

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

Staff Council Minutes

Staff Council

9-17-2020

The Minutes of the Marshall University Staff Council Meeting, September 2020

Marshall University Staff Council

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/staffcouncil_minutes



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Administration Commons](#)

Marshall University Classified Staff Council Minutes

September 17th, 2020, Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Nina Barrett, Amber Bentley, Lacie Bittinger, Karena Burriss, David Childers, Timothy Cline, Samantha Fox, Carol Hurula, Dena Laton, Becky Lusher, Lisa Maynard, Mitzi Meade, Teresa Meddings, Missy Morrison, Denise Parks, Marcos Serrat, Crystal Stewart, Justin Tyler, Eric Wallace, Tony Waugh

Members Absent:

Members Absent (Excused):

Guests: Jerome Gilbert, Jaime Taylor, Mark Robinson, Bruce Felder, Tracy Smith, Libby Rayment, Gillian Sochor, Margaret Cyrus, Lindsey Harper, Krista McCallister, Mary Chapman, Rob Williamson, Adam Brooks, Kim Thomas, Becky Sloan, Mike Adkins, Cody Hall, Melanie Gallaher, Robert Dean, John Apel, Randy Price, Joyce Harrah, Butch Burriss, Lori Thompson, Susan Midkiff, Rebecca Pack, Michael McGuffey, Meena Wadhwa, Susan Weinstein, Kate McComas, Eric Himes, Chris Key, Katherine Kay, Anthony Drumm, Bob Dorado, Todd Hunter, Lynne Edington, Sabrina Williamson

Interim Chair Tony Waugh called the meeting to order. Parliamentarian Becky Lusher verified there was a quorum.

Dr. Gilbert – University President

- Budget
 - We are about 540 students down this fall. That equates to about a \$3.6 million decrease in revenue compared to last year. It has been necessary and the recommendation of the budget work group to implement Part 2 of the temporary salary reductions, which affects employees making \$50,000 and more. No one below that will have a salary cut. The intention is to try and restore the salaries before the year is up and they will be constantly looking at the budget to see if we can do that. The good news is that we haven't had to lay anyone off however.
- COVID Testing
 - We are continuing to do COVID testing and are in the 2nd week of surveillance testing. We are testing around 60-90 people a day, which is a little over 5% of the campus per week.
 - The campus population was divided into 3 groups: residence hall students, employees, and commuter students. Each day names are randomly selected among these groups and they are sent a request to be COVID tested. We're getting about a 75% response rate from those invitations.
 - We're also in early stages of preparing for waste stream monitoring from our 10 residence halls. Some institutions nationally have shown it's possible to detect signs of COVID very early on in their waste stream. They are monitoring the sewage from residence halls and once you see an incidence of COVID you go in and test the whole residence hall. We hope to get that up and running by the end of September. They are

testing the Holderby Hall waste stream first because there are a few students there with COVID. Holderby is our isolation/quarantine facility and we have over 200 rooms there available to isolate individuals. We currently have around 20 people utilizing them, most of whom are primary contacts (someone who was in close proximity with someone who was positive and is in isolation for 2 weeks). Only 2 positive cases are currently in the building.

- Dr. Gilbert stated that he continues to take a strong stand on issues relating to fairness, equity and social justice. Bruce Felder is investigating some free bias training that we could implement and roll out this fall. He added that everyone still has time to read Just Mercy if you haven't done so already since the following week will be book club discussions.
- Dr. Gilbert expressed this thanks for understanding and support as we've gone through the pandemic. He added that while not everyone thinks he's always made right decisions he has always attempted to do what's right and will continue to do what's right for our University.

The 20 quarantined in Holderby consists of 2 positives and the rest are primary contacts? – Carol Hurula
– Yes, and there are also others quarantining off campus.

Dr. Taylor – Provost

- Dr. Taylor stated that last year we put a lot of emphasis and effort on student success/retention, which went extremely well. From fall-to-fall retention we had a 5% increase in retention: going from 73% to 78%. That was due to the effort of many individuals on campus. We also increased our 6 year graduation rate by 5% over 2 years: going from 46% to 51%, breaking 50% for the first time in Marshall's history.
- Dr. Taylor stated that they will be working with the Deans Council to try and create activities to help students safely interact. Due to the social distancing and the students taking it seriously, many are homesick. Dr. Taylor encouraged anyone with ideas or who has an opportunity to say hi to students that they do so.

