

Staff Council Minutes
Staff Council Annual Retreat
June 6, 2007

Staff Council held its annual retreat in the Diddle Arena, 2nd Floor Concourse. Present were current and newly-elected staff council members: Sherry Nation, Trish Jagers, Jeff Jones, Mike Young, Darrell Saalwaechter, Mike Boehmer, James Kennedy, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Shannon Ward, Jennifer Ragan, Tamela Smith, LySandra Bowles, Larry Hardin, Diane Carver, Heather Stubblefield, Patty Booth, Angela Robertson, Chester McNulty, Todd Misener, David Emerson, Ann Potter, and Stephanie Wimsatt.

After introductions of new, current, and retiring members, members reviewed and approved the 2006-07 list of Staff Council accomplishments (will be distributed via email and posted to the SC website).

Questions arose concerning the new Chief Diversity Officer position. While it was generally agreed that WKU needs a diversity officer, we need further information and clarification as to how this will be implemented.

Item one on the agenda was job title & rank vs. salary. It's been brought to the table that some staff with the same "title" are ranked in different pay categories (107 & 109, for instance) with widely-varying salaries. No committees were set up at this time to look further into this issue.

Staff council raised the issue that each department needs to reevaluate employee job descriptions. Staff council wants to make certain that those with the same duties receive the same pay. On the same note, those with increased responsibilities should have their pay increased (beyond annual raises) to adequately reflect those responsibilities.

Fairness issues (equal treatment of each employee by supervisors) were brought up. It was recognized that "bottoms-up" performance appraisals of supervisors can be completed by employees who wish to assess (anonymously) their managers. It was noted that Human Resources receives a surprisingly small number of these. The form for the "bottoms-up" assessment is available on the HR website, and the employee's name is kept anonymous. Members agreed that if an employee has concerns about hiring and compensation practices, that person should approach a staff council member. If management practices are in question, complete a "bottoms-up" evaluation.

Angela discussed how the Staff Council meetings are scheduled and clarified SC duties with the new members (orientation).

Break for lunch

A discussion was held concerning part-time employees not being able to pay for parking permits through payroll deduction. At this time, part-timers must pay for permits in full. It was decided

that since part-timers are employed “at-will,” with no guaranteed salary, payroll deduction cannot be used to pay for permits.

SC discussed the degree incentive policy and how it had not been reviewed. A committee was formed so that SC may look at other benchmark institutions ‘Degree Incentive Policy’. Members willing to serve on the Degree Incentive Committee: Shannon Ward, Sherry Nation, Lysandra Bowles, James Kennedy, David Emerson, & Todd Misener.

Committee assignments were revisited and the following agreed to:

Parking & Transportation Committee: Diane Carver

Ombudsperson Committee: Angela Robertson, Trish Jagers, Mike Young, and Cheryl Lewis-Smith. The Ombudsperson committee will look into such issues as whether this will be a salaried position or volunteer and whether one person or several will be needed. Goal: complete research and submit a proposal to the Administrative Council by this fall (2007).

Wellness Committee (promotes wellness activities for WKU Staff (and faculty) such as Healthy/Colorful Choices, Poker Walk, and the Health Fair: Todd Misener staying on. Darrell Saalwaechter new member.

Staff Mentoring Committee: It was discussed that the staff mentoring program is not really utilized and thus needs reevaluating. Jennifer Ragan volunteered to serve on this committee and to evaluate Staff Mentoring effectiveness.

Campus Master Planning Committee: Chester recommended we allow Sharon Hartz to continue to serve on this committee. All agreed.

SC raised the question of whether staff who are serving on campus committees (such as Benefits, Parking & Transportation, Budget) report to SC. Another question raised was whether the committee member should be on Staff Council or chosen by Staff Council. The decision was made to update SC policy with regard to committee assignment. SC should appoint/approve staff members of campus committees with staff representation.

