

**Augsburg College  
Staff Senate**

Wednesday, May 28, 2014

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Marshall Room

Present: Keith Bateman, Tracy Christiansen, Mark Chamberlain, Mark Cotton, Jill Davenport, Michael Grewe, *Seth Lienard, Jim Matthias, Martha Truax*

Absent: *Dulce Monterrubio, Joanne Reeck*

Excused: Sara Schlipp-Riedel

Guests: 6 guests

**Items in bold are action items.**

1. Open Forum
  - a. Steff Weiss discussed her position and talked about what Augsburg is doing with social media.
2. Approval of Minutes
  - a. The minutes from April 23 and May 14 have been approved.
3. Governance Update
  - a. Leadership Council
    - i. Staff Senate has representation on several College bodies, including Board of Regents and Leadership Council, with the two Staff Senate Co-Chairs divide.
    - ii. At the last meeting, UW-Stout came in and talked about leadership initiatives on their campus.
    - iii. There will be a Leadership Council retreat in June.
  - b. President
    - i. Staff Senate Co-Chairs meet with the President for an hour on a monthly basis.
    - ii. Met with the President on May 19.
      1. Shared results of the Staff Senate elections and talked about the Spring Social.
      2. Discussed employee tuition benefit proposal.
      3. Discussed anchor partnership, which involves the Green Line. As part of this partnership, Augsburg may get an Metro Transit discount.
      4. Talked about his trip to Norway.
      5. They have invited Shimon Peres to the Nobel Peace Prize Forum.
4. Committee Updates
  - a. Safety
    - i. Since Jesse is leaving, the Safety Committee is not meeting. Dennis Stuckey may be taking over as chair. They are talking about focus, frequency, etc. of the committee.
  - b. Diversity and Inclusion
    - i. The results of the focus group have been shared with the Augsburg community. Online surveys will be sent in the fall. The results from those will help Augsburg develop a comprehensive diversity and inclusion plan.
  - c. CRC

- i. The new CFO starts in July.
  - ii. The committee has spent the spring developing a shared knowledge base.
- 5. Spring Social Overview
  - a. Many people heard overall positive comments. Had a great attendance at the event; approximately the same attendance as last year.
  - b. Heard some feedback about the timing; not everyone works during the 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. range.
  - c. Ideas for next year:
    - i. Have staff that cannot attend be a part of the raffle, and draw names rather than raffle tickets.
    - ii. Make the social a little longer to accommodate for those individuals who leave by 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- 6. Employee Tuition Benefit Proposal
  - a. Nowhere in the employee handbook does it mention that the tuition benefit goes down to 60% reimbursement from 75% reimbursement.
  - b. The Employee Handbook (2012) states:
    - i. **Summer School Tuition Discount:** “Full-time employees and their spouses and dependents may take Summer School courses at an *annually determined discounted rate of tuition.*”
    - ii. **Employee Participation in the Graduate Programs:** “The tuition benefit is 75% for full-time employees, up to two credits per term; pro-rated according to FTE for part-time employees, and is limited to the IRS limits.”
  - c. Mark Ch. introduced the following resolution:
    - i. **Purpose:** To ensure that the current tuition benefit to staff does not effectively decrease because of the replacement of the trimester system for graduate programs with the three fall, spring, and summer term system.
    - ii. **Request:** Staff Senate wants to ensure that the graduate tuition benefit at 75% for full-time employees for all terms, unless the IRS limit (\$5,250) has already been met. It is our understanding that the benefit might be lower during the summer term (set at 60%) as described in the Staff Handbook. However, nowhere in the policy does it specifically state that graduate classes receive a lower 60% tuition benefit.
  - d. Staff Senate adopted this resolution. Mark Ch. and Jill will look into who to pull into this conversation.
- 7. Sick Leave Pool
  - a. Staff have suggested to Staff Senate that they be able to donate sick time to an employee in need.
  - b. Mark Co. contacted a former colleague and got a copy of the state’s policy around a pool for sick leave: Employees can donate their vacation time as someone else’s sick time.
  - c. Mark Ch. and Mark Co. will do more research and pick this up again in the fall.
- 8. Leadership Roles for 2014-2015
  - a. Mark Ch. prepared a sheet listing Staff Senate roles.
  - b. **All Senators for 2014-2015 should email Mark Ch. their top three choices.** He will get it solidified by the August retreat.
- 9. Staff Senate Qualtrics Survey / Staff Suggestions
  - a. There are no new entries.
- 10. Next Meetings
  - a. Our next meeting is the Staff Senate 2014-2015 Retreat and will be taking place on **Thursday, August 14 from 11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in Marshall Room.**