

OFFICE STAFF EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

1/21/09 MINUTES

Present: Amy Barnes, Tracey Mason, Cathy McElhannon, Loretta Persinger, Nellie Rice, Wendy Richards, Cree Sherrill, Martha Rowsey, Ed Mays, Dymph Alexander, Mary Katherine Snead

I. Wellness

Mary Katherine gave an overview of current Wellness programming.

- Weight Watchers: Tuesdays at 11:30, WLU is subsidizing ½ the cost and also providing payroll deductions. If there are individuals who are interested in WW, but cannot attend at 11:30, please contact Mary Katherine (x8355 or mksnead@wlu.edu).
- Smoking Cessation: Begins this week, we have 8 employees participating. Hope to hold another program next quarter. WLU pays ½ if employees attend all three sessions.
- Campus Recreation offers faculty/staff intramurals in 'lifetime' sports such as golf, tennis, basketball, etc. Contact Ray Ellington (8244) in Campus Rec for more information.
- Campus Recreation has also expanded the group fitness class offerings. The noon classes are still free for faculty/staff. The other classes are \$50 for any and all classes – the fee can now be payroll deducted. The different fee schedules resulted from programs being offered by different departments. James Dick is working on resolving this discrepancy. Please note the 4:45 classes are specifically aimed at faculty/staff.
- Patti Colliton is bringing speakers during January and February as part of her Winter Wellness initiative. The speakers will be at 12:20 in Commons 345 on various wellness topics.
- Barbara Rowe leads guided meditations on Wednesdays at noon in the Sacred Space in the library.
- There will soon be a wellness webpage with information about all wellness programs at <http://wellness.wlu.edu>.

Please take advantage of these offerings and let us know if you have ideas for others!

Q) Will the fitness center be opening earlier in the morning? There seem to be a lot of people who would take advantage of this.

A) Amy explained that the Fitness Center will be evaluating the hours this spring to determine if the extended evening hours have been successful. Amy explained that the Fitness Center is currently open many hours and it would be hard on the staff to extend the hours even further. If they determine that the extended evening hours have not been sufficiently utilized, they may consider shifting those hours to early mornings. Additionally, it can be difficult to find people with the proper training who are willing to open the center at 5:30 or 6 am. However, it is something that is being considered.

2. Campus Climate Survey

Amy updated the group on an on-line campus climate survey we are administering in the next few months. She explained that The Committee on Women recommended that W&L conduct an employee climate survey. Washington and Lee has contracted with ModernThink, the consulting company that does the 'Great Colleges to Work For' survey through *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (see last year's report here: <http://chronicle.com/indepth/academicworkplace/>). We will use that survey and will be able to add several customized questions. The hope is that this survey will provide more data on the campus

climate and will allow us to compare our results against peer schools. Members of the new University Committee for Inclusiveness and Campus Climate as well as the Committee on Women are assisting with the customization of the survey questions.

The survey will be live from March 2 for two weeks. All survey data will go directly to ModernThink. WLU will only receive reports that do not identify people, and don't give data for groups smaller than five. It is very important that we have high participation to see what everyone thinks, and to provide more complete information. For more information about *The Chronicle* survey, see here: <http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/9/28/>.

Q) How is this different from the Mercer survey?

A) Mercer looked at compensation and benefits. This survey will specifically assess campus climate.

Q) Will the results be public?

A) Yes. The results will be available in April, but we won't have benchmarking information until this summer when *The Chronicle* article is published.

Q) Will this be ongoing?

A) We've contracted with ModernThink to do this survey for three years. This will allow us to see if the campus climate is improving.

Recommendation: be clear how this is different from the Mercer survey to encourage more people to participate.

Q) Will every question have a comment space?

A) No, but there are three open ended questions.

Q) What are the customized questions?

A) The customized questions are:

1. The workplace climate is better than it was three years ago.
2. At this institution, mutual respect exists across all job categories.
3. I am comfortable asking for flexibility to meet my work/life needs.
4. Diversity is important to this institution.
5. In the last three years at Washington and Lee, I have personally experienced disrespect or unfair treatment on the basis of gender.
6. In the last three years at Washington and Lee, I have personally experienced disrespect or unfair treatment because I am a member of an underrepresented group.
7. I am confident that concerns about disrespect or unfair treatment will be handled appropriately.
8. Students treat me with respect.
9. When disrespectful student behavior occurs, the University responds appropriately.
10. My supervisor/department chair supports my efforts to balance my work and personal life.
11. This institution fully supports efforts devoted to advising/mentoring students. (2008 - #45)

Miscellaneous

Amy asked for feedback on the interim newsletter that went out right before the holidays. Highlights included:

- Likes that it is in the paper format. You can save them.
- Valuable information.
- Would like if it would also include more personal information such as information about births, deaths, etc.

Q) We didn't expect the news about the extra SLR days for 15 year employees to come out in the newsletter. Why wasn't it sent as a broadcast email?

A) The additional days were communicated in two ways. First, there was the article in the Newsletter. Amy said that in order to increase readership of the newsletter, you have to put information in it that people can't get in other places. In addition, we wanted to get that information out quickly. Second, we sent an e-mail to those employees who would get the additional days and their supervisors to be sure that they were aware of the change.

Q) How did the extra 5 SLR days go over?

A) The group feels they went over very well. They helped make up for some reservations about CTO by long term employees.

Q) Where are we with performance evaluations?

A) Performance evaluations this year will use the same form as before. The design team is working with Mercer, and we hope to be able to share information about the classification structure and about the performance development process in February.

Q) How should people be keeping track of their CTO?

A) You can access your CTO balance using WebAdvisor. Remember that you can go into the negative up to one year's accrual.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Katherine Snead, Human Resources.