Medical Leave Bank Committee: those who serve on this committee indicated that they wish to remain. (Persons requesting time from the MLBC remain anonymous to the committee members. For obvious reasons, the serving MLBC members wish to remain anonymous so as to insure no interference/favoritism in the decision-making process.)

Staff Leadership Committee: Jennifer Ragan, Stephanie Wimsatt, James Kennedy (chair).

Spirit of WKU Committee: Cheryl Lewis-Smith.

Staff Excellence Award Committee: Angela Robertson

Also discussed was the “passing of the torch” now that Patty Booth, SC’s key “Scooter Recruiter,” was leaving SC. (Scooter Davis is the radio personality who deejays for each SC Fall Break Brunch.) A unanimous decision was made to tag Angela Robertson the new “Scooter Recruiter.”

It was mentioned that WKU Staff Councils’ member’s official shirts are in a pretty sorry state, having been handed down again and again. Perhaps better quality shirts should be ordered; each SC member said that they’d be willing to contribute personal funds toward a more professional shirt—such as a polo or button-down. Jennifer Ragan will look into her shirt supplier and report at the next SC meeting.

Guest Gene Tice offered greetings to the new SC members.

Tony Glisson discussed the proposed Bereavement Policy and how bereavement is currently handled (utilization of vacation/sick time when an employee must miss due to a death in the family). Angela will draft a proposal of our ideas and forward to Tony.

The issue was brought up that smoking urns remain in non-smoking areas, thus encouraging smokers to congregate around the urns. Dr. Tice said that he would speak with Tom Riley about removing/moving those urns. Countless hours have gone into implementing the smoke-free zones and Staff Council wants each WKU staffer to know that we appreciate your support in keeping these areas smoke-free for the benefit of all (staff, faculty, and students).

Years of Service Awards: Jeff Jones asked Tony Glisson about plans for employee merit recognition (5-year, 10-year, and so on, awards). Tony assured SC that it is still on the agenda, but there’s always the issue of funding . . .

Concerns were raised about WKU Policy accessibility. It is available on the HR website but is notably difficult to find/navigate. A site-specific search engine was discussed. The new “Portal” may solve this problem when it is rolled out (soon).

The new buildings on campus will result in a checkerboard-style moving about of staff as they are migrated from Tate Page Hall to Grise Hall and into the new Tate Page Hall. Questioned was the cost of this multi-movement of persons. South Campus construction, it was noted, will be completed this fall with, thankfully, no loss in parking.

We’ve grown by 5,000 students and we need more support. Dr. Tice agreed that with this additional student growth we need to have further conversations about the replacement practices in Facilities Management—particularly Zone Techs and Shop Specialists.

Also noted was the absence of staffers at many programs and sessions offered on campus. Glisson and Tice both agreed that we need the support of directors and supervisors in encouraging employee attendance at these informational and training sessions. They proposed sending a letter/memo to supervisors to this effect. Also agreed upon is that we need better training programs and are open to suggestions from staffers and supers as to the type and length of classes from which employees might benefit by attending.

Pre-Virginia-Tech: The Emergency Crisis Management Committee has worked the last two years researching the crisis needs of this campus and gives Dr. Tice a letter of what is needed. Most needed? An expanded police department, but we need \$\$\$ to accomplish this—money that is not currently available

Staff Council appreciates the information made available by the WKU Police Department, Tony Glisson, and Dr. Gene Tice.

At the close of the retreat, elections were held to determine officers: Angela Robertson will remain Chair of SC; James Kennedy is our new Webmaster (many thanks to Jeff Jones for his past contributions); Todd Misener is Treasurer; Trish Jagers is Secretary.

Dates and hosts for the upcoming year's meetings were decided. These dates/locations will be posted on the SC website.

Finally, the issue of the "missing FM" representative: Several staffers expressed confusion to SC and didn't know that BSAs could run for this position. SC voted to hold a special election to fill this vacancy so that the skilled maintenance chair doesn't remain open for another year. The elected person will serve a two-year term. The election day was set for July 10th. Volunteers agreed to man the post at the loading dock to assist anyone needing help with online voting.

