

Wilkes University

University Staff Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 11, 2024, 9 a.m.

Weckesser Hall or [Zoom](#)

Present: Jen McLaughlin, Mandy Pennington, Lois Grimm, Jackie Klahold, Robert Eskra, Janet Cussatt, Joseph Housenick, Julia Jacien, Teri Shovlin,

Absent: Cathy Lee Arcuino, Michele Garrison, Kayci Brady, Corey Moore, Lee Plank, Kelly Siegfried,

I. Call to order and attendance

A. Meeting began at 9:02am

II. Discussion items:

A. Campus Update - President Cant

1. Orientation is occurring today (2nd of 3)

- a) Budgeted for 558 incoming first year students, but as of today we are at 619 incoming first year undergraduates. Might still lose some/gain some, but still expected to remain above projection at this time.
- b) Transfer students on track for right around 80 students coming in.
- c) International students were budgeted for 40 and currently on track to exceed that goal too - a large number coming in from Nepal, thanks to Cathy Lee's work.
- d) NET tuition (what students actually pay) was targeted for 59% and forecasting 60%
- e) Graduate numbers continue to grow and perform well

2. Working on enhancing opportunities for the Accelerated BSN program. Also identifying ways to increase funding for students to make it more affordable for nursing students to get their degree and walk into a guaranteed job. Also looking at ways to offer advanced clinical settings through SIM labs here on campus, currently exploring funding options.

3. Great Colleges to Work For

- a) Dr. Cant mentioned last time we did this was a bad time due to COVID woes and uncertainty on campus around jobs

- b) Due to this, we did not wait the typical three years as it was important to see where morale is now after the last round
 - c) While there is always work to do, morale seems to be overall better and Wilkes hopes to continue to grow
 - d) When finances are better, then morale naturally goes up
 - e) Seeing others around us shut down or be in danger of shutting down can be scary as well, but Wilkes aims to make decisions in advance to avoid that ever happening here
- 4. Salary increases
 - a) Email went out Wednesday regarding raise in pay
 - b) 2% across the board
 - c) The President's Awards for Excellence and Colonel's Distinguished Employee Awards will continue this year as well, with employees nominated and chosen for awards. Thirty individuals will be awarded for their performance again as part of the Colonel's Distinguished Employee Awards. There is a committee that uses a rubric to score all nominated employees.
- 5. President Cant's new Executive Assistant will begin on Monday the 22nd
 - a) Bridget is now heading the new Events & Engagement group
 - b) New assistant will support the Cabinet, Dr. Cant's office, and the Board of Trustees (which Joanne has done wonderfully for the last 7 years)
- 6. In the next Board meeting, new committees will begin work in a restructured manner with one large committee group now being three committees instead of one to better align with the strategic plan: recruitment/retention, student success, communications. Trustees are able to indicate what committee of the nine they would like to serve, with each member supporting two committees.
 - a) Exploring bylaws to ensure all committees are in line and focused on the proper things per the committee they serve campus wide.
 - b) Will keep things streamlined for better eye on the long term goals that need attention in each committee
 - c) The goal is for these new committees to be assembled by homecoming, give or take. Meetings will depend upon each individual committee's needs. Will put on the USAC Agenda for August for members to volunteer
- 7. Open House tomorrow, in addition to our two Orientations this week

B. Human Resources updates and discussion – Joe Housenick

- 1. Great Colleges to Work for Results are in
 - a) Will be distributed on Monday
 - b) More people participated this year (compared to 2022)
 - c) Results are improved from 2022 as well
 - d) Actual reports will come out to public for transparency

