

Office Staff Employee Advisory Committee
Meeting of March 18, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Amy Barnes, Dymph Alexander, Tracey Mason, Cathy McElhannon, Cree Sherrill, Loretta Persinger, Nellie Rice, Martha Rowsey, Mary Katherine Snead, Denise Watts

1. 2009 Campus Climate Survey

Amy thanked everyone who has already completed the Campus Climate Survey (we do not receive the actual responses, but we are able to access a report that shows participation rates). Amy asked committee members to please encourage their coworkers to participate and said that the staff group (which includes both office staff and operations staff) currently has the lowest participation. We need and want feedback from this important group of employees – this is an opportunity for staff to give us feedback.

Mary Katherine said that Leyburn 201 has been reserved with proctors if people want to take the survey there and she provided the hours.

2. Feedback on recent town hall meetings

Staff said that they appreciated the initial email that talked about the economy and its impact on W&L as well as the ability to see the slideshow online if you were unable to attend. The group also appreciated that the upper administration took the time to share that information. The information shared gives everyone an opportunity to see how different pieces fit together and how and why decisions are made. The presentation was also reassuring in that Washington and Lee plans for these types of situations.

3. Update on the Mercer Project/Recommendations for focus group participants

Amy explained that the design team continues to work with Mercer on new classification/compensation and performance development systems. The next step is to hold focus groups to review the work that has been done so far and get feedback. Each group will be about fifteen people. We are keeping the groups intentionally small so that people will feel more comfortable participating.

Please send any recommendations for focus group participants to Amy as soon as possible. We're looking for a cross section of the campus, people who will give open honest feedback. There will be an operations group, office staff, etc. The focus group sessions are scheduled for March 26th.

4. Employee Recognition Banquet

The Banquet has been moved to April 13 at 11:30 rather than the day after commencement. It was moved to encourage more participation by Dining Services and Facilities employees. The week of commencement is one of the busiest of the year for these employees. Additionally, an outside caterer will take care of the food this year to all Dining Services employees to enjoy the banquet.

Q) What do the responses look like for those groups?

A) As of today, there are 246 RSVPs – 10 from Dining Services and 40 from Facilities Management.

5. Status of the child care initiative

In accordance with the President's Work/Life Initiatives, the University will grant \$50,000 for afterschool programming and a \$25,000 seed grant for summer programming. These grants were combined into one Request for Proposal (RFP) to make it easier for vendors to submit a proposal for one or both grants [Click here to view the RFP](#). We tried to circulate the RFP widely and contacted not only local agencies and providers, but also non-profit as well as for profit organizations that operate nationally.

Proposals were due March 1 and are currently under review by a committee. Committee members are: Mary Katherine Snead, Assistant Director of Work/Life Initiatives; Elizabeth Knapp, Associate Dean of the College and Chair of the Child Care Task Force; David Leonard, Associate Dean of Students and member of the Child Care Task Force; Elizabeth Branner, Director of Development for the Law School and member of the Child Care Task Force; Linda Hooks, Professor of Economics; and Valerie Cushman, Executive Assistant to the President. The proposals look promising, and we hope this will be a step in the right direction.

6. Newsletter

In an effort to reduce printing costs as well as conserve paper, Amy explained that she was considering distributing the newsletter as an on-line/PDF version. Most committee members spoke in support of that approach, but also were concerned about those employees who do not have access to a computer on their desktops. Amy said that HR will try to mitigate the impact, by either providing hard copy to those without easy computer access or by asking departments to print copies for them. Individuals can print the PDF if they would like a copy to take home to read. At this point, with printing budgets being cut across the board, it would be difficult to justify a large additional expense like printed newsletters for almost 1000 employees.

7. Miscellaneous

Q) When will there be an announcement to the community about the Ombuds?

A) Amy reported that President Ruscio announced at the Faculty Meeting this week that Jane Ellen Reid has been hired. She will be on campus this summer but will officially start this fall. We expect she will be here about 15-20 hours per week, as well as available by email and phone. She will also be willing to meet with people at locations off campus if they would like.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Katherine Snead, Human Resources