

Wilkes University

University Staff Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 2024, 9 a.m.
Weckesser Hall or [Zoom](#)

Present: Jen McLaughlin, Mandy Pennington, Corey Moore, Joseph Housenick, Kayci Brady, Lee Plank, Michele Garrison, Teri Shovlin, Jackie Klahold, Robert Eskra, Lois Grimm, Cathy Lee Arcuino, Janet Cussatt, Julia Jacien,

Absent: Kelly Siegfried

I. Call to order and attendance

A. Meeting began at 9:01am

II. Discussion items:

A. Campus Update - President Cant

1. Service awards were last night
 - a) Super special event to recognize employees years of service
 - b) Recognized service for five years up to forty-five years (highest one yet)
 - c) Acknowledging the impact people have made here is important, as well as the growth and opportunity they have found here
2. Open forum on November 21st
 - a) Finance, climate, advancement will be covered
 - b) Also will update the process of the comprehensive campaign - annual fundraising, growth in endowments, grants, capital, and deferred gifts are all measured in this campaign.
 - c) Will have opportunity to ask questions
 - d) Would love to have them in advance to better answer questions thoroughly
3. Notes on presidential election
 - a) Highlights schism in our climate and society
 - b) Our role is to support one another in these times
 - c) New federal legislatures who we have direct contact with, can affect us directly with change in government
 - d) Potential to lose funding and grants due to this change and this unknown
 - e) Potential to lose Department of Education, which would also affect the university
 - f) Can't predict what will happen but worth mentioning there could be unpredictable repercussions when the landscape changes
4. Construction has begun on the new center in SIMMS
 - a) Will be hiring a director in the coming months

- b) Work will continue on the building until then
- c) Will be a fun, bright entrepreneurial space

B. Human Resources updates and discussion – Joe Housenick

1. Retirement funds

- a) Communication will be going out about changing to targeted funds
- b) TIAA will send out mail soon

2. Open Enrollment

- a) Email went out yesterday about upcoming open enrollment
- b) Will be open this November 8th-November 22nd
- c) Working on making the information clear and easy to access
- d) Have been working hard at reducing extra costs for employees
- e) Balancing out action and reward holistically, as well as drivers for increasing costs that can be addressed and predicted (aka cost of drugs)
- f) Previously have used the same company for drug coverage as we have insurance - did a deep dive into these fees, coverage options, providers, and formulary options
- g) Next year, a new provider will be used for prescriptions (Prime Therapeutics). No changes in tiers, copays, but will have a second card for prescriptions going forward. Formulary changes are minimal and not widely anticipated for employees as a whole.
- h) Manage RX is a resource for specialty drugs for significantly cheaper costs for employees - you save money by buying the medication from Tier one countries - UK, Australia, Canada, etc.
- i) Prescriptions still count toward deductible for insurance
- j) Despite savings, still not big enough to avoid rising costs to employees in payroll deductions this upcoming year. This choice is not an easy one nor desired.

(1) Increase will be proportional to base salary

(2) 1.5%-4% increase will be seen, depending on base salary
(1.5, 2.5, 3, 4% increments)

(3) Up to \$40,000 is 1.5%

(4) Between \$40,001 - \$62,000 2.5%

(5) Between \$62,001 - \$99,999 3%

(6) \$100,000 or more is 4%

(7) If you get a raise, then you pay the new tier effective with the raise

k) Changes such as these are never made lightly, and have been thoroughly examined, discussed, and debated.

l) Also doing a dependant audit - mainly verifying that all dependants covered are verified (marriage certificates, birth certificates, etc)

m) Dental and vision remain the same - no changes

3. Wellness - ConnectCare3 Reminder

- a) If you have not done this yet, now is the time
- b) Due very soon (11/22, last day of open enrollment)
- c) To check status, scroll to bottom after logging in

C. Great Colleges to Work For Survey

- 1. Follow up – internal survey in the spring?
 - a) General consensus was to do an internal temperature check on campus climate
 - b) With holidays, spring seems to be an ideal time
 - c) Will likely be a joint effort between USAC and FAC

D. Campus Listening Tour Progress

- 1. Survey has been distributed; group will meet after survey results come back
 - a) Will process feedback and survey results after
 - b) Will aim to have it compiled before holidays
 - c) Goal of compilation on November 15th

E. Athletics - Faculty/Staff Nights

- 1. Working on coming up with a plan for a team effort

F. Access Perks Employee Discount Program Survey Feedback

- 1. Communication
 - a) Delay until after open enrollment?
 - b) Announcement was already created
 - c) Will send out the Monday before Thanksgiving

