

Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

Meeting Date: June 1, 2020

President's Report:

President Morgan reported:

- The Fall Academic Calendar is in development. Provost Albert recently sent an email with two options. Comments and concerns should be sent to Provost Albert, Dr. Greg Russell, or President Morgan. Calendar will be announced next week.
- A Frequently Asked Questions page is forthcoming.
 - Geared toward students.
 - Email to students around June 8.
 - Will include the schedule for re-opening in the fall.
- Preparation for Fall semester includes installing plexiglass barriers, cleaning, and establishing pathways in buildings.
- President Morgan asked that questions be sent to Chair Savard-Hogge, who will aggregate them.

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Healthy at Work Officer Report: Goldie Williams, Director of Counseling & Health Services

Chair Savard-Hogge introduced Goldie Williams, Director of Counseling and Health Services. Ms. Williams is also the Healthy at Work Officer for Morehead State University. The Healthy at Work Officer is the point of contact for governmental and health agencies. Ms. Williams will coordinate information between external agencies and MSU. She was invited to speak to Staff Congress to present information to manage anxiety and promote a healthy work-life balance as we return to campus.

During her presentation Ms. Williams:

- Encouraged Representatives to remind staff to take care of themselves.
- Discussed her experience with closures and encouraged everyone to reflect on what appointments they missed during the closure (such as annual check-ups) and reschedule those.
- Encouraged everyone to do research and learn about Covid-19, be part of the plan for return, and advocate for ideas.
- As Healthy at Work Officer and Director of Counseling & Health Services, Ms. Williams receives a daily report from the Governor and stays up-to-date on CDC guidelines and information.
- From a mental health perspective, it is important for supervisors to listen to employees and repeat back what they said to help decrease their anxiety. Employees need to feel they are heard during times of high anxiety.
- Encouraged employees to act as a community. Understand and respect that everyone's experience is different. MSU has two months to work out our processes and communicate them to students. We can only do this if we work together, be part of the process, and be part of the solution.
- Reviewed steps to minimize risk of exposure or exposing others:
 - Wear a mask
 - Wash hands frequently
 - Clean your workspace
 - Stay home if you feel sick
 - Social distancing- keep 6 feet apart

- The Clinic is open Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm for student appointments. They are accepting up to eight student appointments per day for medical services and two per day for counseling. They are available by phone from 9am to 4:30pm.

Chair Savard-Hogge responded that during the phased return to campus for June, the buildings are still going to be accessible by appointment only. Each area will be using this time to implement their plans and make adjustments accordingly. Do your part to maintain a Healthy at Work environment by wearing a mask, washing your hands, practicing social distancing guidelines, and keeping your work area clean. Take care of staff around you by reaching out. There are going to be frustrations as we progress through our phased return to campus; remember to stay grounded in the present and be patient with yourself and those around you.

Chair Report: Shana Savard-Hogge

Chair Savard-Hogge reported:

- The majority of May was devoted to understanding the University's response to the remote work environment, relaying questions/comments/concerns to administration, and working with Staff Congress Executive Council to find ways to best communicate and advocate for staff. There have been many email and WebEx meetings over the last several weeks to try to address questions and concerns from MSU staff in regards to remote work and phased return to campus. The phased return to campus response, which is centralized at the Office of the President, has been informed by discussions had by Staff Congress; Staff Congress Executive Council; and through questions, comments, and conversations voiced by our constituency.
- Work will continue in June to further prepare for phased reopening. Chair Savard-Hogge encouraged patience and communication during this process. Please do your part to maintain a Healthy at Work environment by wearing a mask, washing your hands, practicing social distancing guidelines, and keeping your work area clean.
- The Constituency Leadership continues to request a meeting with Provost Albert, Dr. Greg Russell, and Vice President Mary Fister-Tucker. The group has submitted a list of questions including budget updates, need for Summer and Fall instructional delivery training, and identification of staff who will be teaching.
- The Supervisor Evaluation Committee did not meet in May. The committee continues to work refining items individually.
- The Hybrid Staff Evaluation Committee continues to draft the final recommendations to present to Provost Albert. The draft will be completed soon with the finalization of all interview data points.

