March Meeting Minutes
March 14th, 2012
10:00-12:00 UC 332-333

Welcome & call to order: President Laurie Fisher called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll call: Carol Bates


Excused: Senators: Chuck Harris, Beki Hartmann, Slade Johnson, Becky Maier, Maria Mangold

Approval of February minutes: President Fisher presented the minutes of the February 8, 2012 meeting. Motion to approve, seconded, motion carried.

Financial Report: Financial Officer Hibbard has been unable to access UMDW for the financial reports. She will send them to the officers when available.

New Business

Review/Revisit priorities from the fall survey: Vice President Darlene Samson facilitated discussion regarding the autumn 2011 staff survey. Several issues were identified as priorities to address. Number one was the need for more communication between SS and staff. CVC is working on several initiatives that are already addressing this issue. SS logo should be on every outgoing flyer or communication.

More emails are going out from Judy Wellert, SS Administrative Associate with information impacting staff. The first SS Newsletter was published earlier in the semester with another one in the works before the end of spring 2012. Wellert also suggested submissions recognizing staff accomplishments to the campus newsletter ForUM and the Business section of the Missoulian. She did raise an ongoing concern as to the best way to contact staff, who do not have email access. Sending hard copies to supervisors to post is an option. Senator constituent lists came up again as a possibility to ensure no one is overlooked. No decisions were made.

Other ideas: More staff recognition / awards and professional development.

Cindy Bois has recently been hired as a Professional Development person in Human Resources. VP Samson will be in touch to see how SS can work with her.
Two HR Staff Compensation training sessions have been scheduled with Sheila Wright. Please encourage colleagues to attend.

All senators are encouraged to send other ideas to VP Samson.

**Spring Raffle:** Senator Rayfield reported on a raffle the CVC committee is working on to raise money for SS scholarships. Letters have gone out to vendors. Senators are asked to follow up with vendors the committee has not heard back from.

A question arose as to why the scholarship fund is not spent down further each year. VP Samson reported that if it is spent down there may not be money in the fund for the next year.

**MUSSA:** Senator Yedinak gave a brief history of MUSSA. She is part of a focus group established to gather feedback on staff issues <compensation> and re-energize the association with the BOR & OCHE. President Engstrom reported on an analysis that was done with institutions of our “size” and noted that UM has fewer staff and faculty and is 24-26% below other institutions with regard to staff salaries.

The commissioner is compiling the results of a survey that was sent out to MUS staff the end of February regarding compensation and recognition ideas. Survey results were discussed briefly at the BOR meeting.

MUSSA met together after the BOR meeting. They will write a report for submission to the BOR. All comments from senators are carried forward to the Regents.

**BOR Meeting:** President Fisher and Senator Yedinak both reported on the recent BOR meeting they attended as being a good experience. Comments:

- The BOR represent 3,000 classified staff.
- There are 15 different staff unions across the state.
- Not all classified staff are in a union.
- Wages are a priority – benefit all staff.
- Regent Pat Williams encouraged staff not to back down from salary / living wage issue.

Senator Curry suggested SS preview the agenda for the BOR fall meeting to see what might be beneficial to staff.

- Discussion – how to share facts with the BOR and not just one individual speaking for all staff

**Guest Speaker – Professor Betsy Bach:** As a result of the autumn 2011 staff survey, Professor Bach was invited to the SS meeting to discuss how we can develop an action plan from the results. She is teaching a class that may be willing to work on a project to help SS sort and prioritize the issues that arose out of the survey. She gave an informal affirmation but reminded the senate that the students’ portion of the project would need to be completed by the end of spring term. Professor Bach is willing to provide staff training beyond the scope of the student project.

**Committee Reports:**
CVC: Senator Rayfield asked for more volunteers to serve on this committee as they have a lot of responsibilities. Currently there are eight.

- Rayfield has been unsuccessful in arranging a meeting with ASUM and Faculty Senate to set up a town hall meeting. The idea has been tabled for now.
- CVC developed a half-sheet SS information piece to place in new employee packets.
- The committee has been putting together and delivering baskets to staff who have received Kudos. A special note of thanks to Senators Rayfield and Coon for their work on this project.
- Senator Coon reported the UC Theatre has offered to show a free movie for staff – sometime in the summer.

Staff Senate Scholarship: President Fisher reported there were 15 applications for scholarship money. The amount and how many to award is yet to be determined.

Campus Safety: Senator DeYoung announced there are many safety issues with people falling and with building projects but no money to rectify. “Safety can be expensive.”

Traffic Appeals: The committee is currently behind schedule with 80 appeals before them.

University Council: President Fisher reported on building projects discussed at the recent UC meeting: the Gilkey Executive Education Center; Athletic Academic Center; Art Annex; and finishing the basement of the Payne Family Native American Center.

Ongoing Business
There are currently three (3) Senate openings.

Next meeting: April 11, 2012 UC 326-327