GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2008
Room 460, University Center

Attending: Joe Amador, Amber Amari, Brenda Blyler, Gloria Brooks, Amanda Brown, Cassandra Burney, Gretchen Cannon, David Caudill, Frederick Childs, Ann Claycombe, Carolyn Copeland-Simmons, Earl Daniels, Sandra Garber, MaryAnne Gaunt, Melody Harris, Nigel Harris, John Medlock, Kevea Mickey, San Miller, Karmen Milton, Phillip Mitchem, Kimberly Moore, Beverly Peters, Bill Prigge, LaRose Raston, Andria Reddick, Preeti Sagar, David Smart, John Streater, Jowanna Tillman, Susan Vogtner, Kimberly Walker, Anita Webb, Frances Williams, Shelly-Ann Williams, Valerie Woods

Excused: Randall Alberts, Mathieu Arp, Colleen Blanchard, Kevin Chappell, Kendall Jones, Shatanese Reese, Kenée Stephens, Tawanna Tookes, Randy Trammell,

Absent: Jess Aaron, Sonda Abernathy, Sharon German, Toure Heywood, Carla Hines, Elisha Jarrett, Teresa Rucker, Cassandra Thornton, Angela Turk, Henry Winston,

Guests: Dr. Carl Patton, Dethra Giles

Opening Business
John Medlock called the meeting to order at 3:00. The minutes from the July 16, 2008 meeting were approved as presented. John stated that this is the second year that Staff Council has cancelled the August Staff meeting. August is a busy time of year for most staff members with the beginning of the fall semester.

President Patton Comments
John Medlock introduced Carl Patton for his presentation to the council.

Georgia State President Carl Patton visited the University Staff Council on September 17 for some frank talk on the economy and what it might mean for employees at the university.

We won’t know before October at the earliest the extent of the budget reduction and how the University System will ask its institutions to respond, he said. That’s when the state will see reports on recent tax receipts, and the governor will be better prepared to indicate the amount state agencies will have to cut.

But employees should know that some tough budget decisions are most likely on the way, Dr. Patton said. The Board of Regents has approved a minimum six-percent budget cut and has discussed strategies for dealing with eight- and ten-percent reductions, he added.
Dr. Patton said that he has been encouraging regents and lawmakers to come up with specific measures to increase the flow of money coming in, including allowing the state’s four-year universities to raise tuition or fees. “We are the cheapest state in the southern region for tuition,” he said. “You can go to Georgia State for four years for what it costs to go to private institutions in the area for one semester.”

The president also addressed questions from staff council members. There are no current plans to change retirement benefits or health insurance plans, he told the council. As a cost saving move, it is likely that the regents will limit the state-paid portion of the indemnity health insurance plan to the amount paid for the PPO.

Dr. Patton indicated that there is a possibility that merit raise funds may be included in the state or system budget reduction strategy, but that no decision has been made yet by the University System or the state. When it comes to raises, however, his strong preference is to treat staff and faculty the same, Patton said. “By the way, I’m staff too along with my faculty appointment,” he said. “So, I’m in the same boat as you.”

He reiterated that staff shouldn’t believe any rumors about budget decisions because none have been made yet, other than requiring each unit to hold back one percent as a precautionary measure. “We don’t know what the state revenue picture is,” he said, “what will be turned over to the regents, or what the regents will do.” Dr. Patton promised that when key decisions are made, the university community would be notified directly through a mass e-mail.

**Grievance Board of Review**
Dethra Giles briefly discussed the staff grievance process and asked council members to volunteer to serve on panels. She stated that the council had helped develop the process and agreed to have council members serve on the panels. Re-training for panel members is suggested every year.

**Committee Restructuring**
John Medlock presented a document that has been drafted by the Staff Organization ad hoc Committee which is made up of himself, Amber Amari, Shelly Ann Williams, and MaryAnne Gaunt. The new committee restructure consists of 6 committees: Administrative, Community Relations, Communications, Development and Advancement, Campus Environment and Sustainability, and Staff Recognition. Some council members felt that the Staff Recognition committee may need more direction. Another goal of finding the best practices of staff recognition around campus could be added to that committee. (The document is provided at the end of the minutes.)

**Committee Report**

**Communications**
Anne Claycombe announced that the committee was continuing to work on the website. They are including links to all of the awards for which staff are eligible. They also plan on including an FAQ for new employees.
Benefits
Phillip is the new chair of the benefits committee.

Events
Kimberly Moore reminded everyone that the Kaiser Permanente run/walk would be held on September 25, 2008. The benefits fair will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. She sent around a sign-up sheet for volunteers.

Staff Development
Andria Reddick announced that the Staff Scholarship was awarded to 6 staff members. Winners are listed on the website and will be formally presented with the award at the October meeting.

Green Issues, ad hoc
David Caudill announced that Georgia State University became a member of the AASHR (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education). This was funded by Chris Jackman. Auxiliary Services is working on a contract with Zip Car that is currently in legal affairs. Bike racks are being installed around campus. He distributed a recycling poster to hang around campus so ensure people knew about ongoing recycling programs. The committee will be working on energy and water conservation and a project for Earth Day.

Senate Reports

FacP
John Medlock stated that the budget and options for raises have been discussed.