- Dr. Atkins has put together a document of Recommendations and Challenges for the Student Employment workgroup. This will be used to begin the refinement of the student employment process to continue to provide meaningful opportunities for students to get work experience and have money to support their education with less of an administrative burden.
- The University Benefits Standing Committee has been meeting via email. Committee Chair Kessinger is working with HR and Budgets to obtain data requested in past meetings.
- There are several work teams that were created to prepare for the Phased Reopening of Campus. President Morgan has indicated that the Staff Congress Chair would be put on one of the work teams. Chair Savard-Hogge served on the team led by Vice President Mary Fister-Tucker. This team worked on the phased return to campus for the fiscal services area. Each team took into account considerations for their area, function, and continued health precautions. The overarching response for the University was centralized through the Office of the President. The work team for fiscal services met on May 6 and May 29.
- Met with Staff Congress Executive Council to prepare for the June meeting.

Vice-Chair Report: Laura Rucker

Vice Chair Rucker reminded Representatives this would be the last meeting of the fiscal year and welcomed new members in attendance.

Vice Chair Rucker thanked outgoing members for their service. Certificates are typically distributed during the meeting but will be sent through campus mail. Outgoing members are:

- Tosha Binion
- Maria Lind David
- Merrell Harrison
- Michael Watts
- Gregory Wilcox

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

Staff Salutes:

Josh Hardymon – “From the moment the university went on lockdown for COVID-19 Josh took charge of making sure that the Craft Academy staff was able to work from home by setting all staff up and creating training videos for us to follow and learn how to work virtually. He was also a major part of setting up the virtual graduation of our Craft Academy students. He is a perfect example of the meaning “going beyond the call of duty”. – Submitted May 11, 2020

Sunshine Stamper – “Sunshine has been instrumental in keeping all Craft Academy staff, as well as parents and students, organized and informed of everything that is going at Craft through this pandemic crisis. She has been the leader with setting up our Craft Academy graduation by writing the script for everyone

involved and making sure speakers and presenters were informed about their part in our graduation. Sunshine is truly one-in-a-million and an asset to the Craft Academy and MSU.” – Submitted May 11, 2020

Tom Wornall – *“I reached out for help with a specific issue and Tom was extremely helpful! He was quick to respond to my questions (via email) . Thank you Tom so much for your hard work and helping me to figure out the issue! You are an MSU rockstar!”* – Submitted May 19, 2020

Barbara Ward – *“Barb has always played an essential role here in the clinic. She is always willing to step in to help with whatever, is well-liked among staff across the university, and has been essential in maintaining a necessary standard of cleanliness here at the clinic, especially during COVID-19. Barb is a jack-of-all-trades and is one of the most appreciated employees here that deserves much more recognition. Thank you Barbie for all that you do!”* – Submitted May 28, 2020

Julia Dahmane – *“Julia is a very hard-working employee. She is currently our longest-running counselor in the clinic and has proven herself to be quite the resource among students. She is always willing to step-up and pitch in when need be as well as assist in staff training when necessary. Julia is an incredible person and I’m so proud to call her a coworker. Thanks Jules!”* – Submitted May 28, 2020

Max Ammons – *“Max is quite the force to be reckoned with on campus and has proven himself well-deserving of his position as Dean of Students. Max is always willing to assist when need be, but does so by teaching how to resolve the issue vs. just solving it himself. He has also served as Interim Director for the campus clinic up until January of 2020. Max works hard (sometimes a bit too hard), and deserves more recognition for what all he steps up to do at this University. Thanks Max!”* – Submitted May 28, 2020

Benefits & Compensation:

No Report. Waiting on information requested in March.

Credentials & Elections:

***Committee Chair Surmont** reported Staff Congress officer elections will be held at a special session a couple of weeks before the July Staff Congress meeting. Nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, or Secretary should be sent to Committee Chair Surmont. Representatives must have one year experience on Staff Congress to hold an Officer position.

Staff Issues:

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

****CONCERN submitted 5/19/2020**

“I would like to be refunded for the amount that I have been paying for parking and for the Rec Center since we have been unable to use either.”

RESPONSE from Teresa Lindgren, Interim Chief Financial Officer

“Parking Permit:

Although many employees are working remotely, there is still a need for employees to return to campus periodically for work obligations. Additionally, certain job functions cannot be performed remotely and require employees to continue to work on campus (i.e. operation & maintenance of facilities, logistical services, and other core business operations). Given that not all employees are in remote work status, MSU will not be issuing a refund or suspending payroll deductions for purchase of 2019-20 employee parking permits.

