Professional Council

March 21, 2012
105 Montana Hall
Montana State University
10:00 am

Present: Nora Smith, Jeff Littlefield, Betsey Pitts, Carolyn Plumb, Julie Tatarka, Jeanne Wilkinson, Adam Edelman

Meeting minutes from 3/8/2012 were approved.

BOR report – Chair Wilkinson

- Chair Wilkinson reported on Commissioner Stearns’ retirement dinner and the granting of her emeritus status upon retirement.
- The BoR “Classified Staff Luncheon” name has been changed to “Staff Luncheon” to more accurately represent classified and professional employee participation. Smith and Wilkinson met with MUSSA, representatives comprised of MUS staff representatives. MUSSA was represented on the Compensation Task Force and continued the discussion with the BOR by presenting non-monetary compensation ideas to the BoR for classified employees such as free gym memberships, expanding tuition fee waiver benefits, professional development and peer mentoring.
- Wilkinson reported that Kevin Thane, chair of the MSU Staff Senate, is proposing changes to the hiring range of the classified compensation policy. MUSSA is taking a broader approach and forwarding the idea of revisiting the entire classification system.
- Student regent, Joe Thiel, specifically mentioned the PC video on student impact to the BoR.
- Wilkinson reported on her email communications with regent Pat Williams, post Dillon BoR meeting, where Williams asked for the top three (3) suggestions on how the BoR may best support and respect university system staff. A general discussion ensued. Wilkinson stated the Compensation Task Force discussion in February indicated everyone is on board that salaries need to be raised. Students are supportive of this issue and Blake Bjornson, at University Council, stated that the top priority student issue for the next legislative session would be faculty/staff salary increases.
- Wilkinson shifted the discussion to management training for managers, a topic she has encountered frequently within the campus community. There was a clear consensus among PC members for mandatory management training, follow up and consistent accountability. PC members discussed compensation and how pools of money are available to employees as strategic or lump sum bonuses but managers who are not informed or motivated may not reward deserving employees.
- Wilkinson questioned what role professionals could play to educate legislators about higher education. Edelman suggested PC work with Doug Steele. Wilkinson will invite Steele to a PC meeting in April/May to discuss.
Social for Former PC Members - Pitts
Pitts will resend the PC event invitation – April 4, 2012 SUB 235, 4-6pm. Large sheets of paper will be posted on the wall with questions/statements prompting conversation (Pitts will forward ideas to PC for comment).

Professional Development - Tatarka
Regarding a bio-safety professional development session, PC encouraged Tatarka to move forward even though there may be sparse attendance.

Announcements
- The Core Office Hours memo is finally in writing and PC will put a link to it on the web page.
- PC would like to revisit campus communications with administration, and will interact more with professionals for communications that might have eluded the council.
- Council elections – PC terms for Edelman, Swanson, and Smith will expire this fall. Edelman will continue on the Planning Council. Wilkinson will send out a call for nominations
- Wilkinson announced that a process for electing new governance council members has been developed.
- Wilkinson will meet with Cruzado and Potvin on 3/30. Topics suggested for discussion are professional development, updates on searches, direction of communications – Who will be attending the legislative meeting in Helena?

As there was no other business, the meeting ended at 11:10 am.

Gale R. Gough
Administrative Associate
Professional Council