Minutes recorded by Trish Jagers

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
AUGUST 8, 2007

The WKU Staff Council met on August 8, 2007 at the Preston Center. Those present were Angela Robertson, Chester McNulty, James Kennedy, Todd Misener, Jennifer Ragan, Stephanie Wimsatt, Diane Carver, Sherry Nation, Mike Young, Darrel Saalwaechter, Shannon Ward, and Tex Currington. Those not present were Trish Jagers, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Tamela Smith and Larry Hardin.

Trish Jagers, Secretary, has been ill so a new secretary Diane Carver was elected until she is able to resume her duties. The June and July minutes will be posted on the Staff Council Web Site.

Mike Young talked about the Intellectual Property Committee. This committee reviews requests from employees to sponsor ideas or products and get them patented. There are several people on the committee but few are staff. He would like to see if a staff council member could participate in this committee. The SC agreed to let Mike Young investigate this matter further.

The Ombudsman Committee has met and are drawing up a policy to present later.

The Cellular Phone Committee has met several times and have reviewed several bench mark institutions and schools in Kentucky cellular policies. This committee is trying to determine a method of reimbursement to employees who use personal cell phones to conduct business matters. This will hopefully eliminate the problem of carrying two cell phones. A policy will be written up and brought to the SC later.

Jennifer Ragan reported that a vendor can supply polo style shirts for \$20.00. James Kennedy stated he would work on a logo. The members agreed that the shirt should be white.

Diane Carver will create the Fall Break Brunch brochure and mail it out 3 weeks prior to the event. Angela stated that she has contacted Scooter Davis to dj the event, but has not yet received a confirmation. Each SC member will need solicit door prizes for the Fall Brunch. A table will be set up outside of DUC Fresh Food Company to take the registration form. Everyone needs to turn in a registration form in order to give an accurate count to Dining Services. It was suggested that instead of a dance competition to have something similar to Singing Bee. Please email staff.council@wku.edu for your opinion.

The Staff Leadership Program brochure should be mailed out soon. The nominees will be picked by the end of August. James Kennedy will go to the first meeting of the Staff Leadership Program and discuss the Staff Council role.

A recommendation that employees who leave and then come back to Western after a year be allowed to count their years of service toward their vacation accrual. The employees who made this recommendation would like to talk before the Staff Council. It was agreed that they could do so at the next meeting.

Todd Misener was elected to be the Staff Council representative on the Budget Committee.

Angela Robertson requested that SC members rotate in attending the University Senate meetings.

The issue concerning temporary employment of workers who were told during the interview that the job would become permanent in the future was discussed. It was also stated that the on-line web application is not very clear concerning benefits to temporary positions. This issue was not resolved at this time.

Child care for WKU employees was discussed and the SC stated that we are in favor of this issue. It was suggested that the day care at Jones-Jagers be expanded. No resolution was made at this time.

Minutes recorded by Diane Carver

**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 5, 2007**

The WKU Staff Council met on September 5, 2007 at Diddle Arena. Those present were Diane Carver, Tex Currington, Larry Hardin, Trish Jagers, James Kennedy, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Chester McNulty, Todd Misener, Sherry Nation, Jennifer Ragan, Angela Robertson, Darrel Saalwaechter, Tamela Smith, Shannon Ward, Stephanie Wimsatt and Mike Young.

Group and individual pictures were taken to be placed on the Staff Council Web page.

The Staff Council Constitution and By-Laws were reviewed and revised. Angela Robertson will type the revisions and present at the next meeting for approval.

Angela Robertson reported that a Herald reporter has been assigned to the staff council and may attend or contact the members at times during the year.

The cigarette receptacles have not all been taken up in the undesignated smoking areas. Chester McNulty stated he would get in contact with someone to take care of this issue. All smoking urns have been placed in the designated smoking areas.