Student Recreation & Wellness Center Fee:

The \$9 per credit hour mandatory student fee generates revenue to specifically fund the annual debt service payments for a bond issued to finance construction of the Student Recreation & Wellness Center. The University is still obligated to make the debt service payments as scheduled. Therefore, the mandatory student fee for the Student Recreation & Wellness Center will not be refunded.”

****CONCERN submitted 5/11/2020**

“With the tuition freeze on graduate level courses, I decided to pick-up multiple courses for the Summer term. Upon using the employee tuition waiver, I was informed that I could not apply it to 800-level courses and that it would only be applied to 600 level. This was very disappointing news to hear. Is it possible to grant employees choice in what credits are covered by the tuition waiver?”

RESPONSE from Teresa Lindgren, Interim Chief Financial Officer

“The MSU employee tuition waiver will continue to apply to a maximum of six (6) credit hours each academic term, not to exceed a total of eighteen (18) hours per academic year. Regular full-time MSU employees may continue to utilize the tuition waiver for their enrollment in undergraduate, graduate (600-level), or doctoral (800-level) courses. The resident graduate tuition rate for 600-level courses offered by the Volgenau College of Education was recently lowered to the resident undergraduate tuition rate. For MSU employees that enroll in multiple 600-level courses with the lower tuition rate and an 800-level course with the regular tuition rate (all within the same academic term), the employee tuition waiver will be applied in the way that benefits the employee. Therefore, in the situation described by the employee that wrote the comment/concern, the employee will be allowed to utilize the tuition waiver for the 800-level course and one of the 600-level courses for a total of 6 credit hours in the academic term.”

****CONCERN submitted 4/27/2020**

“Can HR send out an official Fiscal Year Calendar for 2020-2021? Last one they sent was in February and it was tentative. Since most everyone is working remotely, it would be help out.”

RESPONSE from Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

“We are still evaluating the Fiscal Year Calendar for 2020/21 academic year due to the Corona Virus Outbreak and do not have the final for release.”

****CONCERN submitted 5/15/2020**

“Per President Morgan's email on May 15, 2020, starting June 1, all MSU employees whether working on campus or remotely working, should be available during normal work hours 8:00am to 4:30pm M-F. Procurement office says they are only available 9:00am to 1:00pm from May 18-June 30.”

RESPONSE from Andrea Stone, Director of Procurement Services

“At least one Procurement Services employee will be available on campus from 8-4:30, 5 days per week beginning June 1. Additionally, my employees have been informed they are to work and be available when off-campus from 8-4:30 Monday through Friday. I am unsure where it is posted that we are only working 9-1 through June 30. If it is from an Out of Office message through email, the employee probably has not had a chance to update it since the President’s email came out a couple hours ago. I will send an email this afternoon (Friday) to remind them to check their Out of Office message and update accordingly. Thank you, Andrea Stone, Director of Procurement Services.”

****CONCERN submitted 5/28/2020**

“Staff Salutes - when will staff salutes be updated on the website? Just curious why this is not maintained. The people we nominate should be acknowledged not just in the newsletter but on the website too. I know this seems like a silly concern but with everything happening it would be nice to see these kept up to date.”

RESPONSE from Laura Rucker, Staff Congress Vice Chair

“Thank you for the concern. We love to recognize all of the hard work staff at MSU do. The Staff Salutes presented have been updated on the website!”

****CONCERN submitted 5/26/2020**

“For all University-wide computers (including staff laptops), do we have virus protection software? A colleague of mine downloaded an assignment file from a student, and there was possible malware downloaded. She took it to IT, and they advised that she download a free malware extraction or virus software to her work computer. Otherwise, there was nothing they could do. In my experience, free programs like that are even worse than the actual malware. We are not IT experts, so how are we suppose to know what is a safe and free malware software? This is concerning because many of us work with sensitive student data, and I do not feel like we are utilizing an appropriate software to protect against malicious cyberattacks. Any insight and information relief into this is greatly appreciated!”

RESPONSE from Chris Howes, Chief Information Officer

“The Office of Information Technology uses Microsoft Defender and Microsoft Advanced Threat Protection tools to protect against cyber threats. These cybersecurity tools are frequently updated and effective at identifying and mitigating malicious software. We strive to maintain a balance between usability and security for the technology environment. The campus community can assist by being aware of cyber threats, protecting user credentials, and avoiding email phishing schemes. Thank you for sharing this feedback. Please contact the IT Help Desk by e-mail at ithelpdesk@moreheadstate.edu or via phone at 606-783-HELP (4357) with any questions.”

