USM Professional Staff Senate

Retreat Minutes

August 13th 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: 211 Wishcamper Center, Portland Campus


Absent: Angela Cook, Jennifer Hart, Amy Hinshaw, Katie Mahoney, Gary Stephenson

I: Convened Meeting: Chair Martha Scott convened meeting at 8:00 a.m with introductions of new Senators.

II. Minutes 7/15/15: Motion to approve minutes by Lynn Rollins, seconded by Justin Swift, passed unanimously.

III: Election of Executive Committee:

Chair:

Jennifer Hart nominated by Heather Dilios; not present to accept nomination; advised by Advising colleagues that Jennifer has new Strengths Coordinator role and would likely decline nomination.

Justin Swift nominated by Martha Scott, seconded and passed unanimously.

Vice Chair:

Martha Scott nominated by Justin Swift, seconded and passed unanimously

Co-Secretaries:

Heather Dilios nominated by Erica Leighton

Erica Leighton nominated by Helen Gorgas Goulding

Both nominations seconded and passed unanimously

IV: Determination of Meeting Dates & Times

- Historically meetings are held 2nd Wednesday of the month from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Senate agreed to continue this schedule with the exception of the September 2015 meeting to allow for semester start. September meeting will be held the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 9/16. Meeting schedule for 2015-2016 attached.
V. Newly Elected Chair’s Remarks

- Thank you for your service.
- Goal to increase visibility of the Professional Staff Senate. Many on campus do not know the Senate exists; we need to change that.
- Attendance at meetings and feedback from members is crucial as we move forward.

V. Guest Speaker – Beth Higgins

Beth Higgins introduced new advising model now in place and shared recent changes at Advising:

- Name changed from Student Success to Advising. People found the Student Success name ambiguous; Advising is clearer. New signage is coming.
- Graduating Senior Survey results available here indicated that the student advising experience varied greatly depending on major.
- Changing to a dual advising model. All undergraduate students will have a Professional Advisor and a Faculty Advisor starting now.
- Faculty are critical to a successful advising experience. Faculty advisors will play a key role in mentoring students as well as providing career and academic development, encouraging involvement in programs and student organizations, and ongoing academic advising.
- Professional advisors will assist students in their transition to university, navigate the various policies and procedures, core curriculum/major, creating a graduation plan, and connect students with their faculty advisor early in their college career.
- Goals of new advising model:
  - Change the student advising experience
  - Cultivate the advising relationship between student, faculty and professional advisor
  - Provide consistent advising across all academic programs
  - Increase retention and persistence to degree
- Changing the culture of advising at USM is everyone’s job:
  - Starts at orientation and should be a focal point throughout a student’s experience at USM
  - If you see a student, ask if they know their graduation date, ask if they know their advisor. If they don’t, get them connected.

Support for Advising

- President’s council has acknowledged that advising is a retention initiative and has agreed to financially support the Faculty Advising Liaison Program
- Beth Higgins is working directly with Kathy Fallona, Title III and Luci Benedict, Faculty Commons to create faculty development options that are focused on advising
Graduate Advising

- A more 1:1 relationship
- Students want faculty connection right away
- Still investigating ways to improve the graduate student experience

Other changes in Advising

- Moving to Luther Bonney toward the end of Fall Semester. Relocating to space where computer lab currently resides. Student Financial Services, Veteran’s Services and Community Engagement will also be moving to this space. A smaller computer lab will remain.
- Staffing Changes
  - Kim Warren and Christen Stande will serve as Education Pathway advisors
  - Lyndsey Wood is returning to Portland Campus from LAC
  - Janet Etzel now advising all students at LAC
  - Pam Edwards transitioned from CAHS to Advising
  - Rodney Mondor no longer in advising; now Director of Orientation and Transitions
  - Stacy Stewart has transitioned to Career Development
  - Jennifer Hart will be half time advisor and half time Title III Strengths Coordinator working with Dan Jenkins from LAC

VI. 2015-2016 Priorities

- Justin distributed summary of 2014-2015 priorities for Senate to review.
- He suggests cutting down number of priorities from 10 to 3 or 4 to ensure they are carried out thoroughly and thoughtfully.
- Invited suggestions from Senators:
  - Continue New Employee Welcome Program
  - Revamp Employee Recognition
  - Collaboration with UMPSA on establishing employee sick bank with donated time
  - Health & Safety Trainings online i.e. ergonomics, workplace safety
  - Develop Professional Staff Newsletter
  - Developing a mentor program
  - Grass roots recognition initiative
  - Align priorities with the priorities of the President’s Office and the Student Government
- Justin will distribute a survey of all suggestions to Senators

VII. President Council

- Historically the Senate has started each meeting with a report from the President’s Council.
- Senators agree they want to continue this tradition.
VIII. Guest Speakers

- Historically Senate has tried to have a guest speaker from USM or the UMS at each meeting as a way to foster community and develop knowledge of other USM and Systems departments.
- Senate agrees they want to continue this tradition.
- Invited suggestions from Senators:
  - Nancy Coffin, VP Enrollment Management
  - Glenn Cumming, President
  - Susan McWilliams/Stacy Stewart, Community Engagement & Career Development
  - Traci St. Pierre, Marketing
  - University Health and Counseling re: Mental Illness in Higher Education
  - Buster Neel, Interim Chief Business Officer
  - Research Staff (ORIO)
  - LAC Representative
- Justin will reach out to suggested speakers to schedule.

IX. Standing Committees

- People were asked to sign up for at least 2 Standing Committees
- Executive Committee Members only need to sign up for 1 Standing Committee (Executive Committee counts as other)

X. Lunch Served and Meeting Adjourned at 12:00 p.m.