

Meeting Notes – February 9, 2016 Staff Senate Meeting

President Neal Smatresk spoke to the questions presented – calling some “whiny” and others “very good questions”. He explained about the many websites, emails, and other ways the university sends out messages in an attempt to keep everyone informed. But communication is always important and he will continue to reach out. Items he mentioned specifically that were important to read/review were:

Communication

- Strategic Major Planning Efforts and Initiatives that are listed on websites and emailed
- Attending the State of the University
- Various Bulletins
- You can't communicate enough
- He wanted staff to avail themselves of resources and wanted Vice Presidents to pass on relevant information down through their staff and faculty.

Building/Planning

- Tier One designation enhances position and value for staff as well as faculty and students. It will provide more value should staff decide to leave the university to work in other sectors or universities.
- Planning the CVAD Building. A collab-lab (collaborative lab) will be placed where the old Sack & Save was – this will include game design, intellectual property and art.
- Frisco has about 200 students and he hopes it to be 500 by end of year. Not in the black yet, but hopes that next year it will break even.
- Big push to expand Research Space.
- Planning to reclaim lab space and reallocate.
- Existing spaces will be repurposed
- Renovating Science Research Building with university dollars (our dollars – not TRB or HEAF).
- Site lines – outside company – working on a 26 year refresh cycle.
- ADA technologies – no specific compliance plan for all websites/classes but next year look for improved accessibility.

Salary/Compensation

- Staff undergoing job grading exercise so that titles reflect what they really do.
- Grading attempting to ensure market pay adjustment – otherwise we will lose good people to the outside if not competitive.
- Raises for staff are very common – he signs off on market equity review, job grading changes which necessitate larger income, and additional duties and responsibilities often require a compensation hike.
- Regrade necessary – will be beneficial for organization and clarity.
- Has recently dealt with faculty equity issues regarding gender and race. Also faculty are facing compression challenges.
- We've now got a good healthy reserve and bond ratio so we're in better shape financially to again give merit raises.

- He feels that staff actually have a quicker response time than faculty due to the different natures of their positions.

Career Progression

- Faculty have highly defined benchmarks – not so in staff positions.
- He realizes that often the only way to advance is to wait for someone to retire, wait for someone to go into the public sector or move to another area on campus. Otherwise, the advancement in many departments is stagnant because people currently occupy those advanced positions.
- Working with HR and Equity & Diversity on mentoring pathways.
- HR working on Staff Leadership Tracks and Faculty Leadership Tracks.
- Described supervisor evaluation should contain thoughtful, professional feedback. Positive, corrective feedback done in a nice way.
- When Administration gives merit – they use staff merit feedback often to decide on the amount.
- Job grading won't really be changed because of Tier One status. Our current peers are the same as last time because the market moved with us to Tier One.
- Reason why so often they hire from outside is that he feels outside people have different skill sets than the people already here who have a more narrow focus of knowledge. Seeks to bring in fresh ideas from outside because doesn't think (in those cases) that the current university employee has the same skill set and wouldn't bring new ideas to the table but would work as they had always done.
- Manager Evaluations – he believes managers should get 360° evaluations using 3-5 year performance cycles (for some managers).
- Administrative bloat not as large as our peer institutions. Running a fairly lean operation.

Campus Visits

- Open to going to staff areas for discussion – ask their Vice President to invite the President for whole area/group meeting.

Parking/Transportation

- Outside company working on transportation plans.
- Encourage more bus use – going less places but more dependable and rapid.
- Would like to see a bike share program.
- Looking at not having parking in inner campus (if there is parking, should be very expensive).
- Studying parking south of Apogee Stadium

Planning

- Enrollment gains strong
- Budgets about to start
- Planning starting up
- Setting funds aside
- High impact hires
- Budget managers and VPs
- Project modest excess of 1.75% SCH growth
- Frisco – no departments or colleges own it. 200 students now – behind advertising curve – hopefully 500 coming in fall.
- We think we can have up to 40,000 students on campus – otherwise we'll need to build buildings to be able to handle more students. Studying where to put labs and education.
- Upper division / graduate probably more distance education (so less need for brick & mortar).
- Primary growth expected in off-site structures (like Frisco).
- Expects 5 years from now we will be at 40,000 students.
- To offset so many students use Summer sessions as a buffer and time as a buffer.
- Customer Survey – sending out to us as we are the customers – any changes will be implemented in incremental fashion.
- Current pace of change counter productive because we are maxed out.
- New pace of change exciting and sustainable.
- Staff Senate Purpose – helping to make people aware about the systemic challenges and changes we face.

Those were the remarks by President Neal Smatresk.

Human Resources – Staff Appreciation

Katy McDaniel – HR (on campus), Mary Ella (Spelling?) - Benefits Specialist, Roxanne Sapley – Sr. Compensation Analyst

- They are currently finalizing the grading evaluation. Scope covers both staff who manage others and staff who are individuals who supervise no one. Compensation study by Towers Watson
- Accurate Job Descriptions
- Vetted through Steering Committee
- Brandi – communication coming out this spring
- Like jobs – grading with like jobs
- Reclass procedures may change.

Staff Appreciation

- 3/1 Coffee and Cake 9:00am – 10:30am Hurley Lobby
- 3/3 Service Awards and Reception in Union Ballroom 3:00pm – 5:00pm
- 3/21 Open House – HR Sycamore Room 119 around 11:00am or 11:30am
- 3/28 Zane Reif Behind the scenes tour of Union with reception following in Presidents Suite 3:00pm – 5:00pm

- 3/30 Staff Appreciation Luncheon at Coliseum and Discovery Park 11:30am – 1:00pm (Fajitas)
- They have spots for volunteer opportunities
- Amanda Fisher (HR trainer) shoring up learning sessions and repeating Thank A Staff Member

Training

Terry Eckland – HR System

- Supervisory Building Blocks as of April, every course will be in rotation
- Emerging Leaders – For those who are not actually supervisors. Discusses supervision, critical thinking, emotions, communicating with confidence, listening for success, skillful collaborations, managing attitudes.
- Bringing Dallas and UNTHSC into the supervisory training
- Ladder structure more of a lattice – pay grade and job
- EIS – will contain Job Profile (new evaluation process will be online), will also show person profile to study gap analysis and start bringing groups together – 2 years from an integrated process.

Next Time

- Kerry Stanhope will discuss the health services available to staff – including Dental Choice Plan

Wayne Campbell moved to end the meeting

Seconded by a young man I didn't know next to Gary Payne.