Staff Senate Minutes  
Wednesday, March 13, 2013  
9:00 AM, Billingsly Boardroom

Members Present: Michelle Arwood, Mike Davies, Josh Doak, Gary Edwards, Melanie Epperson, Robert Frossard, Alicia Hughes, Aaron Lewis, Tonya Nickle, Nancy Rainey, Olive Talley, Bob Tessman, Julie Wengert, Judy Wilmoth.

Member(s) Absent / Excused: Heather Arnold, Brenda McDaniel

Determination of Quorum: Fourteen of Sixteen active members present at the beginning of the meeting, quorum established.

Call to Order: Arwood called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Wengert made a motion to approve the minutes; Frossard seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Administrative/Special Guest Comments: No guests scheduled to appear at this meeting

Committee Reports: Arwood called for Staff Senate committee reports:

1. Communications Committee — did not meet.

2. Elections Committee — will address under Old Business.

3. Executive Committee — Arwood and Tessman reported that the President’s Council will address the comment submitted to the senate regarding pay grade for athletics, specifically coaches. The short version of their response is that athletics must follow some industry standards in which there are benchmarks and national searches. Informally, they agree that there appears to be some disparity. Replacing coaches in athletics involves national searches. The President’s Council will provide a written/formal response to the question following this week’s Board of Governors’ Retreat.
The Executive Committee brought for discussion the topics of Merit Pay/Raises on which the President’s Council supports (in theory) but admits there are economic problems and feasibility issues. Tessman commented that the Step/Grade systems was budgeted. A comment from the gallery stated that the faculty increases are budgeted. The Staff Senate agreed that an ad-hoc committee should research industry standards at like institutions and will submit report to President’s Council.

4. Legislative Oversight Committee — The committee met under McDaniel’s leadership in Wengert’s absence.
Rainey reported that the committee reviewed Articles 1-5 in the Code of Conduct. Noted: Elections structure needs revision prior to upcoming spring 2013 elections.

5. Staff Welfare Committee — did not meet.
Arwood called for campus committee reports:

1. **Administrative Council** – Arwood reported that Dr. Speck shared an article he authored in regard to Shared Governance and addressed faculty concerns. He clarified his intent and position. Reports from various campus committees were given; new employees introduced.

2. **Appreciation Committee** – Epperson reported that the committee sponsored a candy bar/drink for National Employee Appreciation Day (March 1st). The committee is currently reviewing and evaluating activities. Quarterly Coffee is well attended. The annual Summer Employee Appreciation Picnic is well attended and a fun event. The committee is determining the value of sponsoring large events as to many smaller ones.

3. **Budget Advisory Council** – Edwards reported that the committee did not meet last month.

4. **Diversity Committee** – Arnold was absent, no report.

5. **Faculty Senate** – Tessman reported that Dr. Pat Lipira, Vice President of Academic Affairs apologized to the faculty for the manner in which departments were reassigned. Faculty expressed their desire that her apology be to “all employees”, not just to faculty. It was also reported at the meeting that there is an expected $200,000 short fall for next year’s budget.

6. **Orientation & Training** – Wilmoth reported that the committee voted to present training for diversity next and that Faustina Abrahams and Kim Kester were selected to facilitate the training. Due to adjunct concerns in the E.S.L. area, Ms. Kester will not assume her leadership in the training until the summer months (2013). Wilmoth also reported that the committee is in the process of restructuring the training calendar.

**Shared Governance** – Talley reported that the Permanent Shared Governance Committee has been assembled and the first meeting is scheduled for March 29, 2013, at which time the chair will be elected.

7. **Strategic Planning** – Arwood stated that the committee activities are on hold until the completion of the Program Prioritization reviews.

**75th Anniversary** – Lewis reported the following activities:

- Date TBD, Diamond Dash; Mallory Cashel of Student Activities will be publicizing the event – students only
- March 28th, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will be the 90’s movie presentation
- April 26th & 27th, Spring Spree
  * Book Signing
  * Spring Fling Picnic
  * 5K, (Sat) 9:00 10:30 AM, with BBQ competition to follow. Will involve off-campus community restaurant vendors as well as booths for arts and crafts
  * Open Swim, (Friday 4/26) 3:00-5:00 PM – for employees, students and their families
- Encore presentation of, “Patsy”, 7:00-10:00 PM Taylor Auditorium (with invitation only reception following)
- Thomas Hart Benton documentary
- Open House and Campus Tours
- Musical Performance will be at an off campus location
- 75th Ann. Gala at Leggett and Platt (sponsored largely by the Foundation); string music, dancing, light hors d’ oeuvres. This event will be free to employees and their guest, invited community members, as well as to some special student guests.

