MASON STAFF SENATE

General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 7
10:30am-12:00pm

Fairfax: Merten 1201, Arlington: Founders Hall 720, Science and Technology: Colgan 221
703-249-8067

Members: Stephanie Atkins, Lisa Bair, Andrew Burroughs, Sean Cox, Christina DiCicco, Liam Dillon, Kathy Dodd, Christina Frasson, Jared Hagenow, Jennifer Gantt, Joshua Griset, Erin Iacangelo, Christopher Maier, Jenna McGwin, Pamela Ononiwu, Stacey Remick-Simkins, Lauren Reuscher, Lauren Reyna, Akitta Robertson, Tiffany Sandstrum, Brett Spencer, Michael Wharton, Preston Williams, Stacy Wilson, Joanne Zimmerman

Absent with Notice: Stephanie Atkins, Christina Frasson, Stacey Remick-Simkins

Absent without Notice: Pamela Ononiwu

Guest Speaker: Rose Pascarell, vice president, University Life, discussed recent University Life initiatives and updates, and how University Life manages diverse needs across Mason’s campuses.

19 constituents present; 1 Arlington, 9 Fairfax, 9 WebEx

Business Meeting:

1. Call to Order at 11:07am
2. Constituents’ Time
   a. 5 constituents present; no concerns presented
3. Announcements
   a. From the Staff Senate
      i. Student/Parent Working Group: Sean and Stephanie expressed interest in joining that working group.
      ii. Holiday Party: Final dates and times:
          1. SciTech: December 10; 11:30am-1:00pm
          2. Arlington: December 11; 1:30pm-3:30pm
          3. Fairfax: December 18; 1:30pm-4:00pm
   b. From the Floor
      i. Christina D: Follow-up Flu Clinic in Fairfax the morning of November 14.
      ii. Environmental Health and Safety looking at how they issue Mason Alerts for Power Outages. Policy was to issue a Mason Alert if the power outage was expected for more than an hour. Lauren: Will they address whether classes are cancelled or continue as scheduled? Joanne: Classes in classrooms with windows and whiteboards continued as scheduled.
4. Committee Updates
   a. Awards
      i. Outstanding Achievement Awards: Thursday, November 15; 10:00am-11:30am; Dewberry Hall
      ii. Outstanding Supervisors:
1. Amy Takayama-Perez, Dean, Admissions
2. Dr. Ivory M. Berry, Director of Student Success, College of Education and Human Development
   a. Akitta: Awards Committee has surprised both candidates in their offices announcing the news.
   b. Chris: Attend the award ceremony if you can. Amanda will be there to take a group picture.

b. Education and Outreach
   i. November Meeting: November 14 at 2:30pm
   ii. Lauren: The committee is reviewing campus wide committees
      1. Lauren is reviewing campus wide committees
         a. Dining Committee is active. First Friday of the month at 1:00pm
            i. Christina D. Lauren Reyna are interested.
            ii. Chris would like to send 2-3 Senators – would like to have different senators provide feedback to the committee and report back to the Senate.
      iii. November 15 – November Newsletter will be sent out.

   c. Events Committee
      i. The committee met on October 8
         1. INOVA Toy Drive
         2. Patriot Pantry – Food Drive
      ii. Holiday Food and Toy Drive (flyer in meeting documents): https://staffsenate.gmu.edu/meetings/events/toydrive/
      iii. Amanda will send out SignupGenius Call for Volunteers for Fairfax.

5. New Business
   a. Holiday Break Time Shift
      i. What would staff think about working Labor Day (Already in the works at JMU) and having nine days off at Thanksgiving versus five days off at Thanksgiving now. Right now, we have Wednesday, Thursday, Friday off for Thanksgiving. With the proposed model the staff would work Labor day-students would attend regular classes on Columbus Day.
         1. A: I would be reluctant to give up one day (Labor Day) in September to gain four additional days in November, but I’d prefer to have more days off and concede to this option.
         2. B: No way. You might as well be asking me to give up the 4th of July. What’s the difference between the 4th of July and Labor Day? I want my Labor Day off.
         3. C: The University gave us two (2) days of holiday flex time; why not use these to take Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week off and essentially have the Saturday and Sunday before these two (2) days off, as well. This gives you your Nine (9) days.–*Only received the flex holiday hours this year because July 4th fell on a Wednesday. Not applicable as a future leave option.*
         4. Yes, I’ll take nine (9) days off for Thanksgiving, and use my holiday flex time to take time off for labor day. *Only received the flex holiday hours this year because July 4th fell on a Wednesday. Not applicable as a future leave option.*
            a. Christina: The point of Labor Day is to celebrate the workforce.
b. Joanne: Childcare is also a concern because most daycares/schools are closed on Labor Day and do not provide alternative options.