Has there been a difference between our students and other universities where they've had to discipline students – have we had any instances of that? – Becky Lusher – Right now Dr. Taylor said he doesn't think there has been any major instances. On campus has been great and there doesn't seem to have been anything major off campus, which was a concern.

Mark Robinson – CFO

- We are currently down \$3.6 million from last year, but that year was also down around \$2-3 million dollars, which means we've been trying to do a balancing act.

If things stay the same and we don't have any more negative financial things, do you see the reduction in pay something that maybe could end within the year? – Becky Lusher – We would have to have some positive sources of revenue come up. There is the hope that maybe spring will look better than fall.

Bruce Felder – Human Resources

- COVID Testing
 - Marshall has been doing surveillance testing of employees and students. If an employee or student cannot make it to be tested on the date they are called, they are asked to please try and make it the following day or another day that week. It's not a mandate at this time but is a tool to try and help minimize spread of COVID.
 - There is discussion at the state level on requiring all state institutions to do surveillance testing. If that were to happen it probably would be mandatory from the Governor's office, and we would probably be testing more than we're testing now. This is something that could happen in the next few weeks.
- Health fair
 - Traditionally in October there is a large health fair in the Memorial Student Center for faculty, staff and students with vendors. Marshall is trying to organize a flu shot drive through and walk-up clinic around the same time this year instead of having a full health fair. We will be working with MU Health and the Health Department and will still have a goody bag with items and reading materials to give away.
- Anti-bias and diversity training in October.
 - Marshall has a contract with EverFi, who also does our Title IX Training, and is working on a training to send out in October.
 - *When the training comes out will we get a notice from HR that it is a legit link? – Carol Hurula* – Yes, Bruce said they are working with them on doing a better job of making sure employees are aware of what it is and that it's not a phishing attempt.

Tracy Smith – Director of Health and Safety

- As we finish up the 4th week of the semester, Tracy thanked everyone on campus for working together and for the cooperation and collaboration to get to this point and be successful. We continue to communicate with the DHHR, Health Department, MU Health, and the HEPC on a regular basis. Any plans and protocols that are announced have been collectively reviewed by each of those groups. Any decision that Dr. Gilbert or the University has made to this point and going forward is based on a great deal of discussion with those entities. Marshall is able to be successful because of these key relationships and everyone's cooperation up to this point, which is greatly appreciated.
- Tracy stated that he talks to the Health Department daily or every other day and talks daily with MU Health. Both entities have been appreciative and thankful for what we've done – but we still need to stay vigilant, including when off campus.
- Marshall began surveillance testing on September 8th and to-date has completed 527 tests. The testing will continue through November 20th. They want all of the participation they can get in testing. They have already identified three students who were asymptomatic and they went through contact tracing, and were quarantined. Those who tested positive hadn't been around a lot of people, and were mainly in non-face-to-face classes. A few were residing in the residence halls and are being quarantined.

- With the help of Brian Morgan in the College of Science, Marshall is working to finalize a centralized reporting database to input test data and results from all of our sources – CHH, MU Health, self-reports, the Health Department, and our own testing. This system will help collect the data as well as send reports to the Health Department.
- We've had around 10 individuals step up and go through the Cabell County Health Department contact tracing training as well as some CDC online training, which has made a lot of difference. These individuals are doing more than their normal job requirements and duties and have worked to try and control spread of virus on campus. The Health Department is very thankful for this help, especially with their limited resources.

Is there a plan for any antibody testing? – Samantha Fox – Right now we're still not sure how long you keep those antibodies. There's some resistance up to 3 months based on testing. For example, someone who was positive in June wouldn't be required to be tested again for 3 months. Therefore, a negative antibody test wouldn't mean a whole lot to us at this point since we're not sure how long it lasts.

Is there a plan to retest staff at any point? Some staff were directly in contact with many students when school first started. – Crystal Stewart – The testing tent on campus is for testing of faculty, students and staff and will be there through November 20th. They will take walk-ups and will provide testing free of charge to students and employees. Individuals can wait until they're randomly selected or they can volunteer to get tested also.