**Student Senate** – Molly (student senate representative) reported that the March 12th St. Baldrick celebration raised over $6500.00 for children’s cancer research. The Student Senate is now looking into a couple of campus beautification projects on which to concentrate for the remainder of this spring semester. The lion mascot
A statue has moved out of their purview and is now being overseen by the Campus Beautification Committee. The Student Senate donated one half of the funds to bring the lion mascot statue to The Oval. Currently the Student Senate is researching the development of a mural in the tunnel to brighten up that space. Also, the Student Senate is working on the development of better relations with The Chart (campus newspaper) to encourage more positive PR. They are attempting to improve the negative press toward administration.

Old Business:

1. Potential Projects
   A. **Merit Pay** was at the top of the list when the Staff Senate ballots were returned. **COLA** (cost of living adjustment) was a very close second. Discussion ensued and it was determined appropriate to combine these two topics and assign an ad-hoc committee to do research. Alicia Hughes, Julie Wengert, Bob Tessman, Melanie Epperson, Josh Doak and Judy Wilmoth agreed to comprise the Staff Senate members of the committee. The committee will determine if there is a need to recruit non senators to serve. Alicia Hughes agreed to chair the committee.

   B. **Staff Survey** was listed as a third priority. Natalie Bruce, a former senator, constructed, distributed and aggregated the data from previous staff surveys. She is no longer a MSSU employee. Discussion ensued regarding possible resources for the survey. H. Arnold was mentioned as one who has experience with Survey Monkey. In her absence, she was not assigned to oversee this effort. However, M. Epperson volunteered to assist her in the development, distribution, aggregate the data and post to SharePoint for staff viewing.

2. Potential Projects
   **Staff Senate Seat Restructuring** was brought to the table for discussion by Elections Committee Chair, Doak by request of the Oversight Committee. There is no actual bylaw regarding terms past the initial appointments at the genesis of the senate. In light of the seven outgoing senators this spring, there is some concern regarding the reclassification of representation of staff. Currently the senate is divided into three categories: Professional, Classified, and Physical Plant. After much discussion, Doak proposed for consideration to combine classified and physical plant. The motion was brought to the table for vote by Wengert; seconded by Davies; the proposal passed unanimously. The Staff Senate will be represented by 9 Classified and 7 Professional Staff at the next election later this spring. It was also noted that the restructure mirrors how the MSSU Human Resources Office divides classified staff. [Following the meeting, the numbers were checked again in HR and there was enough of a change that the ratio of representation was upgraded to 10 classified and 6 professional. An electronic ballot was conducted to approve the numerical change in representation. The motion to amend was approved by majority vote; 12 responses, all approving the revision to the motion.]
   a. Discussion ensued regarding the terms of senators and the repeat loss of almost half the senators in rotation. It was suggested that for one election term only, one classified and one professional position be four year terms and the remainder at three year terms. The additional year will stagger the drop off rate and keep the representation equitable among the staff representation.
   b. It was discussed that the senate should do some publicity recruiting for the upcoming election. O. Talley will work on a flyer and announcements. Both will be sent to the executive committee for review/approval. The communications committee will determine distribution.

New Business

1. **Publishing of Agendas and Approved/Unapproved Minutes** was introduced for discussion by Arwood. She has been uploading all the senate documents to Share Point and/or website during her tenure as president. It was her concern that there should be a designated person responsible for that duty; perhaps the communications committee or other volunteer. Talley stated that the Shared Governance Taskforce made provision for such a person and a job description was constructed by Wilmoth. The proposal was approved
and has been written into the Permanent Shared Governance Committee oversight. The permanent committee will convene on March 28th. If there is to be a change in the current procedure for Staff Senate, Tessman noted that the previously passed proposal will need to be modified.

Comments and Announcements/Guest Input:
- Arwood announced the Administrative Council is meeting this afternoon at 2:30 in the BSC Ballroom. In light of the BOG Retreat, the agenda for the meeting is abbreviated.
- Lewis announced the re-organization of Building Captains under Bob Harrington’s supervision. There will be monthly meetings and a greater effort will be made to disseminate information campus wide.

Anonymous Comments (The link to anonymous Staff Senate comments is on the SS Sharepoint site)
There were no comments submitted since the last meeting.

Adjournment: Wengert made a motion to adjourn. Doak seconded the motion; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 AM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 in Billingsly Board Room

Respectfully submitted by: Olive Talley