The Fall Break Brunch was discussed. Angela is trying to get in touch with Scooter Davis to m.c. the event. Chester stated that he is scheduling the number of tables, chairs and stage. It was decided to keep the dance contest again due to time restriction. Everyone attending the event with a WKU staff id card will receive a ticket with a number at the front of the door. The ticket will then be taken up inside the door to use for door prize drawings. Each winner has to be present to win. The tickets will also be used to determine the number of meals. Members volunteered for retrieving door prizes for the event from various organizations and companies. The brochures will be mailed out two weeks prior to the event.

The staff council will order polo shirts with a logo on the front. The shirt will be worn at all Staff Council events. Jennifer Ragan and Diane Carver are working on ordering the shirts to be here before the Fall Brunch.

A draft of the Proposed Modification to HR Policy #60-140—Leave for Death in Immediate Family was sent to Angela from Human Resources. The draft was reviewed and a couple of suggestions were made. Angela will make these modifications and send back to HR.

Other items were on the agenda, but due to time will be brought up next month.

The next meeting will be at MMTH on October 3, 2007.

Minutes recorded by Diane Carver

Staff Council Minutes
Wednesday, October 3, 2007

Recorded by Trish Lindsey Jaggers, Secretary

The WKU Staff Council met in the conference room of The School of Broadcasting & Journalism. Present were: Diane Carver, Angela Robertson, Sherry Nation, Jennifer Ragan, Darrell Saalwaechter, Larry (Tex) Currington, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Chester McNulty, Shannon Ward, Todd Misener, James Kennedy, Trish Jaggers, Tamela M. Smith, Stephanie Wimsatt, and Mike Young.

First on the agenda was the continuing issue of smoking area reinforcement. Greg Fear from Facilities met with SC concerning the smoking and nonsmoking areas on campus. He was concerned, as well as SC, about the increase of cigarette butts on the ground for the cleaning crew to pick up where there are no receptacles. Removing (or moving too far away) ash receptacles just encourages smokers to throw lighted butts on the ground—and in many cases have caused mulch fires. SC agreed that many campus persons misunderstand the presence of ash receptacles in non-smoking areas even though the signage is clear. SC feels that we need to (re)educate the campus about the designated smoking areas—beginning with the freshmen.

We discussed the newly-formed Diversity Enhancement Committee. Dr. Richard Miller, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), established the Diversity Enhancement Committee with a broad membership, including staff, faculty, students, and the community. This committee will meet quarterly, but may meet more frequently during the early stages. Angela Robertson has been appointed to this committee. SC has invited Dr. Richard Miller to our next SC meeting.

SGA requested student worker representation on staff council. SC discussed the differences with regard to staff and student assistants. Student assistants are valued members of the work force here at WKU, but the issues of benefits, paid leave, etc. are different for staff and student assistants. A vote was taken, and it was agreed that students should form their own council, one that better represents them and the unique issues they face, and they should seek support of the SGA for guidance. SC does want to work with SGA on concerns and issues that affect both student employees and staff.

SGA also asked for SC support in a walkout to protest state budget cuts. SC understands the spirit and courage SGA has to get the attention of the state. SC does not feel that a walkout is the correct action to take.

Two employees were invited to address SC with a question concerning accrual vacation time/re-employment that they had emailed to SC: Should a voluntary interruption in service occur, why does WKU's policy penalize employees by removing seniority and resetting vacation time accrual to that of new-hires after a year? SC weighed the pros and cons of this policy (which currently re-instates employees at severance accrual rates if they return to WKU within one year of voluntary severance). It was proposed to SC that there would be no cost to WKU to change this policy; however, SC determined that such a policy change would indeed cost WKU. It was also proposed to be an added benefit (incentive) to employees and increase staff loyalty to the

university. Currently, staffers who leave WKU but return to WKU after one year (or more) separation find that when they return, they return to “entry-level” accrual of vacation time. SC agreed that vacation accrual increases belong to those who’ve remained with WKU without a significant interruption. SC has visited this issue in the past and after much discussion, SC decided not to pursue any changes in policy at that time. SC maintains its previous decision.

