

The University of Akron
Staff Employee Advisory Committee (S.E.A.C.)
Minutes for 4/16/09 Meeting at Wayne College

Members and Attendance:

Name	Position	Attendance
Jean Andrick		Present
Gary Beckman		Present
Mary Dingler		Present
Jeri Farwell		Present
Lissia Gerber	Vice Chair	Attending Budget Hearing Meeting
Jim Shuster	Web Master	Present
Laura Spray	Treasurer	Present
Bob Stachowiak	Chair	Present
Mary Tabatcher	Secretary	Present
Lindsie Webb		Present
Pam Woodall Caine		Present
Joy LiCause	Ex-officio	Attending Faculty Senate to discuss UC By-Laws

Meetings always scheduled on third Thursday of month at 12:30 PM.

Meeting called to order at 12:48 PM at Wayne College.

Review minutes for 3/19/09. Approved with no objections.

Meeting held at Wayne College. Commenced meeting with introductions of SEAC members and Wayne attendees.

Awards & Recognitions Sub-Committee Meeting of October 24, 2008 (Joint meeting with 2 members of CPAC) - Mary Dingler, Chair (reporting), Jean Andrick, Jeri Farwell, Jim Shuster & Pam Woodall Caine:

Mary Dingler has reported that awards and recognitions is having a big celebration this year at Quaker Station. It is also the 10th anniversary for President Proenza. This year, there are five year increment awards at the request of SEAC and others. A.G. Monaco made it happen and also indicated there will be other expansions of awards and recognitions. People who are getting awards have already been notified but general population has not been notified. Dean's offices sent notices to invite the general population.

Benefits & Wellness Committee - Laura Spray & Jeri Farwell: Met today. The wellness program is being reviewed by Dr. Proenza. Met with consultants to review benefit plans. Keeping current consultant – negotiate with current carriers, make suggestions and recommendations and ask carriers for suggestions to reduce costs. We know they will go up, but looking to reduce costs as much as possible. What about SRWC fees? Some kind of compensation? Taxing benefits is not an option at this time. Looking at training so people can learn of plans. There is a coalition consisting of YSU, NEOUCOM, etc. who will look at combining risk.

Board of Trustees - Gary Beckman & Jeri Farwell reporting (www.uakron.edu/bot/):

Board of Trustees met on March 25, 2009. Following is the report.

Dr. Proenza began the meeting by discussing the budget. Even though the University is in a better position than most universities, the budget committee has been asked to project a conservative budget. Although no severe actions will take place, we must plan to spend less.

College of Engineering Dean, Dr. Haritos, Orestes Varonis, alumnus and manager of electronic controls for The Timkin Company, and Engineering students Matthew Augustin and Michael Baraona gave a presentation on the Siemens PLM NX 5.0 software program. Siemens Corporation has donated its PLM Software NX and Teamcenter Engineering software licenses to the College of Engineering to enhance the education of our engineering students. Students and faculty are gaining valuable hands-on experience with this dynamic modeling software. Our Engineering students will be able to use the software to create 3D animations, with transparency layouts and overlays and develop and demonstrate engineering concepts. Students are able to test their designs in virtual reality, gaining deeper understanding of applied engineering without incurring the significant expense and time costs of constructing and testing prototypes.

In an effort to be friendlier to transfer students, Dr. Stroble talked about creating a Virtual Service Center for transfer students. The creation of a Service Center for Transfer students will serve the needs of incoming and returning transfer students. The center will include personnel from both the Advising Center and the Admissions Office to create a one-stop shop for the University to recruit, evaluate, and retain our growing transfer student population.

We are admitting more students and graduating more students, so there will be an additional graduation ceremony for Spring on Friday, May 8th at 7:00 pm.

The Board approved a request to change the name of the “Department of Learning technologies and Scholar/Learner Services” to the “Department of Instructional Services”. The “Center of Nursing” will also have a name change to the “Nursing Center for Community Health”.