Faculty Affairs
Mary Anne Gaunt stated that the benefits plans and the self retirement plans would be changing. The second child care facility, Early Childcare, has different fees and is being discussed. The Disability Plan is still open for a short time.

Academic Programs
Shelly-Ann Williams announced that 6 certificates were presented in business.

Budget
Amber Amari announced that the committee had an organizational meeting.

P&D and Research
Sandra Garber stated that the Science Park will have the topping ceremony in January.
Next fall the new housing and Greek housing will be available.
Collabtech is now in the Suntrust Annex.
The Advanced Brain Imaging Center is opening in March.
Spectrum Plus will be implanted July 1st. The grants management model is included.
The committee discussed research support staffing levels.
A Waffle House will be opening in the new Science Park and a crepery will be opening in Aderold.

IS&T
A new hosted email system has been released for students. There is talk of a cap for GroupWise storage.

Culture and Diversity
A subcommittee will look at peer institution’s experience and practice with adding a diversity question to student evaluations and provide a recommendation on whether or not Georgia State should add a diversity questions.
The African American Male Initiative Sub-Committee will continue to investigate and plan for the implementation of a program designed to aid retention of African American male students.
The Task Force on Disability Awareness Day will be October 15th from 10am-2pm. The location is to be announced.

Student Life and Leadership
The committee met in August to approve new student organizations which are now listed on the Student Life and Leadership web page.
The 2008-2009 student handbook is available in the Office of Student Life and Leadership and online.

Announcements
The mobile mammogram mobile unit will be at Georgia State on September 24th and 25th.
A blood drive will be held on September 23rd in the Sports Arena.
The State Staff Council conference will be October 9 – 10, 2008. Amber Amari is our council’s representative.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Recorded by Susan Vogtner.
Staff Council  
Georgia State University

PROPOSED DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee Collaboration:
Staff Council and its standing committees play an important role in ensuring the soundness of university policies and procedures that have a major effect on staff. In a few cases, council committees have primary responsibility for the execution of university processes (e.g., Staff Scholarship Award selection process). In most cases, however, committees fulfill the council mission by working collaboratively with other council committees and with offices and groups throughout the university community and beyond. To facilitate collaboration among council committees, the Communication Committee and Administrative Committee each have service to other committees as part of their specific mission.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Administrative Committee
(refines mission of current Administrative Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to coordinate all nominations and elections procedures as set forth in Article III, Section 2 of the Bylaws. The committee will accept proposed changes to the Bylaws, study the proposals, and prepare a recommendation to the council in accordance with Article X and XII of the Bylaws. The committee will serve as a resource for council committees and members involved in the development of formal policies and administrative statements. The Committees Director will serve as a non-voting member of the committee.

Campus Environment and Sustainability Committee
(combines aspects of the Green Issues Ad Hoc Committee and Benefits Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to investigate environmentally related factors that contribute to the quality of work life for university employees and for students. The committee will address such issues as campus recycling programs, resource management, health and safety, transportation and parking, facilities, alternative work models, food services, and dependent care. The committee will contribute to the development and maintenance of campus-wide networks of staff, faculty, and students focused on green business practices and related work-life issues. The committee chair or designee will serve as a member of the university Transportation and Parking committee. The Planning Director will serve as a non-voting member of the committee.

Communication Committee
(refines mission of current Communication Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to promote the activities of the council and its standing committees. Committee members will contribute to ongoing communications
initiatives of the council, including the organization website, email lists, annual report, presentation and display materials, and brochures. The committee members will work regularly with the other council standing committees to facilitate the consistency and professionalism of communication efforts originating from those groups. The committee will engage with the Office of University Relations and other appropriate units to publicize council projects and achievements. The Staff Relations Director will serve as a non-voting member of the committee.

Community Relations Committee
(expands mission of Events Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to plan, organize, and execute council participation in various university and council events and programs such as Benefits Fair/Staff Information Day, university-wide staff forums, Day in the Park, Homecoming, council orientation, and council retreats. The committee will investigate ways the council and university staff can contribute to community-service efforts of the university such as the State Charitable Contributions Campaign, programs of the Office of Civic Engagement, and seasonal collection drives. The Staff Relations Director will serve as a non-voting member of the committee.

Staff Development and Advancement Committee
(combines aspects of the Staff Development Committee and Benefits Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to investigate ways in which staff can benefit from training and advancement programs and other opportunities for professional and personal development. The committee will address such issues as career and professional development, orientation/mentoring, diversity training, and basic skills development. Additionally, the committee will provide the council with information relating to major policy or procedural changes in human resources-related areas and will advocate for new policies and procedures that positively benefit the university and staff when appropriate. The chair of the committee or designee will serve as the council representative to the university Human Resources Advisory Committee. The Planning Director and invited designee(s) from Human Resources will serve as non-voting members of the committee.

Staff Recognition Committee
(expands aspects of Staff Development Committee)
The duties of the committee will be to administer the Staff Scholarship Fund as outlined in Article XI, Section 1 of the Bylaws. The committee will investigate formal and informal means of recognizing the achievements of staff members. The committee will work to foster participation in staff awards programs and other staff recognition efforts on campus by promoting nomination opportunities, participating in award/recognition nomination or election processes on behalf of Staff Council, and publicizing the achievements of award/recognition recipients. The Committees Director will serve as a non-voting member of the committee.