

**Winthrop University**  
**Staff Conference Meeting Minutes**  
**March 19, 2019**  
**Dina's Place**

Staff Assembly Present: Nicole Chisari, Thomas Cornelius, Cheryl Gomez, Lydia Johnson, Alicia Marstall, Linda O'Connor, Brittany Neely, April Hershey, Johnathan Brabson, Kara Cauthen, Lydia Johnson  
Absent: Wes Love, Kelly McGinnis, Julia Fockler, Kirk McSwain, Jessica Martin  
Vacancies: None

Staff in attendance: Approximately 45

Nicole Chisari, Chair, called meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

February 5 and 19 meeting minutes were approved.

**Questions presented:**

*Why is Winthrop spending more than \$200,000 on classes at the Bleachery when we have one of the most under-utilized buildings on campus, Carroll Hall? I never really see any classes in there. It looks like an auditorium built around unused classrooms. Buildings on campus need roof repairs – couldn't that money being wasted over there be utilized on campus roof repairs?*

President Mahony explained that this space is being used as lab space in ways we currently are unable to facilitate in Carroll Hall. He mentioned that the dean of the College of Business Administration is working on moving more classes into Carroll, but the lab space still poses issue.

*The current style of Winthrop parking decals poses a safety concern for me. They make us very identifiable. I've had people I see only in passing at my apartment complex throw the fact that I work at Winthrop into conversation because they've seen what car I drive. These are often people I don't know. I've also had people at gas stations come up to me and reference that they saw from my car that I work at Winthrop. Both encounters have happened multiple times, and it makes me feel uneasy as a new working professional. Added with the fact that if given my name, both my office location and office phone can be found online, it seems unsafe. York Tech F/S decals are hung on the rearview mirror and are removable. Would this be an option for future decals? Or, at the very least, ones that aren't as identifiable?*

President Mahony said that this topic is currently under discussion with those who would make the decision. He, himself, is a supporter of this type a hanging vehicle registration tag.

*A number of facilities, most notably Roddey and McLaurin (there may be others), have major roof and/or façade problems/leaks. Is this something that Winthrop doesn't have time to fix, or will the state not provide the necessary resources? Not addressing it will be much more costly long-term. At what is it better to replace a building?*

President Mahony spoke to this topic. He explained that we currently have about \$25-30 million worth of projects waiting to be addressed, and obviously we cannot do them all at one time. They are currently trying to get \$7.5 million in the budget to address some of the work that needs to be done. Part of the issue isn't just money either. You have to also pay to staff the projects, so staffing becomes an additional resource issue. McLaurin is currently on the list for this summer. State money cannot be used for residence halls, so those projects have to be funded with auxiliary money. With regards to fixing vs. replacing, it comes down to cost. They compare costs and they look at whether it's even fixable.

*As we have had a budget reduction, does it make sense to err on the side of caution and budget low? And then if we have improved numbers and increased funding, then a unit/department/program, college could then have a budget increase?*

President Mahony said that is the idea currently and that the excess is being put in reserves. He also explained how, because of the change in how the Financial Aid was awarded this year (less awards), that ultimately the current freshman class actually paid more than other classes in the past.

*Should Winthrop require students to take a personal finance class? We require ACAD 101 for freshmen, and most students are required to take physical education courses. Should we be helping our students to understand how to properly budget, plan for retirement, and understand all that will come from a financial perspective?*

According to President Mahony, we have to be careful not to add any required classes because it'll increase the cost to students and take longer to graduate. Currently there are other various ways that the university offers optional personal finance information, and it might be possible to have a personal finance/financial literacy event as a cultural event to students.

*I wanted to suggest finding a way to close Winthrop on Dec. 23 in 2019 and 2020. The only people who are truly affected by being open are staff, because most faculty don't stay on campus once exams are over. Especially in years with no raises, it would be such a staff morale boost to have the entire week off. I know the state dictates holidays, but let's be honest, only staff are affected/punished when campus remains open since faculty aren't required to be here.*

*Especially in 2020, I am guessing most people would happily give up the July 3 holiday to have Dec. 23 off. No one likes having to work the Friday after a Thursday holiday anyways, and when offices are open, someone is going to have to work. And then it becomes a difficult decision for supervisors – do you make everyone work? Do you let most off, and then those who are working resent those who are off?*

*Thank you. I just wanted to throw this idea out there as I know staff morale needs some wins.*

President Mahony explained that as a state agency we are limited as to the total number of days off the university can take. That being said, he is formulating a Calendar Committee to look at the university calendar and if anyone is interested in being on that committee to contact Nicole Chisari (with recommendations).