c. Liam: Representing almost 200 staff, employees who work at the Center for the Arts have events during holidays – emergency responders, those who work non-traditional hours already work on holidays so this would not be beneficial to those workers.

d. Kathy: I personally would not want to use my paid time off for Labor Day. If I would like extra hours off during Thanksgiving, I would use my paid time off.

e. Chris: Next step, we would poll our staff before we come to a decision of this magnitude or ever make a recommendation to HR.

f. Jennifer: Your response would depend on your situation in life–whether you have young kids or not.

g. Chris: Should we make this optional for staff? Tiffany/Christina D.: That would be a lot of work for Payroll.

h. Sean: Thanksgiving holiday is in flux based on the Governor/University’s decisions regarding leave. We do not always have off all day on Wednesday. Liam: Mason is one of the few University that does not take a full week for Thanksgiving. Sean: Do all of these universities work Labor Day? Liam: Virginia Tech does have Labor Day classes. Chris: JMU does work Labor Day. Christina: How did University employees react? Chris: All over the map, contention on both sides from faculty and staff. Lauren Reuscher: Believes this would be received poorly because of our location and proximity to Federal Offices-who are closed on Labor Day.

i. Joanne: Motion to investigate the holiday calendars of other Universities who are currently taking off a week for Thanksgiving.

b. Approve previous Meeting Minutes from October
   i. Motioned, Seconded, Approved

c. VGEA Information Session Results
   i. [http://vimeo.com/299044784](http://vimeo.com/299044784)
   ii. 36 people in attendance

   1. Andrew: Officemate attended, and she said she was planning to join but after hearing some answers to the questions did not want to join. A few senators joined. This will give us a deeper understanding of the organization. VGEA has hired a new management team to assist them in lobbying. Communication has been lacking since their original management team was let go, but we will have a better understanding this year. Appropriations Committee membership was attached to the meeting documents. Chris will send out a link regarding how to figure out your representatives.

d. December General Meeting
   i. Dr. Cabrera not able to come in December. We were given the option for a make-up session, but with the upcoming holiday parties and everyone’s full scheduled before winter break we decided to just wait for his attendance at our
May meeting. What other speakers would we like to invite to our meeting in December and in the spring?

1. Liam: Student accounts speak about employee education opportunities—education opportunities and professional development opportunities, tuition waiver, application process, auditing a class, etc. HR (Patricia Coray and Benefits) handles all non-credit professional development certificates.

2. Chris: Healthcare idiosyncrasies (ie: acupuncture/massage). Will bring in closer to open enrollment in the spring. Christina D.: Courtney Ashmore would be able to discuss plans but may not be able to highlight idiosyncrasies.

3. Chris: Sabbatical for staff.

4. Jenna: University Police? Jared Hagenow: What topic would the Police cover? We have a lot of answers to questions, we just need to know what questions staff have.

5. Dave Farris: Environmental Health and Safety

6. Lauren Reyna: ADVANCE initiative. Wayne Adams or John May could speak about the impact on campus.


e. Update from the Chair
   i. ADVANCE- 3 senators attendance the ADVANCE celebration. Chris, Stacy, and Jenna attended. How is it going to impact Mason? Will this impact the bottom line by taking general education credits at NOVA? Increased foot traffic and more students utilizing our resources. Lauren Reyna: Did the full day symposium. Concerns were increased foot traffic utilizing our resources, and discrepancies in academic standards. Currently, we are serving 121 students, but we are slated to have 8000 in 10 years.

6. Old Business
   a. Student-Legislative Process Question
      i. Push to December
   b. ListServ Update
      i. For the last couple of months, we have been monitoring the number of classified staff and non-student wage employees to keep our listserv accurate. There has been an 8.4 percent drop since August. Christina D. made a valid point that a 10-12 percent turnover rate is average. Chris just wants to make sure we are replacing that group of people. Hiring is more difficult during the holiday season as well.
   c. WebEx Traveling Senators Ad Hoc Committee
      i. Need to meet this month.
   d. Appropriation Committee Member List-included by Stacey
      i. Legislative Information System – lis.virginia.gov
         1. How to figure out who your representatives are. Will move forward talking to legislators.

7. Adjourn at 12:00pm
Meeting documents

October Meeting Minutes

Appropriations Committee Members

Holiday Toy and Food Drive Flyer

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 5, 2018; 10:30am-12:00pm, Locations: Fairfax: Merten Hall 1201, Arlington; Founders Hall B119, Science and Technology: Colgan Hall 221, Smithsonian: Academic 219