Several committee vacancies were filled: two SC members will serve on the Parking and Transportation Appeals Committee. Two additional SC persons volunteered to serve on the medical leave committee. Persons serving on these two committees must remain anonymous to maintain the integrity of the committees’ purpose.

Facilities Management asked SC to support their request for funds to be allocated for a new position (training coordinator) from the Budget Council. It was noted by a member that positions are being vacated and not being filled. Thus, the funds remain in that budget, and the work is reallocated to remaining employees. SC feels that, though this is a valid issue, this body (SC) cannot support the position at this time.

Time off for employees to donate blood: This item has been brought to the SC previously. SC supports this community-beneficial activity and WKU’s participation in it. SC encourages managers and supervisors to allow employees time to donate blood.

The Cellular Committee will reconvene now that the fall semester startup is past.

SC discussed the president’s F/S Ombudsperson proposal and identified several concerns. SC would like to make recommendations that would benefit all—faculty, staff, and WKU’s mission. Angela Robertson has requested a meeting with the president for further review of the position.

Member James Kennedy gave us a demonstration of the newly-revamped WKU Staff Council web site (<http://www.wku.edu/staffcouncil>). Thanks to James, the site has a brand-new look and should be user-friendly. SC invites your comments and questions.

Finalizations of plans and last minute details were addressed for tomorrow’s Staff Fall Break Brunch, 2007.

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 7, 2007

The WKU Staff Council met on November 7, 2007 at MMTH 219. Those present were Diane Carver, Tex Currington, Larry Hardin, James Kennedy, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Chester McNulty, Todd Misener, Jennifer Ragan, Angela Robertson, Darrel Saalwaechter, Tamela Smith, Stephanie Wimsatt and Mike Young. Those not present were Sherry Nation, Trish Jagers, and Shannon Ward.

Dr. Richard Miller, Chief Diversity Officer met with the Staff Council. He discussed the role of the Chief Diversity Officer. A Diversity Enhancement Committee has been established. He stated that WKU needs to go beyond a race based plan that will affect faculty, staff and students.

Dr. Richard Greer, Faculty/Staff Ombudsperson met with the Staff Council. He mentioned that he had met with Tamela Smith, Staff Regent earlier. He wants to find out how this position came to be and how we see this position should function. Angela Robertson will email him a description of what we see this position's responsibilities should be. He stated he will officially begin on January 1, 2008 and the position will be evaluated at the end of the spring 2008 semester. He said he would like to have two offices one at the top of the hill and another at the bottom. He would also like to publicize the times he would be available. We suggested that he attend department meetings and introduce himself and state how he can be of assistance. Any department that would like Dr. Greer to attend their next department meeting contact him at richard.greer@wku.edu.

Doug Newton, Employee Wellness Program Manager met with the Staff Council. He asked that we support the following two-part wellness benefit proposal: The first part is to increase the budget for the Employee Wellness Program so as to be able to hire new personnel, such as a nutritionist and program coordinator, and provide more programming. The second part is providing a free membership to the Preston Center for all full-time benefits-eligible employees. He stated that there is a surplus in the health plan, which could help offset the costs associated with this proposal. He would also like to see the wellness proposal funded as its own line item in the Health Plan budget, so that funding for this wellness benefit could be sustained. The Staff Council voted to support these initiatives as long as this did not increase the cost of health insurance for the employee.

The issue of allowing KTRS to count more than 6 months of sick leave toward retirement was brought to the Staff Council. It was stated that KERS can count an unlimited number of sick leave toward retirement. Western has to pay the six months leave toward retirement for both, but the state picks up the additional time for KERS, but not for KTRS. The Staff Council did not feel they could support this issue, due to this being a state regulation.

It was stated that the cost of food for the Fall Brunch was approximately the same amount as last year, even though we had more people, due to the accurate accounting of people attending. Angela Robertson received an email concerning not allowing student workers to participate. The Staff Council Fall Brunch was always meant for staff only. It was just that this year we kept better track of who was attending.