- e) Can revisit in August to determine next steps for committee need/anything that will come up from results
- 2. Updated faculty and staff policy for base compensation
 - a) Notification went out this week
 - b) Only a slight change to qualifications for this policy
 - c) We already use Coupa to determine salary, still using that when possible (sometimes we have unique positions that aren't in the database, for example)
 - d) Wilkes does make adjustments for markets as needed (such as meeting the local pay for positions like HVAC etc to match other employers around us for retainment/recruitment)
 - e) Also adjusted how much of an increase an employee can get at one time - if job didn't change it is limited to 15% at a time; when people are promoted and a job change occurs then it can go higher than 15% if warranted
 - f) If a transfer occurs with no financial increase, they would qualify. If increase occurs, they are not
 - g) If an interim assumed a permanent role and did not get more money for the role, then they would qualify for base lump compensation. If no extra money given, then they qualify

C. Campus Listening Tour Progress

- 1. Email went out a couple of weeks ago to remind everyone to meet with their groups
- 2. Make sure to mark off on the spreadsheet when you meet with groups
- 3. Will follow up with individuals next week to see if support or adjustments are needed

D. Upcoming campus events:

- 1. English Language Center International Festival - July 17 (1-3 p.m.)
 - a) To welcome and celebrate our international students
 - b) Should occur in SIMMS center
 - c) Great way to connect and celebrate their culture
 - d) Please consider attending!
- 2. Summer Event Series - spots [still open](#)!
 - a) Wednesday, July 17: [Susquehanna Kayak Tour](#) on the Susquehanna River
 - b) Wednesday, July 31: Golf & Games at [Clubhouse 315](#)
- 3. Wilkes Alumni Exhibition: Celebrating the Blue & Gold Opening Reception (exhibition runs through August 11)
- 4. First Year Orientation - July 9, 11, and 15
- 5. Discover Pharmacy Camp - August 13 + 14
- 6. Move-In Day - August 22nd
- 7. Transfer Orientation - August 23

8. Lunch and Learn next Tuesday - Bonner

E. Campus Subcommittee updates:

1. Employee Recognition: Michele Garrison
 - a) Not here today, but award was given to Mary Simmons
 - b) Voting is out for next award winner
2. Mentor Program: Julia Jacien
 - a) No updates
3. Treasury update: Julia Jacien
 - a) \$861.20
 - b) No transactions occurred
4. USAC Newsletter: Mandy Pennington
 - a) Going out this afternoon
5. Strategic & Long Range Planning: Jennifer McLaughlin
 - a) They were going to have volunteers listen to the responsible party's needs, but narrowed it down enough that Tom, Jeanne and David are handling it.
 - b) No other updates since last meeting.
6. United Way/Taste of Wilkes
 - a) None, but committee will begin meeting in August
 - b) Consider competing and making a dish!
7. Staff Community Service
 - a) Catie Becker will continue PAK distribution in Kingston - great way to serve and have your office serve together
 - b) Also looking for folks to volunteer with students during welcome week
 - c) Alicia Bond is looking for volunteers to help with book distribution just like last year - will have more information in August for sign ups
8. Wellness Committee: Lois Grimm
 - a) No updates
 - b) Janet walks every Thursday as well!
9. Advancement Committee: Julia Jacien
 - a) No updates
10. Human Resources: Julia Jacien
 - a) No updates
11. Budget Committee: Michele Garrison
 - a) No updates
12. Retirement Committee: Michele Garrison
 - a) No updates from Michele
 - b) Just met last week, looked at expenses and returns and records (TIAA). Exploring new options for records to see if TIAA is still the best option for Wilkes. Will begin some changes in fall with different approaches switching from managed funds to indexed funds - Joe

13. Employee Discount: Corey Moore
 - a) Employees are using it, seem to enjoy it
 - b) Some local businesses don't seem to know how to use it
 - c) Also, if used in store is the usage recorded? Seemingly, yes.
14. Finance Committee: Robert Eskra
 - a) No updates

F. Open forum

1. Healthcare costs will be increasing this year through no fault of the university, but it's a universal issue in America and not unique to us. Always exploring feasible options that actually give figures for the college to explore and compare to other plans.

G. CONCLUSION

1. Meeting ended at 10:25 am.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 9 a.m., Weckesser Board Room and via [Zoom](#).