

MASON STAFF SENATE
General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 1, 2018
10:30am-12:00pm

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

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

Absent with Notice: Kathy Dodd, Christina Frasson, and Jared Hagenow

Retreat/Kick-Off Meeting (no guest speaker)

Business Meeting:

1) Call to Order at 10:35am

2) Introductions

3) Rebus Puzzles/ Break up into Teams by Committee Assignments

- a. Three Puzzles – 10 minutes

4) Announcements

- a. From the Staff Senate

- i. Resignations

- 1. Lindsey Olson leaving the university to pursue a new career field.
 - 2. Carl Redmon leaving the university to pursue his own company.

- b. From the Floor

- i. Stacey-VGEA- Currently transitioning from outsourcing their management and hiring their own staff. Stacey serves as a conduit for the VGEA board. Mason has a very small membership. Other universities have higher membership. Preston: We are one of the largest universities in the state. How do we not have mass representation on VGEA? Stacey: There have been some reservations connecting staff to VGEA. VGEA is not a union. It is a professional association that has a key voice in the legislation. There have been a series of misconceptions, and Stacey is hoping to change that perception. UVA has over 100 members. Radford has over 100 members. Preston: Is this similar to a staff version of Mason Lobbies? Stacey: Yes, it is similar except this is staff coming together from all over the state. VGEA does not endorse political candidates, but we will try to bring them to us, so we have the opportunity to hear from each candidate. Go to VGEA.org, but the website is under development.
 - ii. Jennifer: Congratulations for being selected as August Employee of the Month! Cake with Jennifer's face on it was done by Sodexo! 😊

5) New Business

- a. Approve previous Meeting Minutes from May and June
 - i. Will vote to pass these minutes in September.
- b. Oath and Confidentiality Statements
 - i. Completed during orientation.
- c. Committee Introductions and Selection Worksheet

- i. Akitta-Awards: Akitta will be chairing Awards this year. Awards presents the Employee of the Month with a gift at the Employee of the Month presentation. Outstanding Supervisor Award nominations open August 1 and close August 31. The committee will review nominations, score them, Amanda will compile the scores, and two winners will be selected to receive the award at the Outstanding Achievement Awards in November. More information is on our website.
 - ii. Stephanie-Education and Outreach: We are responsible for publishing the monthly newsletter with announcements pertinent to staff. The newsletter is sent out the Friday after the general meeting. We also present at the New Hire Classified Staff Orientations. We are always looking for people to present. The presentation takes about 10 minutes. We also update the website. We are continuing a revamp on the website, removing irrelevant information and correcting and updating material. Lindsey: We are in charge of communications to the wider staff. We made some attempts to improve communications, and we are continuing to discover how we can improve our website, social media, newsletter, etc. Lauren: We also schedule guest speakers.
 - iii. Erin-Events: Responsible for Staff Appreciation Events. We are always looking for ideas to make those events better at each campus. At SciTech, we have also planned other events like the Halloween Event. Preston: We also plan the Holiday Food and Toy Drive. Chris: Last year, we donated toys to INOVA Children's Hospital. We are hoping to continue to build on this partnership. This is one of the goals President Cabrera has asked of us, to build more community outreach. Jennifer: Arlington had discussed donating to a more local, Arlington charity.. Chris: We would like to move in this direction. This builds a sense of community. Lisa: If President Cabrera has a priority of community engagement, should the senate have a community outreach committee? Chris: We will be delegating this to the Education and Outreach Committee to discuss some ways we can encourage and incorporate outreach this year.
- d. VOTE-Adding seat to Fairfax Campus for period of one year
- i. Chris: In our by-laws and constitution we have a maximum of 28 seats. This year, we have vacant seats at SciTech and Arlington. We cannot fill those seats. There was one individual who was not selected on the Fairfax campus due to the number of limited seats for Fairfax. We would like to increase the seats from Fairfax from 18 seats to 19 seats for a period of one year. Amanda: Would her term be for one year or would the number of seats increase for one year? Brett: The number of seats would increase for one year, and she would serve a two-year term. Joanne: So, this would impact senators on the ballot next year? Chris: Yes. Susan: What would be the negative of doing this? Joanne: Would affect those on the ballot next year. Chris: We have two senators that are leaving the University. Their seats cannot be filled, so we are down to 26 senators. Lisa: It is not a matter of competition, it is a matter of qualification. Amanda read Pamela's Candidate Statement. Lindsey: One way or another, we usually have someone who has to step down for one reason or the other. Joanne: What was the thought process for this particular clause and the way it was written in the bylaws? Chris: It was instituted too far back for anyone to know further details. Lisa: Pamela is exceptionally qualified, but is this setting a precedent for future elections? Chris: Not necessarily, but it should be considered. We have an obligation to fill up to 28 seats on the Senate. Lisa: But also consider that the number of seats are distributed based on campuses. Chris: We are going to look at redistribution of seats this year. Based on engagement, we may consider reducing the number of SciTech seats. Lisa: Pamela sounds exceptionally qualified, but looking at the distribution of seats may be the best solution for

the future. Sean: What do the representatives from the regional campuses think about “repurposing” a seat? Erin: My only comment would be that SciTech is expanding, so before we reduce the number of seats we should consider SciTech’s growth.

