

Marshall University

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Staff Council Minutes

Staff Council

9-16-2021

The Minutes of the Marshall University Staff Council Meeting, September 2021

Marshall University Staff Council

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Marshall University Classified Staff Council Minutes September 16th, 2021, Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Clay Arens, Nina Barrett, Lacie Bittinger, Ray Blevins, David Childers, Timothy Cline, Toni Ferguson, Andrea Gray, Chris Hodge, Carol Hurula, Dena Laton, Becky Lusher, Teresa Meddings, Amy Saxton, Kelly Sowards, Crystal Stewart, Terri Thompson, Eric Wallace, Tony Waugh, Rob Williamson

Members Absent:

Members Absent (Excused): Beretta Coleman,

Guests: John Apel, Monica Brooks, Tracy Brown-Dolinski, Karena Burriss, Pat Campbell, Paul Carrico, Mary Chapman, Judy Clark, Ella Curry, Margaret Cyrus, Sarah Davis, Bob Dorado, Anthony Drumm, Rebekah Duke, Bruce Felder, Melody Freeman, Justin Hawthorne, Katherine Hetzer, Eric Himes, Sam Holiskey, Darlene Howell, Brandi Jacobs-Jones, Chris Key, Heather Lauer, Christine McDavid, Leigh McDonald, Michael McGuffey, Char McKenna, Susan Midkiff, Cassandra Mills, Carl Mummert, Becky Neace, Leah Payne, Mark Robinson, Angie Rose, Sabrina Simpson, Tracy Smith, Angela Strait, Robin Taylor, Kim Thomas, Beth Waugh, Miriah Young

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

Bruce Felder – Human Resources

- Because the theatre department was closed for 18 months due to COVID, they need help building up their labor pool. Much of the work is need based, such as stage hands, event help, tear down and clean up, etc. The jobs will be posted on an internal posting board to give employees an opportunity to take on additional work for extra pay. Employees could make anywhere from \$115 per day to \$300 per day depending on the shift.
- **Q: Percentage to midpoint:** What is our current percentage to midpoint (market) of our employees?
 - **A:** The new salary scale has been out since 2017. The midpoint, or market average, is the average an employee would make in the market, but not necessarily at Marshall. This is a comparison to similar jobs at different organizations.
 - Quartiles:
 - Average market is typically someone with around 8 to 10 years on the job.
 - The first quartile is around 0 to 3 years on the job.
 - The second quartile is around 4 to 7 years on the job.
 - We have around 66% of our employees who are under the midpoint, or about two-thirds, which is about 330 employees.
 - We have around 34% of our employees who are above the midpoint, which is about 170 employees.
- **Q: Career ladders:** If a department would like the opportunity for career ladder advancement, what is the process?
 - Career ladders can be done in two ways:

- An employee in a department can advance to new positions within their same department (ex. – purchasing assistant to purchasing agent, contract specialist, buyer, assistant director).
- Another option could be to upgrade an employee’s title as their skills advance and responsibilities increase. (ex. – recruiter 1, 2, 3, etc.). If a department can articulate a need for this, Human Resources will sit down to work with them.
 - The process for this is to set up a meeting with Bruce Felder and Mary Chapman in Human Resources.
- **Q: Staff Compensation Plan Listening Sessions:** Any updates on when we are going to have listening sessions set up for staff to comment and learn about the Staff Compensation Plan?
 - The intention of the virtual meeting will be to have it when it’s rolled out, not a comment period or listening session.
 - Current status of the compensation plan: Staff Council sent questions and comments, which Bruce and Mary have reviewed, but need to confer with the compensation plan committee before sending.
- **Q:** Are the theatre opportunities just for Marshall Employees, or beyond the Marshall community also?
 - **A:** The link that will be sent is for internal applicants from Marshall only, but Penny Watkins can be contacted to inquire about non-employees.