The issue of management harassment was brought to the Staff Council. Temporary employment issues were also discussed. It was decided that these would be an appropriate issue for the ombudsperson.

The Staff Council agreed to elect Diane Carver Secretary, due to Trish Jagers earlier illness and other commitments.

The next meeting will be at MMTH 219 on December 5, 2007.

Minutes recorded by Diane Carver

**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2007**

The WKU Staff Council met on December 5, 2007 at MMTH 219. Those present were Diane Carver, Tex Currington, Larry Hardin, Trish Jagers, James Kennedy, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Chester McNulty, Todd Misener, Sherry Nation, Jennifer Ragan, Angela Robertson, Darrel Saalwaechter, Tamela Smith, Shannon Ward, Stephanie Wimsatt and Mike Young.

The issue of WKU Voice was addressed by Angela Robertson. She has received several complaints concerning people using the Voice in a way that was not intended. Not only are issues brought up that do not relate to WKU, facts are misconstrued or misrepresented in a way that may be misleading to staff and faculty currently subscribed to the Voice. We believe that guidelines need to be put in place to monitor the Voice. Angela Robertson and James Kennedy will set up a meeting with Dr. Kirchmeyer to discuss a possible change in policy.

Todd Misener addressed questions and concerns that have come from various people on campus regarding the Wellness benefit proposal. He clarified that it is a health care cost containment strategy and that the proposed source of funding would NOT tap into the Health Insurance Reserve Fund. Rather, it is being proposed as an additional benefit to WKU employees that would be paid for by WKU, not the individual employees. The first part of the proposal is to increase the budget for the Employee Wellness Program so as to be able to hire new personnel, such as a nutritionist and program coordinator, and provide more health related programming and services to all employees. The second part is providing a free membership to the Preston Center for all full-time benefits-eligible employees. He stated that each part would be evaluated separately and that this proposal will be presented to the Benefits Committee in 2008.

Tamela Smith, Staff Regent, addressed the issue of Staffing. She has evaluated various positions on campus and how the enrollment growth has affected these positions. She believes several new positions need to be created to help with the work load. Angela Robertson suggested that we establish a committee to keep evaluating this issue regularly.

A concern was raised regarding a recent assault situation involving a BSA. It is understood that the BSA was instructed to contact her supervisor first before contacting campus police. WKU Campus Services and Facilities Associate Vice President, John Osborne, has provided clarification regarding the defined policy or protocol for emergency situations of this nature.

Tamela Smith stated that she has served on the review committee to interview candidates for the position of Director of Facilities Management. Three individuals have meet with the review committee. The committee provides input to the individuals who then make the final decision in the hiring process.

Cheryl Lewis-Smith brought up an item concerning the 2009 KRS Retirement Regulation. Some staff members are concerned about the overall impact to WKU based on potential mass exodus of qualifying individuals. It was mentioned that some universities are looking at ways to offset the difference of what 2009 qualifying retiree candidates would receive if they remained in their positions after January 2009. The line of thinking is that employees could remain a few more years without being penalized. Overall thinking is that this concept would be a great way to ensure continuity of institutional operations. The question was raised as to whether or not WKU has considered

conducting a formal review or analysis as a means of projecting the overall impact to the campus. It was decided that we do not have enough time to act on this issue (via formal recommendation or statement of concern) due to Budget/Fiscal planning timeline restraints.

Diane Carver, Secretary, stated that she has been asked to respond personally to individuals who have made an official request to the Staff Council, before stating the results in the minutes. The Staff Council agreed that would be an appropriate response.

Mike Young asked about the Staff Survey, but Angela said we would not work on that until the January meeting.

At the January meeting, Angela will ask staff council representatives on university committees to meet with us and give us an update.

The next meeting will be at the HR Conference Room on January 9, 2008.

Minutes recorded by Diane Carver