

Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

Meeting Date: May 4, 2020

President's Report:

President Morgan reported:

- Student refunds are finishing up. Direct deposits and checks went out.
- Craft Academy will possibly host their graduation virtually.
- Work teams were created for Return to Work for phased reopening in late May. The Staff Congress Chair, Faculty Senate Chair, and SGA President each serve on a team.
 - Focus on what each individual area needs for a limited reopening – how to phase back employees in three to four weeks. Also focused on Fall semester from an instructional environment and student services environment.
- New hires only where necessary.
- Received noticed of state appropriation pullback of 1% in the current fiscal year (approximately \$400,000).
 - To get through Spring Break to June 30, 2020, administration worked with budget units' managers across campus to pull funds back into the Central Fund. Still need to identify funds to cover the 1% pullback from Frankfort.

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- Over the next two to three weeks, they will pool more money to offset anticipated losses in the first quarter of next fiscal year (July to September 2020).
 - Anticipate sizeable State Budget pullback.
- CARES funds will be drawn down and sent to students or used institutionally.
- Currently have a budget deficit next fiscal year. The deficit could increase if we cannot open for Fall Semester or have to close mid-semester.

Chair Savard-Hogge read questions submitted by Representatives and the campus community:

- Question from Chair Savard Hogge: You previously made a tentative commitment to preserving current Full-time positions. At what point would that commitment come under pressure and who would be involved in the decision-making process?
 - Dr. Morgan responded he sees Fall semester as a potential pressure point, particularly if we cannot open. For example, if we could not house students in residence halls or had to close them mid-semester, that would create a major shortfall. The other pressure point is a State budget shortfall. How much of the State appropriation will they want back? MSU is budgeting for 2-3%. Third, residence hall occupancy is running behind schedule on occupants. Typically, residence halls open in Fall semester with about 2,800 total occupants, and currently is around 2,000 to 2,300. Finally, a significant unknown is what Fall student population will look like. There are funds to mitigate some of these pressure points, but if MSU were hit from two or three sides, there could come a point where not all Full-time positions could be held. Presently, new hiring has ceased, which may mean moving employees to other positions. Priority was placed on covering courses for the Fall semester. President Morgan stated they are trying to avoid a furlough, but we may not be immune to it.
- Question from Representative: Are there numbers regarding the number of staff that will be utilized to teach in the Fall semester? Is that one of the teams you put together?

- President Morgan responded that faculty hiring has been slowed down. Running reports every couple of days on courses not presently covered by existing faculty. They have a good idea of what needs covered in the Fall for sophomore to senior level courses. At this point, they do not have SOAR numbers since those were moved online or moved to May or June. Typically, the freshmen set their course schedules at a SOAR session, so needs for freshman-level courses are unclear. They anticipate incoming freshman class will be down 100 to 200 students. The Academic Workgroup will discuss how to cover these courses. The number of staff needed to cover courses cannot be determined until they have a better idea of the number of uncovered classes.
- Question from Chair Savard-Hogge: Will Faculty Senate and Staff Congress be involved in those determinations to ensure credentialing is effective, to see that issues from the first round of fractionalizing staff have been resolved, and make sure that the transition for staff teaching is adequate with instructional design and they have the resources they need?
 - President Morgan responded that Faculty Senate and Staff Congress would not be involved to discuss specific individuals, as those discussions would occur with the supervisor and employee. They would be involved in general discussions regarding policies and procedures.
- Question from Chair Savard-Hogge: Will staff be paid a supplemental stipend?
 - President Morgan responded they are looking at putting a pool of funds into the budget to compensate the staff member, but this is not final yet.
- Question from a Representative: What student enrollment numbers are most concerning and what efforts can Staff congress be part of to help out?
 - President Morgan responded summer undergraduate enrollment is down, but not alarming. For Fall semester, estimates for incoming freshman are about 1,100-1,125. Usually, the incoming freshman class is 1,285-1,400. Staff may help by making phone calls to incoming students, prospective students, existing students, or parents. Anyone interested should contact Enrollment Services, Office of Retention, or the Graduate School. This will be ongoing throughout the summer.

- Residence halls likely won't be filled to their normal capacity.
- Graduate enrollment numbers are lagging. The College of Education Graduate student tuition has been lowered to be more competitive within other online providers.
- Question from a Representative: Have furloughs been considered?
 - President Morgan responded that yes, there have been limited discussions regarding furloughs. They are saving discussions until more is known about the Fall semester enrollment numbers and return to campus. Furloughs would be a next-to-last resort.
- Question from Chair Savard-Hogge: Who is involved with discussions regarding furloughs?
 - President Morgan responded that the discussions have been with the Vice Presidents.
- Question from Chair Savard-Hogge: What aspect of our current state is most concerning as MSU's President?
 - President Morgan responded he is most concerned with a State budget pullback and pension costs.