Carl Mummert – Interim Assistant Provost

- **Enrollment** – The challenge we have had this year and last year is that we can’t do much in-person recruitment. We had Green & White Days but the recruitment has still been negatively impacted.
 - Compared to last year, enrollment is down a little more than 5%.
 - Undergraduate numbers are 6% down overall.
 - In-State Graduate numbers are up a little.
 - We have improved the percentage of our students who are from West Virginia, but the actual number of West Virginia students is decreasing. We continue to recruit in-state, but will also continue looking out-of-state.
- **Enrollment Management** – The process that includes recruiting, admitting, and graduating students, which is having some changes made to the process.
 - Admissions is now the Office of Enrollment Services. We will be looking for a recruiter to be on staff there also.
 - The premise is to change the mindset to think of “admissions” as more than just getting students here, but also recruiting and getting them through to graduation.
- **Q:** What functions fall under the Office of Enrollment Management?
 - **A:** We will need to get a detailed list, but the office will start thinking about getting students from recruitment to graduation, as opposed to thinking of Admissions and Recruitment as separate entities.

- **Q:** With our current enrollment, what does our student body look like right now? Is the decrease in freshmen compounded from also being down before this year? What about sophomores, juniors and seniors?
 - **A:** Overall, our enrollment peaked around 2018-2019, before beginning to decline, which was only made worse during the pandemic. We have more seniors than freshmen because we don't bring in the same number of student's each year. The biggest challenge seems to be recruiting freshmen.
- **Q:** Is there a trend on why graduate school enrollment is growing? Possibly due to online courses, aviation, etc.?
 - **A:** In-State graduate numbers are up, and while we don't have an answer as to why, it is not due to the flight school. Often during a recession people go back to school. Also, since we've increased our graduation rate it means there are less students still enrolled.

Mark Robinson – CFO

- **Tuition & Budget** – We are down about \$1 million dollars from the fall of last year. From fall of 2019 we are down around \$2.5 million. The shrinking of enrollment leads to a shrinking balance of funds.
- **Crisis Fund** – The student government has a crises fund from Cares Act money to help those effected by the recent flooding on campus.
- **Q:** Will the emergency crisis fund payment replace the auto payment to students?
 - **A:** No, that is separate and Financial Aid is working on it.
- **Q:** What about damaged items that are University property, such as library books?
 - **A:** Those should be reported so they can first be ran through the insurance.

Tracy Smith – Safety

- **COVID**
 - We offer two options to students and employees at Marshall:
 - Get vaccinated.
 - Test weekly if not vaccinated or if you haven't disclosed your vaccination status.
 - Vaccinations are offered on campus from 10am-2pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
 - 8-9% of vaccinated students have been tested due to group settings like band, athletics, fraternities, etc.
 - There have been more breakthrough cases, which can happen. The majority of those we have seen on campus, as well as our state and country, are symptomatic. When symptomatic, contact someone to be tested.
 - If someone has been on vacation or part of a large group and just want to get tested, walk-ups are welcome at our testing sites.
 - There are two sites students and employees can be tested at, and it's important to pay attention to which site you are supposed to report to for testing.
 - There have been several employees and students who have not shown up for testing. There will be sanctions for those who don't show up.
 - If you have any questions or aren't sure how to proceed with an exposure, positive case, etc. just report it by reaching out to the Marshall COVID email, Leah Tolliver or Michelle Biggs.

