

**Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2010****443 Food Science Building, 1:00 pm to 2:45pm**

Members: Sara Ashcraft, Heather Besecker, Terri Cravener, Nadine Davitt, Rhonda Demchak, Scott Harkcom, Tiffany Hoy, John Pecchia, Kim Ripka, Cathy Walker

Chairwoman: Sara Ashcraft called the meeting to order at 12:55pm. She handed out name tags for the new members. Cathy Walker offered to make them with tougher paper. Sara will send her the new and department information. Sara also handed out the charter for the new members that had not yet received one.

Old Business:Fall College-wide Meeting:

The fall meeting will now be on November 29, 2010 from 2:30-4pm. This change is due to changes in the Dean's schedule. We will have the room at 2:15 so we have time to set-up. Our presentations will include a short presentation on the SACD, a presentation by Bill Devlin from Human Resources, and a presentation by Dean McPheron.

Website:

Rhonda volunteered to be the contact for the website, with Mary Wodecki. Some ideas we had to get started updating are:

- Update members list and staff awards

- Anonymous submissions for staff questions

- Minutes from meetings posted online

- Departmental pictures for members list

- A link to the AdobeConnect for the College-wide meeting from the spring and for this fall

- A FAQ page once we get some questions in

Rhonda will be our connection to the website and if any new ideas or thoughts come up please share them with the group.

Meeting Times for the SACD:

Starting in December and through May our meetings will be the second Tuesday of the month at 1pm in Rm 443 FSB.

Ella Reagle Staff Award:

The Ella Reagle Staff Award committee will be Terri, Nadine, and Sara plus two other staff members. We will be receiving the information October 7th and meet to discuss the candidates.

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Spring College-wide meeting:

Try to schedule for the week after finals. Sara will find out about scheduling for this time. An idea for a speaker is Highmark due to the changes that will be occurring in our available health care.

New Business:

Website training:

Will there be official training with the new Plone system? Rhonda will look into this and get back to us.

Meeting with Bill Devlin

The Bumping Process:

The bumping process is explained in policy HR34. Each bumping process is handled confidentially on a case-by-case basis. Once an individual is laid off, they have the option of bumping another staff person based on the same job title/level, university seniority (not college seniority) and the ability to do the job or have done that job in the past. Bumping can only occur within the college. The ability to do the job is assessed by having conversations with supervisors to gain more information to make a decision. Once the bumping process starts, there is a domino effect and there is no way to know who might be at risk for being bumped. One of the questions that was raised: If you were in a research staff position with a degree or several degrees, could you bump down into a staff assistant position such as receptionist, etc. The answer was that in most cases, staff cannot bump down into lower grade level positions. It seems that if a person gets bumped, then an effort is made to find that person another position within the university.

This is a conservative, old fashioned policy and in the past has been talked about being dismissed in the policy. This year is probably going to be worse because of the budget situation. In 1992 there were 20 people laid-off, and we still have \$6 million to go for this year to recover our \$11 million short fall. Lay-offs do not usually encompass faculty, but this past year some off-track faculty were identified and laid-off. The susceptibility for staff lay-offs this past year was based on the units. Each unit had to give back 5% of their budget and some of this was people.

The university as a whole has a goal of getting 10% smaller in employees. The biggest expense in the budget goes towards people. We have lots of great support for the university, but the economy has hurt us. The university is hiring less tenure faculty and less staff. The university and the college are in a time of restructuring and reorganizing, and changes will be coming.

The timeframe for lay-offs is over by the end of summer.

Job Competencies:

The transition to the new system will be made November 1, 2010. The new system includes 19 job families that operate out of the entire Penn State University. Each job family has different job categories, and each job category has several levels, level 1 being the lowest. The people that were writing the levels actually do the job that they are describing. There are

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different ways of classifying jobs and will hopefully get easier as everyone becomes more accustomed to the new system. HR will make the family/category/level descriptions for new job positions. In 2 weeks each person will receive a letter that will have their own family/category/level in it.

In “hybrid” jobs where the staff member does the job of many different families/categories, it is the duties of the job and how the job fits into the family/category/level. The switch from SPEC to the new system was hopefully going to make the descriptions more specific, but they are still generic in the new system. The new system is not really useful in management. More will be explained after people become acquainted with the system.

Pay scales will be in salary bands and the salary bands are assigned to the levels within the job category. The salary bands were made based on external market pay scales. There is overlapping in the salary bands between levels and categories. Some employees will be under the new minimum or over the new maximum. The employees under the new minimum salary will eventually move up until they reach the new minimum salary for their position. There may be some adjusting of the salary bands as the system is introduced. The hierarchy is based on the salary bands.

There will be promotions going up levels, for example going from a Level 2 to a Level 3. In order to promote a position, there has to be a business need to justify promoting the position, i.e. from Level 2 to Level 3. Bill is not sure what the promotion increases will be under the new system. In the past the promotion raises were 6-8% but he isn't sure we can continue to offer those same percentages whenever salary increases are around 3%. These promotions will be within the new salary bands. It will be confusing for a while to know when a person applies for a position whether it will be a promotion or not. This will hopefully get less confusing as people learn the system.

There will be an appeal process occurring in November if a person doesn't agree with their job family/category/level. Each position was reviewed 3 times by HR and 2 times by the unit leader.

The ACTS Program:

The ACTS program (Administrative Coordinator Technical Supervisory Program) is currently expected to continue, however, Bill could not guarantee what the future holds for the program based on future budget constraints. It has been opened up to fixed term staff, but there needs to be funding coming from somewhere. With any position though there needs to be a position available for them to be promoted to.

Meeting with the Dean

We will be meeting with the Dean on Monday October 11, 2010 at 12:30 in room 443 FSB. The questions we have are:
In relation to the budget:

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How is the college going to be restructured?

Will there be centralizing of positions?

If yes, how do you see this affecting the unit?

Extension is a third of the mission of Penn State, are we meeting this goal?

How do you see the new responsibilities affecting the extension staff?

i.e. the new reporting system, teaching, more use of technology instead of human contact, etc.

When are the layoffs coming?

If the staff understand the process, then their ability to do their job will continue to be as effective, and it will not affect moral.

The meeting was closed at 2:45pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Ashcraft
Department of Entomology