

Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

January 7, 2019

Guest Speaker: Brian Hutchinson, Director of Athletics

Mr. Hutchinson presented a slide show detailing the Athletics program, including:

- MSU sponsors sixteen intercollegiate athletics teams. Fourteen is the minimum number of teams required for Division I standing. While the cheer programs are not counted in this number, both cheer teams are managed within the Athletics department.
- MSU currently has roughly 300 student athletes, plus 70-75 cheerleaders.
- MSU belongs to the Ohio Valley Conference, with the exception of participation in OVC football.
- In the mid-1990's, football scholarships were discontinued and MSU eventually joined the Pioneer Football League, which currently has 10 member schools. MSU is the only Division I institution with a non-scholarship football team in the country.
- Funding for athletics primarily comes from institutional investment. Additional funding comes from ticket sales, corporate sponsorship, game-guarantees, NCAA and OVC distribution, and ESPN.
- Expenditures for 2017-18 totaled \$9.3 million, down \$188,000 over the last two years.

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Guest Speaker, Continued:

- Direct institutional investment was \$7.4 million and Athletics contributions to the budget were \$1.5 million.
- MSU spending for Athletics is in the bottom tier compared to other schools in the OVC.
- Aid to student athletes totals \$3.2 million. Student athlete expenditures to the University total \$3.1 million. Hutchinson points to the \$100,000 as the total investiture of the University to student athlete aid money.
- Two years ago, MSU hired a Title IX consultant group to evaluate compliance to Title IX requirements for gender equity, which found MSU to be compliant with only Prong 2 of those requirements.
- The cumulative GPA for the last year is 3.143. 65% of our student athletes graduate, versus 42% of the general student body graduation rate.
- 916 academic honors were awarded to student athletes in the last four years.
- Being a Division I school, MSU can attract a wider audience. Nearly 100,000 people have attended athletic events in the last year. After the win over U of L in the 2011 NCAA tournament game, there was a 3,000 spike in applications to MSU.
- Athletics plays an important role in diversity initiatives on campus.
- Challenges include funding, facility maintenance, limited staff, and finding new revenue streams.

Q and A:

Representative Pace: What should we know about the athletics budget to dispel any misunderstandings or errors?

BH: Athletics strives to exist within the benchmarks of Division I, not just within MSU, the institution. Most of the athletic budget is tied up in fixed costs, personnel, and travel.

Representative Fletcher: Why do we need to stay in the Pioneer Football League instead of being independent?

BH: A conference schedule guarantees you 8 games, with 3 non-conference games. No games would be guaranteed as an independent team.

Chair Report: Clarissa Purnell

- President Morgan will host a constituency reception for members of SGA, the Faculty Senate, and the Staff Congress on Monday, February 4, 2019 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Caudill Heritage Room of ADUC.
- Revisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Staff Congress have been sent to the Office of the President and will go before the Board of Regents for approval during the spring semester.
- The state's university presidents did not agree to a discounted tuition rate between institutions, as previously discussed. Full tuition rates will apply to employees taking classes at other state institutions beginning in summer 2019.
- Revisions to PG-22, regarding the employment of relatives at MSU, have been proposed. Staff Congress representatives have viewed the changes and should give any feedback to Chair Purnell before the end of January.
- If the Staff Congress wants to continue discussions about tuition waivers and fees, President Morgan prefers that all benefits be reviewed comprehensively and that the Benefits and Compensation Committee use these specific benchmark institutions to make the comparison: Eastern Kentucky University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, Tennessee Tech, and Jacksonville State in Alabama. If there are benefits MSU employees want to make a case for receiving, President Morgan would also have to look at decreasing other benefits.

Vice-Chair Report: Lora Pace

Vice-Chair reported the Staff Congress webpage has been updated.

The following Staff Salute submissions and presented the Staff Salute certificate to Cory Clark, Minority Academic Services Coordinator. Vicky Cooper was unable to attend the meeting to receive her certificate.

Staff Salutes:



Cory Clark– *Cory has done an amazing job fostering community among our minority students for several years. He has worked with reduced resources and last year had a 78% retention rate among minority students at MSU. That is amazing and should be recognized. Cory is among the best resources that we have at MSU and should be recognized for it. – submitted 12/11/2018*

Vicky Cooper– *Vicky is the behind the scenes person in our office. She is the person who consistently volunteers to help others within the department and the community to do their jobs. Whenever, she is asked she pleasantly responds, yes, I am glad to help. She goes out of her way to help others within and outside of the department. She is a great ambassador for MSU in the community. However, she never wants to take credit or be recognized. We want to recognize her for an outstanding job. – submitted 12/3/2018*

Benefits & Compensation:

***Committee Chair Savard-Hogge** reported the committee's four goals for the year:

- 1) Review MSU policies.
- 2) Work with HR to understand process for staff promotion and reclassification.
- 3) Work with HR to create an environment of consistency on campus.
- 4) Discuss healthcare options and work toward recommendations as a Staff Congress.

Credentials & Elections:

***Committee Chair Lynam** reported:

- The changes to the Staff Congress bylaws and constitution have been completed.
- The plan for redistricting the Staff Congress representative areas have been finalized.
- The Staff Congress constituency list is continually updated.
- The Service Award standing committee needs three new members.
- The Credentials and Elections committee will begin preparations for elections in April.

Sustainability Report:

***Representative Niehoff** reported the committee will meet on January 22 in the Educational Services Building.

- The RecycleMania competition begins February 3 and runs through March 29. The program promotes waste reduction activities on college campuses.
- April 19 is Earth Day. If anyone from the MSU community would like to participate in the planning, contact Holly Niehoff.
- Representative Niehoff wrote a grant for a solar charging table for outside of ADUC that will work for laptops and phones.

