurley will meet to discuss training for students and new employees in areas that impact “customer service”. At this time, in-services are offered for new employees in the use of campus databases and software.

C. **Old Business:**
   a. **Evergreen Staff Survey** – Darren Fullerton shared the content of recent correspondence with a Senior Analyst from Evergreen Solutions, LLC. In the correspondence it was stated that Evergreen analyzed the internal and external worth of every position at the organization (MSSU).
   b. Dr. Agee stated to Darren Fullerton that Debbie Dutch Kelley had indicated that the final report will be available and posted for review around October 1, 2009.
      i. There are appeals in process at this time that might delay the final report completion.

D. **New Business:**
   a. **Beimdiek Recreation Center Fees** – Darren Fullerton explained that $30 monthly faculty/staff usage fees were set in conjunction with the $150 per semester student fees to offset the cost of facilities maintenance. There is an account set up for those fees collected and restricted to the maintenance and replacement costs of building equipment. The faculty/staff fees will apply to ALL general programs and activities offered by the center. Student fees are earmarked for payment of the construction debt.
      i. Greg Needham commented that he had learned of an expense incurred by the university for recent compliance repairs on the Young Gymnasium swimming pool and racquetball court areas. In the future, items like the $30,000 cost of repairs will be covered by the fees collected for usage and will no longer fully impact the general funds of the university.
   b. **Committee Development** – Darren Fullerton asked the Senators if anyone had requests for additional committee development. No requests were made at this time.

E. **Comments and Announcements:**
   a. Darren Fullerton informed the Senate that he had been invited to the August 31, 2009 Faculty Senate Meeting. At this meeting, the faculty voted to form an ad hoc committee that will be responsible for providing evidence and exploring how to go about scheduling a vote of “no confidence” in MSSU President Bruce Speck. At this meeting, and in a follow-up meeting with Dr. Bruce Speck, Darren Fullerton stated that the presidency had not been an agenda item and that the Staff Senate concerns are currently focused on issues that directly affect the constituency, i.e. personnel and human resource issues. Dr. Speck has offered to meet with the Staff Senators by request, either as a group or individually to address any issues that the senate might have at this time.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 A.M.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Staff Senate is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Spiva Library Room # 413 A,
Respectfully submitted by:
Olive Talley, Secretary