G. Colonel's Distinguished Employee Awards - nominations due Nov. 20

- 1. One time payment for employees nominated for excellent performance
- 2. Share with departments, nominate a colleague
- 3. Benefit to recognize exceptional work at Wilkes

H. Retention Task Force – **two staff representatives needed**

- 1. Do not have to be from USAC but can be
- 2. Could put out an open invitation to all staff to contact us with interest
- 3. Would be nice to open it up to all
- 4. Google form sent out through Today @ Wilkes
 - a) Quick blurb about why they want to serve
 - b) Evaluate based on those replies
 - c) Open through the end of next week (Nov 15th)

I. Master Planning Committee - **two staff representatives needed**

- 1. Committee members: Mike Wood, Mark Allen, Charlie Cary, Alicia Bond, Gerald Korea, Sue Hritzak, Kelli McCullough, Lisa Reynolds, Abas Sabouni, Woojun Lee, Stephanie Wasmanski, Brenda Gruver, Kathleen

Hirthler, Jared Menghini, Paul Riggs, Jon Ference, Ellen Gallagher (chair)

- a) Maybe have one USAC member and one from Public Safety?
- b) Jackie from Athletics will represent USAC
- c) Mandy will reach out to Public safety for a representative

J. Upcoming campus events:

- 1. November Open House - Nov. 9
- 2. Second Saturday Family Hour at Sordoni Gallery - Nov. 9
- 3. Taste of Wilkes - Nov. 12
 - a) Next Tuesday!
 - b) Communication going out today for buying tickets online
 - c) United Way campaign just kicked off too
 - d) In JPAC
- 4. Veterans Day Ceremony - Nov. 12
- 5. Art in Context Screening at Sordoni Gallery - Nov. 13
- 6. Performing Arts: The World Goes Round - Nov. 14-17
- 7. TGIF SIMM second floor with IT - Nov. 22
 - a) Celebrate the end of open enrollment (for all but HR) and go to TGIF
- 8. Chorus Concert - Nov. 24
- 9. FYF Symposium - Dec. 10

K. Campus Subcommittee updates:

- 1. Employee Recognition: Michele Garrison
 - a) Award winner will be presented his award
- 2. Mentor Program: Julia Jacien
 - a) No update
- 3. Treasury update: Julia Jacien
 - a) \$847.26
- 4. USAC Newsletter: Mandy Pennington
 - a) Recap with recent updates and taste of wilkes winners
- 5. Strategic & Long Range Planning: Jennifer McLaughlin
 - a) No updates
- 6. United Way/Taste of Wilkes - Jeanne Rabel
 - a) Looking for [volunteers](#) to set up, clean up, and run event
- 7. Staff Community Service
 - a) Veterans Day Cleanup - Nov. 9 – contact Catie Becker
 - b) Colonels Caring for Colonels: Details coming soon on how to participate and nominate students. Last year, this program raised \$1600 and assisted 21 students.
- 8. Wellness Committee: Lois Grimm
 - a) No updates
- 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) Committee met this week
 - b) Vetted a few more companies for retirement plan
 - c) Returning to TIAA in hopes of revisiting fees
 - d) Lots of exploring options and looking for the best ones
- 13. Employee Discount: Corey Moore
 - a) Valvoline
 - (1) Extended a discount of 20% off for all employees
 - (2) You notify them you have a 20% discount and you'll give a code - then you get the discount
 - b) Corey, Kayci and Lois met and chatted about options moving forward
 - (1) Identified 15 places to possibly expand discount services
 - (2) Reaching out to those companies in the coming weeks
 - (3) Will ideally create a list
- 14. Finance Committee: Robert Eskra
 - a) Meeting next week
- 15. Academic Excellence and Student Success: Jen McLaughlin
 - a) No updates - have not met yet
- 16. Student Recruitment and Retention: Corey Moore
 - a) No updates
- 17. Marketing, Communication and Branding: Jackie Klahold
 - a) No updates

L. Open forum

- 1. CCDI is assembling an advisory council and are looking for faculty and staff to serve on the committee. Reach out to Jenna Weiss if interested!
 - a) Bringing back the advisory council that used to exist
 - b) Bi-monthly meetings
 - c) Looking for representation across campus on how to best help students get externships, shadowing, etc.
- 2. Staff have expressed concern over produce pop up
 - a) Felt that they were unwelcome at event
 - b) Felt that they were taking food from students
 - c) Will speak to Catie Becker

M. CONCLUSION

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 9 a.m., Weckesser Board Room and via [Zoom](#).