

STAFF SENATE Minutes
1100 Torgersen Hall
Thursday, January 15, 2009
12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.

Attending: Bonnie Alberts, Judy Alford, Susan Archer, Robin Atkins, Jim Baker, Jean Brickey, Sarah Castle, Mary Ann Cole, Shelby Cole, Dan Cook, Lisa Cotting, Carolyn Dudding, Lori Greiner, Karen Hall, Tammy Henderson, Jennifer Hundley, Travis Hundley, Lori Anne Kirk, Cindy Koziol, Lori Lee, Rob Lowe, Maxine Lyons, Wyatt Sasser, Becky Saylor, Bradley Scott, Sue Teel, Tom Tucker, Ken Wieringo, Jon Wooge, April Lucas, Meghan Thompson

Excused: Catherine Caldwell, Sue Ellen Crocker, Tracy McCoy, Hannah Swiger, Chris Thomas, Hubert Walker, Vicki Scarrat

The meeting was called to order, agenda approved, and minutes accepted.

Announcements:

Closings - An update on the winter closing proposal was provided by Tom Tucker. The version of the Winter Closing Proposal revised after the November Staff Senate meeting was not pursued by HR. In that version of the proposal, all 12 existing holidays will remain as they are and can be observed on the day they occur or worked and used as compensatory leave at a later date. This is per coordination and approval of one's supervisor. If the latest version had been approved, the University would close between December 25th and January 1st, and employees would use whatever combination of appropriate leave to cover the time of the closing. Extra Holidays granted by the Governor would be available to VT employees whether the proposed closing policy changes happen or not. The proposal also includes provisions to help ensure newly hired employees are protected from Leave without Pay situations during their first winter closing working at Virginia Tech. The winter closing proposal was presented to the Staff Senate via an electronic survey in early December. Staff Senators polled their constituents and indicated whether members of their associations supported the proposed winter closing change or if they supported keeping the current holiday policies. The results were: 43% supported the proposed change and 57% supported keeping the current policies. These results were reported to HR and presented at the December 16th CSPA meeting. At that meeting, the CSPA was informed that HR was not going to pursue the proposed Winter Holiday closing changes and no further action to be taken. The winter holiday proposal can still be discussed and pursued through the shared governance process in the future.

VT Engage - Robin Atkins reported that staff will be represented on a commission/workgroup on student involvement.

Wellness Task Force – Tom Tucker reported that the wellness task force is looking at peer institutions to determine what they are doing on wellness. They will be developing a survey to determine what services are in demand. Therefore, it is important to respond to the survey because it will be used to develop the programs that are implemented.

Staff Appreciation Day – Tom Tucker reported that Staff Appreciation Day will be held Wednesday, May 20th.

February Meeting Date / Location – Tom Tucker reported that Mike Coleman will be the speaker for the February Staff Senate meeting. He will discuss energy savings at the university. Please feel free to bring questions related to the temperature change in buildings that went into effect during break.

Program

Kevin McDonald, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, presented a very informative update on diversity and the Advancing Diversity at Virginia Tech workshop. He was joined by Perry Martin, Assistant Director and Ray Plaza, the Director of Diversity Initiatives. Kevin thanked the Staff Senate for their support and attendance at the Advancing Diversity workshop. Future workshop sessions ideas include age related bias by discussing how to work across generations, hierarchies within the institution, and the divide between faculty and staff. An Administrative Services Diversity Council is forming for areas that fall under the VP for Administrative Services and their first meeting will be held January 29th. The Office for Equity and Inclusion is working to expand the Principles of Community. In addition, they are working to connect their office with alumni and have had positive results from their effort. Additional information about the Office for Equity and Inclusion and their programs can be found on their website at <http://www.oei.vt.edu/>.

The Next meeting will be February 19, 2009. The speaker will be Michael Coleman, the Associate Vice President for Facilities. The meeting will be held at **The Inn at Virginia Tech** in the **Drillfield room**.

With no more discussion the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Hundley
Senate Secretary