

Staff Conference Quarterly Report

October 2019

Mission of Staff Conference

Staff Conference is comprised of all full-time or part-time permanent classified or unclassified staff members. Eligible staff also includes grant-funded employees that are physically located on our campus. Members of the Staff Conference will serve on committees, offer a sense of the body on issues, and provide feedback and suggestions on topics of interest to staff. The Staff Assembly is the elected body of representatives of the staff, and the Staff Conference is where all the staff and Staff Assembly representatives are invited to meet and discuss various topics affecting them.

*The mission of Staff Assembly is to provide a **forum for communication** that enhances the work environment and values the ideas of all staff. We are **committed to representing the interest and concerns of Staff Conference to the president, administration, and other members of the university**. We are dedicated to **promoting staff involvement** both on campus and in the community; providing **opportunities that enrich staff experiences**; and encouraging a **positive campus climate of support and respect among peers**. The Staff Assembly fosters the mission of the university and serves to continue to make Winthrop University the best place to work.*

Staff Assembly

In August, we welcomed our newest Staff Assembly members who replaced members whose terms ended at the end of the year, and two of our returning members volunteered to fill vital officer positions.

Tanya Pettus – Human Resources

April Hershey- Vice Chair

Chris Johnson – Finance & Business, Facilities

Kara Cauthen- Secretary

Katie Gawronski – Access & Enrollment Management

Claire Mooney-Melvin – Athletics

Megan Baggarly – Student Affairs

During the first quarter of the year, there was discussion regarding the divisional structure change of the Office of Communication and Marketing being absorbed into the Office of the President. This modification eliminated the need for one of the representatives on the assembly. Various options were presented on how to handle this change in the bylaws including an audit of division numbers, transitioning from 15 to 14 representatives, or offering an at-large seat. Final decision and vote is set to commence in October.

Staff Conference

Provost Dr. Adrienne McCormick shared with us her goals and vision for the institution for 2019-2020. We feel that having new members of Senior Leadership engage with the staff at the staff conference continues to promote transparency and respect between faculty and staff.

Dr. Amanda James, Assistant to the VP of Access and Enrollment, returned to update staff on fall recruitment and admission outcomes. Six months earlier, staff conference held a special enrollment focused meeting to address many questions and concerns resonating from the staff regarding enrollment. Dr. James's return in September demonstrates the impact that can be made when staff drive issues important to them through the assembly to leadership. One outcome to note, staff have asked on numerous occasion for answers to the question "Why Winthrop?" and in a way that might be somewhat universal and easy to access. As a result, in

September, Faculty and Staff received accordion cards entitled “Uniquely Winthrop.” This guide is easy to carry and spotlights many ways Winthrop is unique and why a student would want to join the Winthrop family. We believe that the voice of staff played an important role in seeing this type of information be produced and distributed to staff on campus.

Staff Conference partnered with the Campus Safety Committee in September to provide Active Aggressor Training to staff on campus during Campus Safety Week. This is another good example demonstrating ways that staff conference represented the safety concerns of our staff and provided an opportunity for education and training.

Staff Committees

Staff Conference supports the work of six staff committees. Each committee has at least one staff assembly representative on the committee to be a physical and moral support to the chairs and other members. The work they do supports the mission to provide opportunities that enrich staff experience and staff involvement on campus.

The committee for Professional Development has been instrumental in providing learning events on campus for staff and also hosting and/or collaborating with other organizations to provide Winthrop staff tremendous opportunities for robust professional development and personal growth. In September, the committee joined forces with South Carolina Women in Higher Education (SCWHE) to sponsor an event with guest speaker, Dr. Mattell Jones. This event welcomed both faculty and staff and was the first event the committee held that did so. The response was overwhelmingly positive and the number of attendees exceeded expectations. It is important to the committee and to Staff Conference that we continue to find opportunities like this, not only to support professional development, but to encourage a positive campus climate of support and respect among peers.