

Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: October 8, 2013

Present: Amber Amari, Kevin Chappell, Chris Connelly, Robert Crowder, MaryAnne Gaunt, Charles Gilbreath, John Medlock, Kimberly Moore, Stephen Rosner, Susan Vogtner, Anita Webb, Michael Wyatt

The meeting was called to order by Staff Council Chair Chris Connelly.

Council meeting plans

Connelly announced that the university staff ombudsperson, Kelly Alexander, will speak at the October Staff Council meeting. The rest of the meeting will be devoted to discussing the major findings of the recent staff survey and gathering recommendations from the council as a whole.

Staff Survey discussion

John Medlock provided a summary of the Board of Officer's preliminary discussion of the survey. The BOO and the Executive Committee identified the following areas as issues of concern in the survey:

Retention:

- More than half of respondents indicated that they had seriously considered leaving the university in the previous year.
- Could we propose a performance-based staff salary adjustment model that would supplement the regular merit raise process? In related discussions, we would need to be sensitive to ongoing discussions about raises at the state level.
- How would we measure high performance? How would we ensure that comparable standards were applied across the university? Where would the funding come from for such a program?
- Staff in positions between 4 and 9 years are significantly more likely to have considered leaving. Is this a natural consequence of staff gaining degrees/experience and then being able to pursue their ideal career path? What are our options here?
- How can we use the current exit interview to provide additional information about why staff leave the university.

Mentoring:

- Only a quarter of those responding indicated that they had been mentored.
- We should use the information about what mentoring activities were used to identify areas of need at the university in this area. What efforts are underway already? What best practices can be borrowed from our aspirational institutions?

Supervisor skills:

- Issues relating to communication and dealing with performance issues were identified in the survey.
- Could we develop better methods of evaluating the performance of managers (and provide coherent programs for addressing areas of need), possibly including a 360 degree evaluation process?
- Providing monetary (or other) incentives for high performance, as described above, could help address the performance inequity issue to some degree. It could also exacerbate the problem if only limited funds are available for this and they are not distributed appropriately (or at least there is that perception).
- The upper-administration response to the survey and our recommendations could go far in helping folks feel that they have opportunities to effect change at higher levels. When recommendations are acted on or any outcome occurs that is connected in some way to the survey, we need to make sure that staff know about it.

Building on positives:

- We should highlight positive findings as well and encourage support for continuing and expanding aspects of GSU work life that employees find most favorable.
- We have a well-educated staff, which might lend support for the TAP program and staff scholarship.
- Staff have close relationships with colleagues, so what can we recommend to enhance such connections?

Future of the survey:

One of the recommendations should be to continue the survey every two years beyond the pilot period, which ends this year. We should also note that future surveys may benefit from having cross-institutional comparisons since several other USG schools would like to implement the same survey for their staffs. Being able to make system-level claims about the impact of climate on retention, etc. could give our government relations staff new tools when working with state officials.

Survey format and further recommendations:

The group recommended re-ordering the Executive Summary of the survey to emphasize areas of concern first. Medlock indicated that he would edit the existing summary and post on Basecamp for further suggestions. The committee agreed to continue the formation of recommendations online and in the full council meeting.

The chair closed the meeting.