****CONCERN submitted 5/26/2020**

“Vacation Accrual. If vacation time cannot be used during pandemic time, can the accrual limit be extended temporarily to allow employees to work without losing earned vacation hours? This would allow employees to work necessary hours during the limited time and use vacation hours only when the pandemic limitations have been lifted.”

RESPONSE from Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

“Human Resources is not able to answer this staff concern at this time, we will review the policy regarding vacation accrual.”

ADDITIONAL RESPONSE from Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

“This staff concern came to Human Resources somewhat close to the June 1st, Staff Congress meeting and there was not ample time to fully review. Several points need to be made regarding this concern.

- 1. To temporarily allow employees to work without losing earned vacation which would extend the cap of 30 days (225 hours maximum carry over), would require approval from the BOR.*
- 2. The Vacation Usage section of personnel policies, PG-48, states that ‘the work requirements of the University shall take priority in the scheduling of vacation or other time off. PG-48 also addresses scheduling in advance and approval by the immediate supervisor. Only days on which the employee normally would have worked are charged against accumulated vacation.*
- 3. Dr. Morgan’s March 19, 2020 memo to MSU Employees, “During this time, the following individuals have authority to determine working arrangements, schedules, and make any necessary*

staff modifications: Vice Presidents, Associate Provosts, Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans and individuals reporting directly to the President. These noted individuals have the authority to work with their units to achieve a combination of on-campus work, remote, rotating shifts flexible work arrangement, time off approval and creation of non-traditional schedules.

Closing with Dr. Morgan's previous message he requested that during this period of flexibility we would ask that employees consider using some sick and/or vacation leave if they are truly sick or are not working at all. If any employee is out of leave, please contact your Vice President. Or direct Presidential report for areas with a VP, and they can work with HR to make any determinations needed."

****Follow up on concern submitted 4/13/2020 and reported in the May Meeting Minutes**

““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.”

ORIGINAL RESPONSE from Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources as reported in the May Meeting Minutes

“Human Resources is not able to answer this staff concern at this time, we will review the policy regarding vacation accrual.”

ADDITIONAL RESPONSE from an employee

“Who do I need to respond to about the staff concern for “..humanities are not requiring their staff to keep a daily journal.” I was asked to and have been keeping one that was created by the CCAHS Dean's Office. I am attaching it right now for you to see because I want someone to verify I did not just create it when I get asked for it... Granted, later in the day I miss adding what I've done in there but I am keeping it but my electronic records will support that I am accessing e mail, taking phone calls, and a variety of other duties necessary to keep the business moving at all times of the day.”

Committee Chair Becky Scott noted that the concerns involving the daily journal and the Procurement office did not include how this information was obtained and whether the employees tried to confirm it was accurate before submitting the concerns. Employees should make sure the information they have is correct before they move forward with submitting a concern.

Other Reports

Sustainability Report:

No Report.

Staff Regent Report:

The Board of Regents meets June 18 either in-person or via WebEx (to be announced).

Faculty Senate Report:

No Report.

Human Resources Report:

No Report.

Cabinet Report:

* *Dr. Caroline Atkins, Cabinet Liaison*, reported that she may ask for Representatives to help with outreach to students who have concerns, stress, or a need.

OLD BUSINESS:
None.

NEW BUSINESS:
None.

SPECIAL SESSION:
A Special Session of Staff Congress was held on June 16 to elect officers:

- Chair: Shana Savard-Hogge
- Vice Chair: Laura Rucker
- Secretary: Risa Boyd

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.
- Drive-thru testing for Covid-19 is available through St. Claire. Visit <https://www.st-claire.org/services/covid-19-testing/> or call (606) 780-5227 to complete the pre-screening and schedule a test.
- A training video on Covid-19 for employees can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjUBNk4JWU>. It is posted on the Healthy at MSU webpage at <https://www.moreheadstate.edu/healthyatmsu> and the EH&S Training Programs webpage at <https://www.moreheadstate.edu/Administration/Facilities-Management/Environmental-Health-Safety/Safety-Training>. Questions can be sent to Holly Niehoff at h.niehoff@moreheadstate.edu.
- Monday, July 6 – Next Staff Congress Meeting, location To Be Determined (if social distancing recommendations are still in place through this date, the meeting will be moved to WebEx).

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO VIEW/REGISTER FOR THE LATEST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A STAFF SALUTE

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A STAFF CONCERN