President Morgan closed his report by stating that no decisions would be made regarding furloughs or layoffs until they have more clarity on Fall semester numbers and that Staff Congress and Faculty Senate would be involved in those discussions.

Chair Report: Shana Savard-Hogge

Chair Savard-Hogge reported:

- Discussed with Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources, items presented at April Staff Congress meeting regarding Work From Home staff concerns.
- April 16: Attended Board of Regents virtual meeting.

- April 17: Staff Congress Executive Council met with President Morgan and discussed items regarding the remote work environment including supervisor communication and lack of business operations schedules. They discussed the fiscal outlook for this fiscal year end and the Fall semester. President Morgan indicated that he is committed to preserve current Full-Time positions which may require some movement.
- April 22: Constituency Leadership meeting. Called a meeting with Staff Congress Vice Chair Rucker, Staff Regent Dennis, Faculty Senate President Lennex, President Elect Grupe, and Faculty Regent Adams. Discussed the April 13, 2020 Campus Update and items of interest for staff and faculty specifically:
 - revenue from enrollment projections
 - shifting faculty and/or staff into instructional positions
 - Instructional support for faculty/ staff.

The Constituency Leadership has requested a meeting with Provost Albert, Dr. Greg Russell, and Vice President Mary Fister-Tucker to address these items. Tentatively asked to meet the week of May 25.

- The Supervisor Evaluation Committee met twice in April. The committee has currently drafted a tentative supervisor evaluation tool. The committee is refining two items before they continue with the draft. These items include:
 - Should the evaluation be on a separate form or should it be combined with the current staff evaluation form?
 - Should the supervisor evaluation be anonymous or collaborative in nature?
- The Hybrid Staff Evaluation Committee is drafting final recommendations to present to Provost Albert. Chair Savard-Hogge's section of the draft final recommendations include three hybrid instruction criteria gathered from HR records. Chair Savard-Hogge submitted 5 recommendations to the committee for review:
 - These criteria are utilized in future instructional assignments.
 - These criteria will be compared against ERP system data to determine adherence to standard definitions.
 - When changes occur to instructional assignments in the future, compensation criteria will be maintained.
 - Supplemental assignments should be temporary in nature. If a supplemental assignment persists, evaluation of instructional void should occur.
 - Master list be maintained by the Provost Office. All departments involved in data collection or dissemination have the ability to access information.

- The Student Employment Workgroup has finalized student job descriptions and Dr. Atkins is preparing a plan for next steps.
- The University Benefits Standing Committee has not met and is working with HR and Budgets to obtain data requested in the April meeting.
- April 28: Met with President Morgan and Dr. Lennex. President Morgan gave a budget update and discussed the April 13, 2020 Campus Update. They asked that President Morgan address each constituency group regarding the budget and be available for questions. President Morgan agreed to attend the Staff Congress May 4 meeting and the Faculty Senate May 7 meeting.
- Met with Staff Congress Executive Council to prepare for May meeting.
- May 6: Will attend meeting regarding Phased Reopening Plan. Staff Congress EC has already begun discussions on items regarding staff.
- As work plans for summer and Fall 2020 are being developed:
 - The three categories of employees should be reassessed (as needed) and communicated to staff:
 - Category I: Employees Needed for Emergency or Critical Services
 - Category II: Essential Employees
 - Category III: All Other Employees
 - Directors will maintain list of employees in each category
 - Employees should be given the ability to telecommute as appropriate.
 - Supervisors should determine who will return to campus with justification.
 - Supervisors should document when employees will be on campus and make accommodations for social distancing.
 - Supervisors should document availability of masks for employees and resolve employees' issues with access.
 - Supervisors should clearly communicate schedules to align work and prevent overtime due to asynchronous schedules.

Representative Thompson asked how would a supervisor justify bringing an employee back to campus if the job can be done remotely? Chair Savard-Hogge responded that Executive Council has discussed this and would like to see that supervisors justify why someone is asked to return to campus during the phased re-opening. The first priority for Staff Congress is that staff are appropriately protected in regard to their health and to make sure social distancing guidelines can be maintained.

Vice-Chair Report: Laura Rucker

Vice Chair Rucker reported the following Staff Salute submissions were made since the April 2020 meeting.

