

Minutes

Staff Advisory Group

10/28/15

Meeting began with introductions. Twenty people in attendance. Meeting moderated by Lori Dawson.

Website: www.skidmore.edu/staff-advisory-group/index.php

Idalia Sepúlveda had the website up on the screen, reviewed the features as they stand now, and invited input.

It can be found in a number of ways: there's a link through HR page and also Faculty and Staff page, and it can be found via A – Z file.

Photos: Rebecca Shepard is taking photos of staff who are willing. Objective is to raise awareness of who we are and the critical role we play on campus.

Faculty (and Staff) Interest Group: Rebecca S. reported on FIG meeting on 10/19: about 40 people in attendance – perhaps almost as many staff as faculty; clear enthusiasm from moderator Erica Bastress-Dukehart for having staff as part of the conversation. Discussion was wide-ranging conversation. Bastress-Dukehart followed up with an e-mail identifying points for discussion at the next meeting.

Jamin Totino expressed the welcome significance of this meeting as a forum where staff and faculty can work together around an issue. Erica will be sending an invitation to next meeting within a week or two.

Middle States: Lisa Christensen reviewed where the Middle States document stands now, and the importance of having input from everyone; she commented that if a proposed action / initiative makes it to the document and is approved by Middle States, it becomes a reality for Skidmore. She passed out recommendations from each chapter ending, and urged people to review those and send any comments / input to her.

Staff at Middle States meeting: Joshua W followed up by saying that he would like two staff members to attend a Middle States meeting with Dr. Janet Riggs next Tuesday from 1:15 – 1:45. No preparation necessary; this is so Middle States rep can gain information about the experience of staff on campus.

Strategic Plan: Joshua spoke about the strategic plan, he expects there will be a new draft of this by Friday 10/30. Input is invited on this document as well. There will be an open IPPC meeting on Nov 6th from 10:30 – 12 on the Strategic Plan; the topic is also on the faculty meeting agenda that same day. Strategic plan must be ratified by Board in February.

(Comparison: Middle States is looking at the past and present, and identifying problem areas; Strategic Plan is looking at future (ten years out) and includes ideals / goals.)

Shared reading proposal: Joshua also spoke about the book What If by Steven L. Robbins, and proposed it as a shared reading. This could be a good way to begin discussions on diversity. He sought interest among attendees, and many volunteered to be involved.

Minutes: (We belatedly approved minutes from September 30 meeting.)

Manager Training: Open discussion of manager training. Idalia began with reporting from a conversation with Barbara Beck, who said that the model is largely in place and she hopes to begin the program in January. (Barbara would like to attend next meeting and discuss this, as well as the employee handbook.) As it stands now, there will be 7 modules. Terri Mariani gave some input as well, commenting that the program was developed directly from input from the Staff Survey.

Many questions / comments:

Will it be mandatory? What happens in Academic Affairs when Chairs change? How extensive is it – some worry it may be unwieldy in scope. Will core competencies be relevant to each area? How much flexibility will there be for managers? In sum, SAG welcomes Barbara to next meeting to hear more: Jen C suggested we ask if she can provide us with information in advance; that way we can look through it / identify areas that seem important to discuss.

Future directions:

Sherry Ankeny brought up question of subcommittees, and invited suggestions regarding what areas could lend themselves to the focus of a subcommittee.

-Facilities?

-Diversity and Inclusion? (Which may grow out of book group.)

-PQ? (There was some discussion on PQs with final agreement that inviting Alena and / or members of PQ committee to a future meeting may be helpful, to review / clarify process....More transparency seems to be needed. At the very least, the PQ process has an image problem.)

-A group that would keep Staff Survey in mind as a road map for future directions.

Other topics suggested for future discussion:

-Exploration with IT on how some common issues / practices may be shared and streamlined across departments and areas.

-A demystification of college committee structure in general.

Jamin T said he would like to hear more from the group (outside of those who've been working with the group for a while) would like to discuss / focus on. Suggested that the e-mail address: staff-advisory-group@skidmore.edu is a good way for people to contribute thoughts & ideas if they prefer that to speaking at a meeting.

Lori Dawson closed the meeting with an open invitation that all interested may volunteer to moderate a meeting and / or record minutes.

Next meeting:

November 18 at noon in the library's media viewing room.

(One agenda item so far: Info on manger training and more discussion of this.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rebecca Shepard

10/30/15