Professional Staff Association  
Senate Meeting Notes  
September 9, 2009  
Alexander Room, Student Union Building

In Attendance:
Bill English, Mandy Nelson, Pat Pyke, Ferd Schlapper, Kathleen Tuck, Mike Reed, Alain Rodrigue, Melissa Wintrow, Kimberly Woodings

Absent:
Beth Oppenheimer

I. Call to Order and Opening Activity
   • Melissa called the meeting to order at 10:35 am
   • No opening activity

II. Review and Approval of Minutes from August Meeting
   • Ferd read an email from Dale Seay regarding updates to the professional salary survey.
   • Lots of discussion regarding Dale’s presentation.
     • Pat expressed concern regarding the lack of representation of academic units on the Advisory Council.
     • Pat motioned that the Professional Staff Senate (via Ferd, as he is on the Advisory Council) communicate with Dale to inquire about academic representation on the council.
     • Kimberly seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the senate.
   • Kimberly moved to pass the minutes as is. Alain seconded the motion and the senate voted unanimously to approve the August meeting minutes.

III. Treasurer’s Report
   • Mike reported our appropriated account balance is: $2,050.61 and our local account balance is: $4,946.01.

IV. Committee Outreach Chair: Kimberly’s report
   • Kimberly and Pat will be hosting an orientation session for new committee members today.
     • Kimberly created a sheet for each committee member from the handbook.
   • Kimberly updated committee information in the handbook. Melissa will send this out for review.
   • Kimberly emailed Randi McDermott regarding how the PSA can get involved regarding policy changes now that there is no policy committee. She has not received a reply back.
   • Melissa asked if Kimberly will keep in contact with committee members. Kimberly will be contacting them every few months.

V. Old Business
   • Discussions on part-time employee benefits
Melissa shared the following information that she has gathered:

- Mike Gwartney, Directory of Department of Administration, has absolute authority to negotiate on state benefits. In December 2008, the decision was made to cut part-time benefits significantly. No information regarding this decision was released until June 2009.
- Donna Uhle, President of Idaho Public Employees Association, is trying to find a committee to gain oversight of Mr. Gwartney’s position. Long-term, she would like to remove that much power from one person.
- The senate presidents met last week to investigate whether or not this can be stopped.
  - Department of Administration says no.
  - Talked about a forum with Legislators, but feel that there is not enough time to do this before the change goes into effect.
    - Should we do something when they are back in session?
    - Should we ask the Legislature to pose the question of legality to the Attorney General?
- President Kustra is supportive of us being vocal.
  - Melissa asked about possibly contacting the media.
  - Ferd suggested checking on policy regarding speaking out against the Governor.
- Ferd asked if Mr. Gwartney has the authority to unilaterally decide to cut the benefit package.
- Pat suggested comparing the number of part-time classified and professional staff employees at peer institutions.
- A joint meeting of all three senates was discussed and all in attendance agreed it would be a good idea.
- We would like to reach out to other staff associations at other Idaho institutions to see how the change is affecting them and if they are doing anything to try and stop it.
  - Mike will contact UI
  - Alain will contact LCSC
  - Kathleen will contact ISU
- Ferd mentioned that there was a presentation on organizing staff associations. They may have a contact list for other institutions. Ferd will send out if he can get one.

VI. New Business

- Melissa briefly mentioned hosting an event with ACE and faculty senate to meet legislators and present the pro staff message.
- Emeritus language change
• Bill proposed wording changes to the current policy. What does “Department support” mean? Suggests changing department to work unit – tabled until October for further discussion.

• Discussion of Survey Results:
  • Discussions on senate representations via elections.
    • Possibly look at restructuring senate to allow for representation from more areas of campus.
  • A lot of surveys showed interest in social aspects
    • Kathleen and Pat both really like the idea of a staff recognition week.
  • Brown bag to discuss issues effecting all professional staff
    • Kimberly suggested implementing a networking aspect to brown bags.
  • Volunteering opportunities
  • Pat suggested following up with people who indicated that they would like to serve on a committee with specific suggestions of how they could get involved (i.e. – brown bags)
  • Pat pointed out that whatever we start, we have to manage. Best to start small. All agreed.
  • Mike pointed out that many surveys mentioned changing fee waiver to plus 1 rather than spouse.
    • Bill mentioned that there was a concern among Idaho Colleges regarding a plus 1.
    • Kimberly suggested that this could be a brown bag.
  • Ferd suggested that we follow-up on survey results so people know that we are taking action on their concerns.
    • Melissa will draft an email and have results posted.
  • Ferd, Kathleen, Kimberly and Pat will meet to brainstorm how to put this all into action. Melissa said to make it “manageable but exciting!” They will report back at the next meeting.

VII. Announcements
  • Next Professional Staff Senate meeting will be Wednesday, October 14, 2009.
  • Next meeting: update from Winter Luncheon Committee.

VIII. Adjournment
  • The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 pm.