- ii. Lindsey motions to add a 19th seat for Pamela for the next two years. The seat will be one year and we will re-address the total number of seats in the spring. Sean seconded the motion.
 1. Yay: 16
 2. Nay: 6
 3. Abstain: 5

- e. VOTE-New Committee Chairs: Awards, Events, and Education and Outreach
 - i. Chris appoints chairs: Akitta- Awards, Lauren and Stephanie-Education and Outreach, and Preston and Erin, Events
 1. Susan motions to approve, Joanne seconds the motion.
 2. Majority Approval
- f. Results of Summer Staff Appreciation Event Survey
 - i. Will be sent via e-mail and discussed at the September meeting.
- g. Update from the Chair (Planning Conference, Committee Nominations, Emails, Teams, EoM August)
 - i. President and Provost and Senior Vice President had a planning committee with Presidents Council.
 1. Rebranding the University. Our brand is not well known enough even in our own backyard. Virginia Tech was given the opportunity to open a new Cyber Security Center. Why were we overlooked? Most people in the state did not know that we have a superior Cyber Security program. A branding consultant has been brought on board, and he or she is working with Frank Neville’s team.
 2. Shernita Parker, Interim Vice President of Human Resources, and Julian Williams, Vice President of Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics gave a presentation about staff turnover. Last year, staff had a turnover rate of 16.1 percent. At that point, staff represented about 3200 employees. About 500 people left the University. This year, staff are representing about 3350 employees. Our turnover rate went down to 10.49 percent. Staff turnover went down about 5 percent. Faculty turnover went down about 1-1.5 percent. We must be doing something right, because we are keeping people. Liam: Liam is responsible for giving out certificates as part of the retirement packet. Over the last year, they have had over 100 retirees. That is another aspect to consider in these statistics. Christina D.: National average for turnover is 12-15 percent, so we are looking good.
 3. Chris met with Kate Astor and Shernita regarding the mini survey that went out to everyone last February. Currently, they are working on a watered down version of the results to publish. The 10 pages of results were shared with the Executive Committee in the spring. Eventually, we can look at both reports side-by-side, but Chris will need permission from HR to share the results.
 4. Take a look at the email from Chris regarding announcements about pay raises and retention bonuses, among many other items of importance. Susan asks to create a mini-newsletter with excerpts of the important items to reduce the number of attachments.

5. Webex Teams: Cisco Spark is now known as Webex Teams. Christina Frasson is our administrator. We started Webex Teams last year. We did not have any protocol or procedures or anything in our bylaws regarding how Teams would be used. Sean suggested the conversations on Teams should be included in our meeting minutes. I took Teams down the last 2.5 weeks for a recess. I would like to continue that tradition each year so the chair and vice chair get some time to recoup during a busy Senate time. Webex Teams is a great way to communicate with your committees, your campus location, and the Senate as a whole. This year, we would like to look into adding some procedures and protocols into the bylaws to give constituents an idea of what the Senate is discussing. Susan: Why would we include those conversations on our General Meeting Minutes? Not to say there should not be a record of them or they should not be published somewhere, but why in the General Meeting Minutes? Joanne: Some topics discussed in the meeting are also discussed on Teams. Chris: We will leave our General Meeting Minutes as they are, and we will add an addendum of Teams minutes. Stacey: One issue came up years ago when the Senate was forming about publishing items. It could curtail people from speaking, but we also have to consider the Freedom of Information Act. Teams is a University property and we have to be careful the way we record and publish conversations. If anything was taken out of context it could cause harm. I would steer away from recording those conversations since it could be potentially harmful if something is taken out of context. Lisa: Not all senators are looking at Teams all the time due to job requirements. Is it required? Chris: The only thing that we are requiring is that you download the application so we can specifically bring you into a conversation if a questions arises or we want to contact you directly. Lisa: If you are not active on the application how would we know we were being directly contacted? Preston: Everything exists on the application so you can look back. Susan: The General Meeting is for voting and discussing. Chris: No vote has happened on the application. Lindsey: Things happen between meetings, and this was a way for us to discuss and resolve some of those issues. Preston: It is almost like a closed session, and the General Meeting is our open session. Amanda: I do not have any General Business Meetings recorded, only guest speakers or special sessions. You can always amend the meeting minutes if you feel like you were misrepresented or do not feel comfortable with how something was presented before we approve the minutes each month. Brett: I can put together a Code of Conduct and can present at an upcoming meeting. Sean had also mentioned an IT Session to bring everyone up to speed on how to use the app and its functionality. Chris: When Christina returns from maternity leave, we can ask her to do a presentation. Sean: This is not a required duty, but for those not using the app there should be some documentation of subject matter for transparency. For example, everything that was done to resolve the Canon issue was done primarily through Webex. During the meeting, it was glossed over. Therefore, the documentation should be available for those who are not seeing it in Webex. Christina D.: What is discussed in Webex? Chris: Anything and everything. Lindsey: If you see an issue on campus you can put it down and either ask to discuss it at the next meeting or someone may have the answer and it does not need to be discussed. Jenna: Would it be helpful for those who are not on the app to have a weekly recap of the conversations that were discussed? Akitta: It would be interesting to have a recap of relevant topics but not just chatter. Preston: It is all

there in the app where you can scroll through. Chris: It was introduced last year. We do not have the answers right now, but we do need some professional protocol. Brett has volunteered to pull together a code of conduct. Right now, we will include an addendum of notes to the meeting minutes.

6) Old Business

7) Adjourn at 12:54

*Meeting documents

May and June Meeting Minutes

Oath/Confidentiality Statement (New and Returning Senators Only)

Committee Selection Sheet

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