Staff Issues:

*The following staff concerns were submitted since the December 2018 meeting:

****CONCERN (submitted 12/4/2018)****

Has anything been addressed about the continuing fees for staff in regards to attending classes? I noticed they are still there and according to one of the previous meetings this was supposed to be up for discussion?

RESPONSE (Chair Purnell):

I have had conversations with President Morgan as recently as January 2, 2019 about the fees being assessed to employees using the tuition waiver. Instead of looking at individual benefits as we have been with the tuition waiver, Dr. Morgan feels that a better discussion would be regarding a comparison of all campus-

wide benefits at MSU against similar institutions. Dr. Morgan's proposal of an all-encompassing benefit review has been referred to the Benefits and Compensation committee to discuss at their January 9 meeting, with a report to be submitted to Staff Congress during the February meeting.

****CONCERN (submitted by 12/5/2018)****

Can anything be done about employees diffusing essential oils in their offices across campus? There are many employees and students who have allergies, skin sensitivities, and chronic health conditions that cannot tolerate these 'all natural' scents.

In many instances, there may be more than one person diffusing a different oil causing a plethora of scents to combine, most often than not, into a foul odor that is dispersed throughout the building. I know employees should have the freedom to diffuse, but other employees have the right to not have their health adversely affected by the practice of diffusing essential oils prevent the oils from getting into the duct work within the building.

RESPONSE (from Kim Oatman and Harold Nally):

Kim Oatman: Harold may know of some policies that could apply indirectly, but I am not aware of any. I would tend to think we could deal with each of these types of concerns on a case by case basis...kind of like I did for the last one we had in your building. I think me talking to the person with the problem causing odor resolved the issue...did you ever hear anything else on that complaint? I would like to hear from Harold before we issue a formal response. Thanks, KHO

Harold Nally: I reviewed MSU's policies and did not find anything that specifically addressed this employee's concerns. I am in agreement with Kim Oatman that issues of this nature can be addressed on a case by case basis and if this employee is comfortable coming forward we may be able to address this issue.

****CONCERN (submitted 12/12/2018)****

In the last Board of Regents meeting book, it says that two staff members were given supplemental pay to teach. I wonder how these two received compensation to teach when all other staff are teaching as part of their regular duties for no extra compensation.

RESPONSE (from President Morgan):

I have done a little more checking on the two staff members that were paid to teach adjunct rates last fall while others were fractionalized. I think we have put some steps into place to watch it a little closer this spring. As you know, the concept of fractionalized staff is in our Strategic Plan, and many people across campus are contributing to the initiative to keep us running well. I, too, am joining the ranks of fractionalized staff and teaching a graduate course this spring. Thanks and let me know if other questions.

****CONCERN (submitted by 12/12/2018)****

I know this may seem like a trivial complaint but I would like to see the staff salutes page be updated each month. I feel like staff salutes are one way to celebrate those who go above and beyond and should be recognized not just in the staff congress letter but on the staff salute page as well. This is one way that we as a university can increase the morale of our university by recognizing our excellent staff.

Supervisors... recognize your staff when they do something awesome. None of us are getting raises but it would be nice to be recognized for our hard work in ways other than gaining more job responsibilities! I must also mention that there are some really amazing people on this campus that haven't been recognized but definitely deserve a pat on the back.

RESPONSE (from Harold Nally):

We began the practice of taking pictures and recognizing Staff Salute recipients during our June 2018 meeting. When we publish the newsletter each month, we ensure all salutes and accompanying pictures are included in the monthly publication.

The Staff Salutes page has been updated with the exception of photographs for December 2018. The .jpeg files submitted were of insufficient quality to upload to the web. We will continue in our effort to find better .jpeg files of the December 2018 salutes to submit to COMA to upload.

Vice-Chair Pace will submit information after each meeting to COMA to ensure our Staff Salute website is updated regularly.

Other Reports

Staff Regent Report: No report.

Faculty Senate Report:

****Dr. Sue Tallichet*** reported the Faculty Senate will meet January 17 to vote on constitution and bylaws changes. Work on general education continues. Dr. Tallichet suggests the Faculty Senate should work with the Staff Congress on any benefits review work.

Human Resources Report: Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

****Harold Nally*** shared the following announcements:

- The Weight Watchers kickoff event will be Wednesday, January 16 at 11:45 a.m. with regular meetings and weigh-ins to occur each Wednesday of the series.
- The first meeting of the Freedom From Smoking class will be Wednesday, January 23 in the CHER Building, Room 102 at 5:00 p.m. Participants must complete all classes and receive certification to have their smoking surcharge ended.
- 1095C and W2 tax documents will be available in WebAdvisor.
- MSU purchased 150 licenses for web-based staff development.

Cabinet Report: Dr. Caroline Atkins

****Dr. Caroline Atkins*** encouraged employees to remember to support students returning for the spring semester as much as possible and keep up work with retention.

The first meeting of the diversity plan work group is January 29th.

MSU has been asked to host a Tri-State Diversity Conference on September 27, 2019 in ADUC. It will be open to all who want to attend.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Wednesday, January 9: Convocation, division, college, and department meetings will take place.
- Friday, January 11: Winter session grades are due in the Registrar's office.
- Monday, January 14: Spring 2019 term classes begin.
- Monday, January 21: The University will close in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- Tuesday, January 22: The last day for students to protect their class schedule by making a payment plan and accepting the financial responsibility agreement.
- Monday, February 4: The next Staff Congress meeting will be in ADUC 326 at 1:00 p.m.
- Don't forget to check www.msueagles.com for upcoming MSU athletic events.

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