Staff Senate Meeting Minutes
11.19.14

Attendees: Martha Alvarez, Vanessa Arredondo, Sarah Babb, Nadya Balabanova, Raamen Bass, Whitney DeBruin, Catharine Foote, Jason Hanchar, Gary Hatter, Jessica Lyon, Briana Maturi, Reggie Melonson, Kris Okimoto, Michael Derek Pugh, Fred Puza, Ilana Schachter, Trevor Wiseman, Michelle Yeung

Updates from Executive Board Meeting with Rebecca Chandler, Vice President HR

• Open enrollment Feedback
  o A majority of the feedback we received from staff was positive. There were a few concerns, particularly surrounding the design layout of the website and FSAs.
  o Rebecca was receptive to the feedback and admitted that she agrees that the website could be set up better and they have struggled with the limits of the software that they utilize for that.

• Salary/Annual Merit Increase
  o We had a very good discussion regarding this issue.
  o Rebecca informed us that HR benchmarks 100 positions at the University every spring to ensure that we are competitive with market value for our positions. They benchmark against other universities as well as other industries.
  o She said that there is not a plan in place to bring up the salaries of the lowest rung employees due to the rise in minimum wage, however she believes that the benchmarking will help to establish that we pay a fair market rate to our employees.
  o She also said that LMU holds itself to the Los Angeles living wage standard and not the state minimum wage. The figures she quoted us for LA living wage were:
    ▪ $11.03 with benefits
    ▪ $12.28 without benefits
  o In regards to AMI, each department is given a pool of 2%. Each division head is entitled to divide up the pool amongst their employees as they see fit. They can give everyone 2% or they can give some more and some less.
  o In regards to the question that a staff member asked about only being eligible for a 10% raise if they move positions within the same department, it is true...and not true. It is true that this is what is encouraged by HR so that favoritism does not seem to be shown. That said, a pay increase of larger than 10% can be approved, but it must come from the Senior Vice President level. She said that 20% is generally viewed as the maximum increase although, as everyone knows, anything is negotiable.

• Annual Staff Holiday Party
  o Human Resources has agreed to contribute $500 to the event as they’ve done in the past.
  o They have leftover gift cards from Sodexo from the Staff Survey and are happy to donate these to us as giveaways/raffle items.
  o The events committee should follow up with Lauren Holland on both of these pieces

• Alternative Breaks (Center for Service and Action)
  o If your department views it as necessary skills building, then you don’t have to take vacation, otherwise you are supposed to.

• Commuter Benefits
  o For those who asked about Commuter Benefits, Chris Lechner will be sending some information out.
• **Staff Climate Survey**
  o Turnout was down from over 80% last time to 60-65% this year. The feedback they received was that people were not as interested in completing since they felt that nothing was done the last time.

**Updates from Executive Board Meeting with President Burcham & Provost Hellige**

*John Orozco will be following up with the President and Provost after the holiday to see where they land on the issues they said they would review.*

• **Staff Senate’s Role on Campus**
  o They felt that we serve a vital role and not just as party planners but as staff representation.
  o They understand how time consuming and difficult that is and they don’t envy us.
  o They appreciated the changes that we have put in place and the direction that we are headed in.

• **Reporting Structure**
  o They listened to our concerns. They are happy to meet with us, but both said that if we have direct concerns they would address those to HR anyway.
  o Our current system of once a semester seems to be a good compromise.
  o We believe meeting with Rebecca can be beneficial.
  o President Burcham asked for more time to consider. We suggested language is key. We don’t necessarily report to HR, but meeting with them can be beneficial.

• **Salary/AMI/Minimum Wage**
  o The Board of Trustees has decreed that raises must be based on merit and not simply an across the board bump.
  o They do their budget modeling on a 3 year basis, so they do try to plan for various contingencies that are coming, such as a slowdown in rise of tuition increase as well as the opening of the new science building which will increase resource costs, etc.
  o We discussed that we are not a union, and it is not staff senate’s responsibility to try and advocate for specific people and their salaries, but we did want to bring forward the concerns of the staff, particularly concern for staff at the low end of the pay spectrum and how they are being compensated in response to the rise in minimum wage, health insurance costs and costs of living.
  o We discussed total compensation and whether or not the administration needed to be more transparent regarding reporting that figure to staff. Should it go on AMI notification? Should it be on pay stubs?
  o We discussed the importance of conversation and how upfront the administration needs to be regarding how salary is set.

• **LMU Children’s Center**
  o It is absolutely on President Burcham’s radar. He said that Lynne Scarboro is looking into this matter.
  o The trick is finding a way to address this issue without devoting too many resources to an opportunity/benefit that only impacts a small percentage of the faculty/staff.

• **Vacation Blackout Periods**
  o President Burcham stepped out for this portion of the meeting due to our meeting running long.
• Provost Hellige said he would follow up on this. He agreed that the entire summer seemed like an inordinate amount of time and he wanted to touch base with HR regarding the specific policy.

• **Staff Climate Survey**
  o We gave our feedback to Provost Hellige.
  o He took the feedback and said they would consider how best to roll out this year how the information will be utilized.