

**University Staff Council
Work-Life Committee
Annual Retreat
Friday, 11 May 2012**

The Work-Life Committee met at the annual University Staff Council retreat on 11 May 2012, at Georgia State University's Brookhaven campus. Present were Travis Remington, LaTanya Frierson, Lyshandra Holmes, Kia Graves, Cheryl Johnson Ransaw, and Andy Reisinger.

As vice-chair, Andy reviewed the Work-Life Committee's mission statement as well as proposed changes to the mission. He also provided copies of the minutes from several meetings last year in order to introduce new members to past initiatives and goals, as well as on-going projects, of the committee.

Andy also reviewed the short- and long-term goals established by the committee last year.

The short-term goals included:

1. Establishing a staff listserv (task given to the Communications Committee)
2. Investigate establishing a campus no-smoking policy (told by Human Resources that this was not viable)
3. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income (ongoing; need to follow-up in light of Auxiliary Services forthcoming development plan)
4. Investigate implementing free use of the recreation center by staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income (stalled in a University Senate sub-committee)
5. Review and revise the Work-Life mission statement (ongoing)

The long-term goals included:

1. Investigate and advocate for maternity/paternity/domestic partner leave for all University employees
2. Investigate and advocate for increased, affordable on-site daycare for children of University employees

Cheryl suggested that we consider revising this year's goals in light of responses to the staff survey conducted last year. She said that maybe we could dedicate the June committee meeting to exploring this idea.

Committee members then discussed the need this year to investigate staff benefits at other University System of Georgia schools as well as at Georgia State's peer and aspirational institutions in order to gauge what benefits are available to staff at other institutions and to determine priorities regarding what initiatives we want to pursue.

Jowanna Tillman, Staff Council Chair, dropped into our meeting to inform us that the University is considering implementing a campus-wide, no-smoking policy in Fall 2012. The proposal is currently under review in Legal Affairs.

Committee members then shared their preferences for what goals we would undertake this year.

Travis made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Advocate for an official University comp time policy
2. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
3. Investigate implementing free use of the recreation center by staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
4. Work on ameliorating the bad blood between units throughout the University (i.e., in response to various challenges, a common response among staff is: “what do you expect, it’s GSU”)

Travis made the following suggestions for long-term goals:

1. Advocate for the creation of a staff lounge complete with vending machines, computers, equipment check-out, and information on various departments throughout campus

Kia made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Advocate for free or reduced-cost education for family members of University employees
2. Advocate for an official job progression program
3. Advocate for free or reduced-cost summer camps for children of University staff

Kia made the following suggestions for long-term goals:

1. Advocate for more courses available to staff through the TAP program, allow earlier registration for TAP participants, and introduce courses exclusively for University staff
2. Investigate and advocate for maternity/paternity/domestic partner leave for all University employees

Lyshandra made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
2. Advocate increasing staff discounts for campus activities (athletics, Rialto events...)

Lyshandra made the following suggestions for long-term goals:

1. Advocate for better, more varied, and healthier food options on campus

LaTanya made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Investigate implementing free use of the recreation center by staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
2. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
3. Advocate for better communications regarding the University’s flex time policy
4. Advocate for better communications regarding new policies and benefits at the University

Lyshandra made the following suggestions for long-term goals:

1. Investigate and advocate for maternity/paternity/domestic partner leave for all University employees
2. Investigate and advocate for increased, affordable on-site daycare for children of University employees

Cheryl made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Monitor and support the University's evolving no-smoking policy
2. Collaborate with the Communications Committee on publicizing new policies and developments at the University
3. Revisit the University's Wellness Flex Plan
4. Look at the Staff Survey and craft goals in response to staff concerns

Andy made the following suggestions for short-term goals:

1. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
2. Investigate implementing free use of the recreation center by staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
3. Advocate for free or reduced-cost summer camps for children of University staff
4. Finish reviewing and revising the Work-Life mission statement

Andy made the following suggestions for long-term goals:

1. Investigate and advocate for maternity/paternity/domestic partner leave for all University employees
2. Investigate and advocate for increased, affordable on-site daycare for children of University employees

With very little time remaining before the Committee had to make a presentation of short- and long-term goals to the entire Staff Council, committee members agreed to propose the following tentative goals for this year:

Short-Term:

1. Investigate implementing free use of the recreation center by staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
2. Investigate implementing free parking/transportation fees for staff, or at the least charge staff members on a sliding scale based on income
3. Advocate for free or reduced-cost summer camps for children of University staff

Long-Term:

1. Investigate and advocate for maternity/paternity/domestic partner leave for all University employees
2. Investigate and advocate for increased, affordable on-site daycare for children of University employees

Note: We were the only Staff Council committee to receive applause and enthusiastic shouts during the presentation of our short- and long-term goals.