Will the dashboard be a cumulative record instead of just what was tested this week? Yes, we're going back now to collect all of that to get a cumulative number. We've compiled well over 6000 tests between our surveillance testing, initial testing when we came back, and the athletics testing, and our overall positive rate is still less than 1%.

When and how often do the numbers update on the website? – Becky Lusher – It was weekly, but once this is finalized we hope to do daily update of tests and positives as they come in.

The granddaughter of one of our adjuncts was sent home from school today because a classmate tested positive. Is the grandmother safe to go teach her class or must she quarantine? – Chris Key – It would depend on whether the granddaughter was a true primary contact or not. The grandmother shouldn't be affected unless she begins to have symptoms.

The students in face-to-face classes at the Teays Valley Regional Center at the Seville Building have not all been tested. Can we get them tested somehow? – Chris Key – We have an agreement with MedExpress that we could possibly utilize, or if any of those students happen to be in Huntington they can be tested at the walk-up tent.

Is the self-assessment that students are required to do not a requirement for staff as well? – Becky Lusher – Correct, it is not required for staff or faculty.

Carol Hurula – BOG Report

BOG Representative – Carol Hurula

**Disclaimer: This is my interpretation of each meeting and presentation and are not verbatim conversations. Any questions or clarification, please notify me. The board chair proposed a “consensus” approach to agenda items which differs from the motion, discussion, vote approach; indicating most discussion is done in committee. This was a first and it is not clear this is how we will proceed at future meetings. The chairman also asked for feedback on the meeting. The meeting was held in the Don Morris room, which is a bit large and hearing / speaking into microphones was trial and error. I for one had difficulty clearly hearing some of the speakers.*

BOG Meeting on August 27, 2020

- Approval of minutes from June 27, 2020
- Approved BOG Policy; GA-1 including Title IX to comply with new federal guidelines (Title IX requirement – to receive Fin Aid federal funds)
- Approved new Aviation Maintenance Technician program (joint with MCTC)
- Approved BOG Policies; AA-18; AA-37 and AA-28 that had been previously table for review/revisions
- Special Fees for International program (to replace fee that initially was paid via INTO joint venture)
- Investment Earnings update. % change comparison 0.24% YTD -4.68%. Approval to change investment firms at June meeting to Meketa Investments Ltd.
- Approved BOG Policy; FA-11 Capitol Project – language issue changes only.
- Finance update. 6.1% decline in revenue to date, budgeted for 15% decline in - enrollment looks promising. Level I budget reductions for salaries 100K+ were effective 7/4/20. Possible need to pursue level II salary reductions of 50K+ as enrollment revenue is down more than enrollment numbers due to less out of state and international students which have higher tuition costs.
- Student Affairs update (see attached handout)
- Academic College highlights (see attached handout)
- SOM update (see attached handout)
- Athletic update (see attached handout)
- Operations and Audit updates (see attached handout)

Executive Session under authority of WV Code §6-9A-4

President’s Report:

- Discussed the past 6 months of COVID and how the university has communicated and addressed day to day changes to protect students, faculty, staff and the community.
- Monday, walked around campus on first day of class and felt a sense of calm.
- 500 face to face lectures for freshman
- Everyone mask required inside buildings