In recognition of his exemplary achievements, unparalleled career and devoted service to the students, families and citizens of Akron, The Board approved to award an Honorary Doctorate of Laws degree to Mayor Donald Plusquellic.

The next board meeting is Wednesday, April 29, 2009 at the University of Akron Student Union: Executive Session meeting at 7:30 a.m.; Public Board meeting at 10:30 a.m.

By-Laws - Laura Spray (reporting), Jeri Farwell, Lindsie Webb & Joy LiCause (ex-officio): SEAC needs to review and formalize bylaws. Laura has submitted a draft for review at another meeting. We are shooting for completion in August – will need special meeting to consider them.

Executive Committee Meeting with President – Bob Stachowiak (Chair), Laura Spray (Treasurer), Mary Tabatcher (Secretary – reporting) and CPAC representatives Jeanette Carson and Greg Dieringer:

The above Executive Committee members and two CPAC representatives met with President Proenza on Friday March 20th to discuss the possible employee appreciation event. Bob Stachowiak discussed the concept and ideas regarding the desire to make it a community building event along the lines of Dr. Cases' departmental events. Dr. Proenza seemed very supportive and offered to help form a committee to help after he discusses it with A.G. Monaco and Dr. Stroble. Many ideas were discussed in line with previous SEAC committee discussions, including using shuttle buses to bring Wayne people in and maybe including some after hours times to include people who are not able to break during regular work hours.

The President also discussed several other topics, including the governor's plan to increase SSI by 6% with no increase in tuition. Assuming 4% enrollment growth and no large increase in overhead, we will have a \$5-10 million gap. The President stressed we all need to be creative with our dollars and show the community we are sensitive to current events.

UA is looking at ways to help low income students with such things as creating a book scholarship fund or finding ways to offer modest tuition breaks through some voluntary programs? He mentioned that there are rewards just to have 100% return of United Way cards, but we historically only return 30%. Why?

Overall, UA hopes to manage through the downturn without layoffs and furloughs. Crisis contains a moral obligation to do something for the community.

Bob mentioned that SEAC want to put a link on our website to strategic planning. He also suggested a possible discount coupon for cross-fee remission with KSU and other NEOhio universities. The President said it was something to entertain.

Bob told the President that feedback from the service awards is very positive.

President indicated that our completed bylaws should go to both his office AND legal simultaneously. Bob asked if we should increase our membership due to university counsel, but the President seemed neutral.

Bob mentioned that SEAC would like to close the gap on personal days between contract professionals and faculty days off. The President had no comment.

Faculty Senate - Lissia Gerber & Mary Tabatcher , with Joy LiCause representing UC Bylaws (<http://www.uakron.edu/president/facultySenate/>):

Joy LiCause reporting: Faculty Senate met on Thursday, April 2nd to discuss UC bylaws. There were no amendments offered at the meeting but there was the suggestion from one or two parties that defects in the bylaws (such as not having a process for amending the bylaws IN the bylaws) might be ones that the UCEC ought to consider.

Faculty Senate meetings are always held on the first Thursday of the month. Next meeting is a special meeting in two weeks to reconsider UC bylaws.

OSCHE (Ohio Staff Council on Higher Education) - Bob Stachowiak (Chair) & Lissia Gerber (Vice Chair) and (Lindsie Webb alternate): Next meeting is April 24th at LCC (Ohio Staff Council of Higher Education). Not parent committee – voluntary groups like ours. Discuss issues and gain best practices within the institution family. HB187 re: civil service reform. With the HB, there have been no changes to UA staff rules. HB187 recommends that changes should be slow and incremental and staff must be involved in decision but it does give universities the power to change rules. Bob attended workshops last year on leadership and highlights for individual organizations. Ohio University staff senate sells OU blanket throws. Anyone who wishes to go should call Bob Stachowiak at 330.972.5456 or email at rws1@uakron.edu. Summer workshop is \$65/person. First person is free. Workshops are usually two-days. Penny press – we were told to submit a budget request.