- **Q:** What about employees who aren't vaccinated and also won't get tested?
 - **A:** They are working on a solution to that. Right now, if you don't respond when contacted to get tested the notice is resent and you're asked to test by the end of the week. Communications are only being sent via email, but they are also communicating with directors.
- **Q:** Since COVID numbers are up so high right now, and many vaccinated seem to be getting COVID, would they be able to have **mandatory** random testing for vaccinated (it is currently optional for vaccinated)?
 - **A:** At this time we will only be doing optional surveillance testing for those vaccinated, and we are one of the few schools even doing that much. Anyone who is selected for optional testing and shows up to do it are appreciated. 5-7% of vaccinated employees have been tested.
- **Q:** The surveillance testing FAQ says not to get tested if someone is symptomatic. How do they get tested in that case?
 - **A:** Contact the University COVID email so they can be triaged where they are tested.
- **Q:** Should an employee report that they are positive if they contracted it elsewhere?
 - **A:** If someone is actively working on campus then we need to know.
- **Q:** If you have been identified as a true exposure, when should you get tested?
 - **A:** You should wait 3-5 days from the last exposure in order to avoid a false negative. If you are vaccinated and exposed, you can come to work while wearing a mask and test in 3-5 days. However, if you are not vaccinated and are exposed you must stay home until tested around days 3-5.
- **Q:** At the beginning of the pandemic, it was said that rapid tests were not as accurate. Is that still the case?
 - **A:** No, they have improved. However, it's still possible to get a false positive or negative with either type of test. If you test negative using a rapid test with no symptoms then they don't go any further with it, but if you are negative and have symptoms they will then do a PCR test.
- **Q:** Do we still have the saliva test as an option?
 - **A:** Yes, we still have kits but recommend doing a nasal test.
- **Q:** Should we be notified if we have been exposed within our office?
 - **A:** Yes, contact tracing should let you know if you were truly exposed. A true exposure is when both parties are in close proximity without masks for at least 15 minutes.
- **Q:** Will we be providing booster doses to employees once approved?
 - **A:** Originally we were going to start offering booster doses on September 20th, but there has been no updates or guidance. Once the 3rd doses are available everyone on campus will be notified.
- **Q:** What should an employee do when someone else isn't abiding by the mask policy?
 - **A:** They need to be reported through safety, not through Human Resources.
- **Q:** If someone has symptoms but believes it can be due to other circumstances, like weather or allergies, should they get tested out of caution?
 - **A:** They are recommended to get tested to be sure.
- **Q:** If a student comes to a personal office, but not at close proximity as they stay in the doorway, should masks be worn?
 - **A:** Masks should always be worn when in an office with someone.
- **Q:** Will more masks be distributed?

- **A:** Safety has very few cloth masks right now, although there are more coming from the screen printer, and they also have disposable masks. They do not intend to distribute masks, but they are available upon request.

Minutes

August 19th, 2021 minutes approved as written.

Teresa Meddings – ACCE

- ACCE recently had a meeting via conference call, and assigned members to various committees, including a website committee to update the website.
- Schools share COVID updates with each other.
 - Fairmont had initiated a program via upper management called a buddy badge, in which they wore lanyards to identify who was vaccinated. However, they discovered the students were selling them so they stopped and went to a mask mandate.
- Employees at hospitals associated with WVU and CAMC are required to get vaccinated or lose their jobs.
- Institutions can mandate masks as well as vaccination status information.
- The next scheduled meeting will be via Zoom the following day.

Committee Reports

Election Committee – Nina Barrett – No report.

Legislative Committee – Carol Hurula – No report.

Personnel/Finance Committee – Teresa Meddings – The committee met on the 9th and discussed proposed revisions to the employee handbook. Teresa intended to ask Amy Pitzer from Concord questions but is unsure when she will be able to do so. Another meeting will be scheduled after they speak. The process of getting the handbook updated will be slow in order to address everything appropriately.

Physical Environment Committee – Becky Lusher – The committee met to continue to compile a building list and once they have done that they will go through and talk to people in buildings to identify contacts for either the floor or the building, whichever works best. They are working with Physical Plant and Safety to get a building representative assigned for each building or floor to be a point of contact to communicate to the whole building. Parking lots will be on the lists also, to ensure things are reported for those. Please let the committee know if there are any issues to report.

- The 4th Avenue parking lot is continually still locked on Monday mornings.

Service/Staff Development Committee – Eric Wallace –

- The committee is working on updates to the tuition benefits guidelines.
- We are waiting to hear back on whether we can have anything for the Thanksgiving dinner for students.

- Missy Morrison reached out to see if we would like to do a coat drive in October and a hat and gloves drive in November.
- The committee will continue to do COVID care bags for students in quarantine.

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

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

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