- Testing of all students on campus (residence hall, out of state, commuters that come to campus)
- CHH confirmed they could do 200 tests a day
- COVID cleaning protocols, masks / PPE, residence hall check-in was staggered
- Thanks to Tracy Smith for leadership and implementation with Return to Campus Guide and working with Cabell County Health Department, MU nursing students in assisting with testing
- Athletics is testing and re-testing periodically football players every 2 weeks. Few positive over summer during first move-in to campus. 190 coaches and staff with (1) positive staff
- COVID numbers on website did not include athletics, they are changing the website to reflect these tests.
- Governor required all employees and students be tested. Worked with CHH, Health Department, DHHR and Governors Office. Provided at no charge at Q-lab testing.
- Q-lab doing testing for many institutions, so results are taking 2-10 days.
- August 12th began testing of all students and employees. 7 athletes from non-football and 3 staff were positive out of 377 test results. Average of 2.6% since 8/12.
- 1,720 employees tested and 1, 949 students with results for 2,078. Of those results - 2 employees tested positive and 3 students (1 from campus and 2 from off-campus living) Ratio .2%
- August 15 test returns of 2,455 with 15 positive average now .6% overall
- Future random testing for residence hall/employee/commuter students at CHH with results to expected in 2-3 days
- 50th anniversary plane crash – not as originally planned. Committee coordinating with families of the 75. 11/13 & 11/14 virtual or in-person
- Continuously showing We Are Marshall on 2 of the 4 screens in the MSC lobby, 1 screen sports, 1 screen news
- Post-humous diplomas to families
- 75 photo hangers throughout campus
- Aviation Maintenance – thanked BOG for approving the first joint venture in the state between 4 year and 2-year institution
- Air Flight school – looking at housing options. Prefer to have RA with them as majority in program could be high school graduates and want to provide same measures as current housing on-campus.
- Social Equity-Coalition for Anti-Racism. Townhall July 28th discussion. September 29th townhall discussion on relationship with MU and Fairfield Commons.
- Diversity Training – Bruce Felder developing for ALL employees
- Hiring units to have a diversity plan
- Book reading discussion – Just Mercy (9/23/20)
- Relating to budget – we still have funds from CARES act of which 50 percent of the grant funds are to provide student with financial aid grants that qualify; Freshman will be given first option since they were not on campus in spring, then open to upper-classman
- Finance is incurring additional expenses due to COVID. i.e. IT expenses for faculty, sanitizing wipes throughout campus, plexiglass installation, signage, and PPE.
- Loss of revenue in housing due to remote instruction

- Students can opt out of a portion of fees approx. \$450 due to remote instruction. May have a significant number opt out (unknown at this time)
- May incur COVID test expense once no longer free / could cost up to \$20K in testing
- Highly likely will have to go to level 2 salary reductions. Info on MYPAY via MYMU for those affected employees. Table is progressive reduction from .07% - 5.6%
- Level 2 reductions may have to include stipends at next level to make up lost revenue.
- Managing situation as we go forward. Hope and pray we can manage all setbacks that come up. Sleepless nights worrying over issues. Second guessing as others second guess decisions as well.

Chairman's Report:

- Shared governance - role of board, legal fiduciary duty. Public trust to do public good to protect institution. Tough questions. We will be judged in hindsight on how we do.
- Shared governance – faculty & staff, make sure students get education, and experience they pay for.
- Discussed the many issues facing the university, especially with COVID, changes to the learning / instructing platform and various other obstacles.
- Thanked Dr. Gilbert for leadership through COVID.

Adjourn 2:45pm

If there are furloughs in the spring is there a system for that to take place? – Mitzi Meade – Carol replied that she's on the budget workgroup and they hope that will be one of the last resorts they come to and it's not part of Phase 1 or 2 of the budget plans.

Some employees with 2 incomes have mentioned that they could possibly take some voluntary unpaid time off, which could maybe be an option for helping the budget. Is that something they would consider? – Mitzi Meade – Carol said she could take that to the budget workgroup when they meet again.

Committee Reports

Election Committee – Nina Barrett – A special election is currently ongoing for the positions of Chair, 2 seats on EEO 30, 1 seat on EEO 40, and 3 seats on EEO 50. The election will conclude on September 22nd.

Legislative Committee – Carol Hurula – No report.

Personnel/Finance Committee – Lacie Bittinger – No report.

Physical Environment Committee – Crystal Stewart – No report, but Crystal encouraged anyone with any issues, particularly regarding safety issues, to let her know.

Service/Staff Development Committee – Missy Morrison –

No formal report, but will begin taking donations of gloves, scarves, toboggans and chapstick for winter care packages with a due date of mid-October. We are also still doing a coat drive, but are asking individuals to drop off directly to the City Mission and Harmony House.

Will we try to do anything for students who are still on campus during Thanksgiving? – Becky Lusher –
We won't be able to do our usual large dinner for them, but Missy will reach out to Mistie Bibbee in Residence Services to see how many will be staying on campus and if we can possibly do some packed meals for them.

Staff Council will also work on putting together goodie bags for the students who are in quarantine in Holderby Hall.

Announcements

Minutes taken and prepared by: _____
Katie M. Counts, Program Assistant, Classified Staff Council

Minutes approved by: _____
Tony Waugh, Interim Chair, Classified Staff Council

Minutes read by: _____
Dr. Jerry Gilbert, University President