

Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs

325 Burruss Hall

March 17, 2009

Present: Judy Alford, Robin Atkins, Jean Brickey, Catherine Caldwell, Sue Ellen Crocker, Maxine Lyons, Mike Naff, Judy Ridinger for Hal Irvin, Melissa Simpkins, Sarah Surak, Don Taylor, Tom Wertalik

Absent: Lay Nam Chang, Alicia Cohen, Vishal Gandhi, Cathy Hill, Cindy Koziol, Brett Shadle

Guests: April Lucas, Wanda Osburn, Human Resources; Susanna Rinehart, Office for Equity and Inclusion

Chair Maxine Lyons called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. The minutes of the February 17 meeting were approved electronically.

1. Election of New Member for CEOD

Since several members' terms expire in June, it was decided to wait until new members are appointed to select a representative for the coming year.

2. Diversity Strategic Plan – Susanna Rinehart

Ms. Rinehart has recently been appointed Director of Education for Diversity and Inclusion. Among her job duties will be coordinating and facilitating multiple needs regarding diversity for faculty, staff, and students. The first task is to identify standing groups and units who can assist in identifying what needs are perceived by each, then identify what opportunities are available for diversity development and training. The university's strategic plan will be updated using this and other information gathered. It is hoped that the plan can be reframed to make a real connection of work and diversity as imperative in the workplace and the world. She would like to move away from the traditional way that strategic plans measure progress to find a new way other than just numbers. She will be meeting with the Staff Senate as well as diversity chairs in the colleges and non-college areas to share ideas. One of the biggest problems is communication. While there are diversity education opportunities available, staff often don't know about them. She hopes to eventually have one central site for diversity information.

3. Diversity Commitment Dimension for Performance Planning and Evaluation for Staff Brochure – Judy Ridinger

The diversity brochure for staff was created and distributed to all staff and supervisors two years ago. It was a joint project of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity and Human Resources. With the performance plan changing, the brochure needs to be updated. Ms. Ridinger will go to CEOD to start the process.

4. Employee Relations – April Lucas, Wanda Osburn

Employee Relations is the place where employees and managers share confidential information to improve working relationships. The ER staff works to find ways to turn problems into solutions. They assist supervisors with many issues, including communications and employee performance. They also assist employees with communication issues, conflict resolution, and many others. Employees should contact Employee Relations any time they need information or assistance in determining what options are available for assistance.

Wanda Osburn has been added to the staff as Case Manager/Program Coordinator, with a background in employee assistance counseling. Often, employees are not comfortable calling a toll-free number for assistance. Instead, employee can contact Ms. Osburn for phone consultation or face-to-face contact. The issues do not have to be work related, as personal problems often follow employees to work. She and the employee will work together to determine what longer term assistance may be needed. Ms. Osburn also arranges group or roundtable discussions when requested.

5. Announcements

Staff members have voiced concern over the elimination of the New Horizons contract for computer training. Judy Ridinger will find out more details and report back.

The call for nominations for the Staff Leadership Award has gone out. The deadline is Friday, April 3.

The Employee Benefits Committee is discussing employee discounts offered by various businesses, both local and on-line, attempting to determine what is permissible and what is not.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.