Staff Salutes:

David Flora, Xavier Scott, Jing Zhang – “During this healthy at home period, the Instructional Design team has worked to mobilize all face to face course to online. They have also supported faculty and students who are attempting to transition to this format. They have worked continuously and have been a great resource during this time.” – Submitted April 24, 2020

Omer Rhoton – “Omer is one of the most helpful staff members in IT! He has worked tirelessly with me to help me with technology issues in the transition to working from home. He's been patient, professional, and adept to working with various operating platforms and gone above and beyond to provide great customer service!” – Submitted April 24, 2020

Shana Savard-Hogge – “Shana has provided an outstanding ability to juggle not only her primary role as an employee, but as a listening ear and valuable resource in pointing employees in the right direction. The work she does behind the scenes is not unnoticed and she should be applauded for it.” – Submitted April 24, 2020

Benefits & Compensation:

***Committee Chair Holbrook** reported the following:

- The Staff Congress Benefits and Compensation Committee is reviewing possible questions for the supervisor survey.
- The Staff Congress Benefits and Compensation Committee is waiting on information requested from Human Resources.

Credentials & Elections:

***Committee Chair Surmont** reported the following:

- All nineteen seats were filled during the election:

Elected Representative	Area	Term Length
Shana Savard- Hogge	1	1 Year
Barbara Willoughby	1	1 Year
Becky King	1	3 Years
Sharnetta Fritts	1	3 Years

Holly Niehoff	2	1 Year
Xavier Scott	2	3 Years
Traci Webster	2	3 Years
Carry Harris	3	1 Year
Amanda Holbrook	3	1 Year
Gary Cornett	3	3 Years
Toni Hobbs	3	3 Years
Becky Scott	4	1 Year
Garrick Ratliff	4	1 Year
Paige McDaniel	4	3 Years
Andrea Stone	4	3 Years
Mark Murphy	5	1 Year
Maurice Savard	5	2 Years
Samantha Bryant	5	3 Years
Helisha Tuerk	5	3 Years

- July 1: new terms begin
- June 1: new member orientation

Staff Issues:

***Committee Chair Becky Scott** reported the following concerns:

****CONCERN submitted 4/13/2020**

“Is everyone (all staff) required to keep a daily journal during the "working from home" plan? There are some supervisors asking their staff to keep a daily journal and recently just found out that humanities are not requiring their staff. Can you clarify this please? Thank you for your time during this pandemic.”

RESPONSE from Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

“All employees may not be asked to keep a daily journal. A supervisor’s request to an employee to keep a daily journal is solely their decision to put into practice.”

****CONCERN submitted 4/20/2020**

“Regarding the College of Education tuition decrease to undergraduate rate, can dependents use the employee tuition dependent waiver for graduate courses since the tuition is now at the undergraduate level?”

RESPONSE from Teresa Lindgren, Interim Chief Financial Officer

“No. The MSU Employee Tuition Waiver has not been revised to include graduate courses for dependents of MSU employees.”

Other concerns received in April have not received a response.

The Staff Concerns Committee met and discussed potential updates to the Staff Concerns form:

- Form remains anonymous.
- No changes to the intention of the form.

- Gives Staff Congress more information to know if there are recurrent issues or if attempts were made to reach out to someone else, with no response.
- Clarify that concern should refrain from using employee names.
- Drop-down with general topic of concern. This will pull up contact information for that area, in case the employee did not know who to contact within that department.
- Three “Yes” or “No” questions. The response will not prevent the employee from submitting the concern. It is just to give the committee more information and identify areas where there may be breakdowns in communication.
 - Has the employee tried to contact anybody in that office?
 - Has the employee asked a supervisor?
 - Has the employee tried to reach out to a Staff Congress Representative?

Other Reports

Sustainability Report:

No Report.

Staff Regent Report:

No Report.

Faculty Senate Report:

* *Faculty Senate President Lennex* reported Faculty Senate has been dealing with pedagogical issues pivoting from face-to-face instruction to online teaching. Faculty Senate would like to add complimentary materials to the current online instruction materials. Send tips, tricks, and techniques to Faculty Senate President Lennex.

Human Resources Report:

No Report.

Cabinet Report:

* *Dr. Caroline Atkins, Cabinet Liaison*, reported that she finished summarizing recommendations for student employment. Sub-committee is recommending development of a one-stop shop for student employment through Career Services, to ensure students are placed in an equitable manner and placements are based on the academic discipline for their future career choice.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- MSU continues to remain open with limited staffing to serve students but is closed to the general public until further notice. Most campus events have been cancelled or postponed. Cancellations and closures are posted at <https://www.moreheadstate.edu/News/2020/March/MSU-Cancellations>
- Check <https://www.moreheadstate.edu/coronavirus> for updates on campus changes related to the Coronavirus.
- The MSU Farm Greenhouse is open, by appointment and curbside pickup, for purchasing flowers and vegetables. The link is available on Facebook.
- Monday, June 1 – Next Staff Congress Meeting in ADUC 329 (if social distancing recommendations are still in place through this date, the meeting will be moved to WebEx).

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