Budget Update: President Mahony wanted to share where we were currently with regards to the budget. It's currently in the House. They are suggesting \$ 2million into the budget if there is no increase in tuition. They are proposing a 2% salary increase to salaries under \$100,000. The state side still needs to make their budget proposals so it's still hard to say what the final will be, but they are still looking about \$7 million.

Nicole Chisari, chair, shared with the conference that Winthrop was contacted by USC-Aiken and Lander, recognizing our success with creating a staff representation through Staff Assembly and Staff Conferences and are looking to use our example to create their own. She thanked President Mahony for attending our conferences and supporting staff at Winthrop.

### **Employee Assistance Plan Benefits- Terri Haynes, Human Resources**

Terri Haynes from Human Resources shared information about the EAP (Employee Assistance Program) provided through MYgroup (McLaughlin Young). This program is free to employees and offers employees and their household members support and resources to address personal or work-related concerns. These services are for all members of the employee's household. The services are confidential and no one from Winthrop will know what services were used. There is an informational session on April 4 and employees can register at <https://www.mygroup.com>. Username is: winthrop303 and Password is: guest. When logged in, employees can click on "Work-Life" to see the available list of services.

### **Introduction, Chris Keck, Director, Office of Accessibility**

Chris introduced himself as the new program director and gave attendees a summary of what he sees are the changing trends in accessibility and what areas he is focusing on in the Office of Accessibility

here at Winthrop, including: customer service, accountability and partnership/collaboration. He addressed some attendee questions relating to ESA (Emotional Support Animals) and student rights and responsibilities. He encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to contact his office. There was a question about the accessibility of his office as it currently resides on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of his building with elevator issues, and while he shares those concerns, he encouraged everyone to remind students that if anyone needs to see him or his office and has any issues getting to him to let him know so he can make accommodations and other arrangements. A final question addressed if they are validating ESA certificates to ensure that the ability to have an animal on campus is legitimate and he assured everyone that they are aware of those and they do verify the those claims.

### **Winthrop Giving Day, Shannon Brown**

Shannon took a moment to remind everyone about April 6, Winthrop's inaugural Giving Day. They have a participation goal of 500 new donors. Please support by giving, sharing social media information, and liking the Winthrop Giving Day social media posts. Please use #WUGives in your posts. More information and donations can be given at [www.winthrop.edu/giving](http://www.winthrop.edu/giving).

### Standing Committee Reports:

**Campus & Community Involvement** – The Spring Food Drive is currently ongoing. Come See Me tailgating for Winthrop students, faculty, and staff begins at 3 p.m. on April 13. Bring your own food/drinks. Food truck Friday is April 19. Volunteers needed and will receive a free food voucher for \$5 to be used at any food truck. See Pam Varraso to help.

**Elections & Nominations** – Jessica Martin is the new Student Affairs Staff Assembly representative. Elections are coming up and more information about nominations and elections will be going on soon. Representatives needed include 1 representative for Academic Affairs, Access & Enrollment Management, Athletics, Finance and Business, HR, Student Affairs, and University Relations. Contact [bestr@winthrop.edu](mailto:bestr@winthrop.edu) for more information.

**Media & Communications** –Kara shared that Staff Stuff for April will be coming out on April 1. Email her if you are not receiving the newsletter and would like to.

**Professional Development** – The committee is focusing most of its efforts into planning the Summer Professional Development Conference coming in June.

**Staff Feedback** – The information from last month's Special enrollment focused Staff Conference is now online. Those who would like to review it or if they missed the conference can go to the Staff Conference website and see what information was shared.

**Recognition Committee** – Because both Callie and Miranda were out on maternity leave, there has not been an opportunity to recognize a staff member of the month. Nicole shared that the Staff Assembly came up with some of their own recommendations and selected a new staff member to be recognized. Pam Gillette was awarded Staff Member of the Month. Brittany Neely introduced six new staff members and welcomed them to Winthrop.

A reminder was given about the Provost candidates and their upcoming visits to campus and everyone is encouraged to attend their presentations. They will all be in Dina's Place.

Judy Longshaw shared that there may be a return of a food competition this summer. In the past there had been something similar and it was well received. More information will be coming.

Dining Services gave away 3 gift cards to random attendees. The names drawn and won were:

Pam Gillette

Jamie Ray

Shayna Foxworth

Next Staff Conference will be at Dina's Place on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.