

Professionals and Professional Faculty
General Meeting Notes (Roundtable Discussions)

Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:15-9:30am
Sadler Center, Chesapeake B/C

Training (Babs Bengtson, Human Resources):

- Supervisor's Institute: Babs is seeking outside resources that will be paired with W&M presenters to customize topics and presentations to fit our culture. An open invitation will be sent.
- Disney Institute: No topic has been identified yet. There will be room for 200 participants.
- Authentic Excellence: Babs will meet with Kelly Crace, Associate Vice President for Health and Wellness and will meet with our Ombudsperson to discuss different training options. Possible topics include how to discuss difficult situations; how to handle difficult conversations; helping supervisors understand staff with mental health challenges.
- Lynda.com: This has many resource options for faculty, staff and students. Word needs to get out and it would probably be helpful to put together guided sessions for learners who are not online-ready or for people who prefer to be in a room with a real "face" and/or other colleagues.
- Suggestions for future topics/ideas:
 - Work-life balance
 - Getting to know W&M
 - Staff on-boarding
 - Ted Talk Tuesdays
 - Swem training videos
- Mandatory training: Should all mandatory training (such as harassment training, conflict of interest, EVA, SPCC, etc.) be scheduled twice a year so they can be completed all at once?
- Training vs. Professional Development: They fulfill two different needs. Training refers to skills someone may need to do the job right. Professional development should be thought provoking and it should encourage behavior modification. The latter, ideally, should be scheduled for at least a full day with lunch included.

Benefits (Rita Metcalfe, Human Resources):

1. Affordable Care Act: Metcalfe reported that several of this act's initiatives had already been implemented by insurance companies, even before the act became law, such as health insurance coverage for dependents up to age 26. There's also a new medical flexible spending account. A few part-time employees have had their hours reduced to 29 hours per week which removes them from health insurance coverage by the college/state.
2. Retirement benefits: Metcalfe answered questions about the different retirement options, including Virginia Retirement System, 401 plans, cash match, etc. A new "hybrid" Virginia Retirement System plan will be launched in 2014, with many informational sessions to be held for staff.
3. Communication: ways to reach staff about changes in Human Resources policies (including open-enrollment periods, etc.) were discussed. Separate emails to all staff, as is done now for important announcements, were deemed the best. The PPFA might want to sponsor informational forums, focused on a specific personnel issue or benefit, at which Human Resources staff could be available to answer questions.
4. Partner benefits: still need to be improved.
5. Other leave: Metcalfe also answered questions about annual leave, leave share, sick leave banks, disability leave, etc.
6. Clearance form for professionals/professional faculty who leave the college: improving this process is in the works.

Parking (Bill Horacio, Parking Services):

- Bill discussed the parking study currently underway. This will help determine if parking is adequate, ways can parking be improved, and if we can partner further with local transportation carriers (WAT, for example) to help with the congestion on campus.
- Bill stressed that parking is not out to get people. They are just trying to enforce the rules so that it is fair to everyone.
- Bill also pointed out that if people need assistance from parking, or need an exception to one of the rules, it is best to contact them ahead of time. He said that the problem really comes when people just take the liberty of parking wherever, or do whatever they want, and then they get a ticket. He said if they had just talked to them in the first place, they could have worked with them.
- A lot of the discussion focused on issues that arise for VIMS employees when they try to park on campus for meetings. They either have to get a state car, or park in the W&M Hall lot and walk to their destination. It was pointed out that if VIMS is truly part of the W&M campus, employees from VIMS with a valid pass should be able to parking in a faculty/staff spot on the main campus. Bill noted that it is something that can be discussed, but results from the parking study need to be analyzed first.