Performance Evaluation Committee - Lissia Gerber & Mary Tabatcher: Maybe work on developing survey about performance evaluations. Ask, “does anyone have a problem with performance review forms?” One thing that Wayne dean has noticed is that ratings are poor, fair, good, very good and excellent. No average? Current format came from accreditation documents. Employees are supposed to abide by the mission and assist in enhancing such. However, that has recently been removed. When we spoke to President last time he said that we should suggest something better. Employee issues require steps. We will be trying to come up with some sort of evaluation questionnaire. Meanwhile, keep in mind anything you wish to come to light. There are problems with overall lack of communication with supervisors unless there are negative comments. Who keeps a performance log? Developing a PDAQ takes a long time. After we get the survey completed, we will make an effort to see the President.

Safety Committee - Bob Stachowiak (reporting): Did not meet – cancelled Tuesday morning. I guess we’re safe! Formed last year, and have safety task force and also have safety committee that looks at other issues. Some issues being discussed are hiring practices and background investigations. Had sexual harassment policy reviewed by committee. Also reviewing visual surveillance; being vetted by legal. Looking for centralized video security solution. Bierce has 32 cameras monitoring from one location which means that a shooter can see everything being done in building. Most other universities have surveillance systems. What is being done to train people? ALICE program goal is to train thousands of people this year. Call Chad Cunningham on x5914. Action requires collective action. When are trainings?

Social Committee - Jean Andrick (Co-Chair), Gary Beckman (Co-Chair) reporting, Mary Dingler, Pam Woodall Caine: Bob reported about meeting with Becky Hoover and Mike Kimble about Employee Appreciation Day. Monday’s meeting with Becky Hoover indicated that it might cost \$75K to put on such an event. Mike Kimble and A.G. Monaco have responded that they are looking at other options. We believe we can organize an event for much less money. Becky indicated that SEAC should get back to Becky with cost estimates. Mike and Gary talked to Zia and one other unnamed individual. They indicated that Dining Services cannot write off anything except punch and cookies. Maybe

we can do all work and ask people to bring covered dishes. We are pushing for this, but economic issues may restrain any actions somewhat. Tentative date is 8/5 or 8/6.

Treasurer's Report – Laura Spray reporting: We have \$1,988. OSCHE costs in Dayton will need to still come out of budget.

University Council - Bob Stachowiak & Joy LiCause (ex-officio) reporting: UC document complete; bylaws are in draft form and being reviewed by Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate originally created exploratory committee for university council. Changes were originally intended to be according to Robert's Rules. Representation has been a struggle. FS, CPAC, SEAC each have four members. Subcommittee can pick from anyone within university according to their expertise. Faculty will have overload of representatives at the committee level – only difference is the voting level. There is a special Faculty Senate meeting today at 4:00. We are all hoping it will be approved. It allows all groups to discuss global issues. Much of their work will be long range.

Web Team - Jim Shuster reporting: Updated last minutes and made some corrections to website. We should go back and look at the issues table. We try to develop issues that SEAC members submit for consideration. One issue is sick leave bank; however, President, Legal and HR have all said “no!” Also, HR has indicated that we have benefits that cover sick leave and for those who are special cases, special consideration may be given. SEAC should review table and give Jim updated information.

Old Business: Laura received two boxes of SEAC archives from Joy and will give to Mary to organize.

New Business: FAST has monthly meetings to discuss various topics. Re: concern from member on sick leave. AG compared our sick leave time with average private sector sick leave. Our sick leave is double that of the private sector. Ohio Revised Code is determining factor.

Our response is that it would be a civil service rule change which kicks in HB187. The board deems to make a university rule which overrides ORC.

Laura to give statement.

Wayne Branch Question: Has anyone heard about raises? We had heard a few months ago there would be a 2.5% pool; now rumors are saying none. Lissia is SEAC member involved in budget hearing process; nothing is firm at this time; however, President says pool is still being considered. If things go as planned, we are OK. If things decline at the state level, we would need to cut some millions from the budget. President indicates no plans for layoffs at the current time. No rumors on buyouts either.

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 PM.

Next meeting is on May 21st at 12:30 PM in UAPD Conference Room.