

MASON STAFF SENATE
General Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, October 5, 2016
12:00pm-2:00pm
Fairfax, Merten Hall 1201; SciTech, Bull Run Hall 254; Arlington, Founders Hall 119B;
703-249-8067

Members: Wajaht Ahmed, Stephanie Atkins, Lisa Bair, Susan Brionez, Cameron Carter, Rubi Chavez, Eric Fowler, Barbara Hill, Erin Iacangelo, Amanda Kennedy, Megan Kirk, Ann Moran, Jenna McGwin, Christopher Maier, Lindsey Olson, Lauren Reuscher, Nicole Roth, Christina Sanders, Tiffany Sandstrum, Dan Silver, Cloud Spurlock, Rebecca Stone, Al Underwood, Katara Wright

Absent with Notice: Andrew Bunting, Amanda Corrigan (on leave)

Absent without Notice: Cloud Spurlock

Guest Speakers:

Linda Harber

Gave an overview of the upcoming Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) changes in regards to salary thresholds (\$23,660 to \$47,476, to become overtime eligible); duties test which comes 1st, and salary 2nd, before determining overtime eligibility. The new FLSA standards will go into effect on December 1st, 2016, at George Mason. Staff and Admin-Faculty (not at the senior level in an organization) are affected by these changes.

- About 250 employees are affected by this change.
 - What does this really mean?
 - If you work more than your required amount of work in a week (Saturday through Sunday), then you are owed time and half for all work over the required hours, when approved by your supervisor. Comp Time may be used by individual departments in lieu of over-time hours. “The biggest changes are how you do your time sheet and if you work it, you must be paid for it.”
- Retirement Calculator is available on the HR Website, again (You should check it out).
- Shernita Rochelle-Parker – Coming to December Staff Senate Meeting to discuss Employee Relations.
- Cool Groups that are unique to George Mason: Working Moms, Working Dads, Veterans, and Toastmasters, for example.
- Enrichment Day is coming up and registration is open.
- Flu Shot – Free if you have insurance with George Mason University and dates are coming up.

Heather Aleknavage – Speaker for Mason Administrative Professionals (MAP) Group

- New MAP “Custom Created” Group as of January 2015.
- This Group is Free & Informal, Has an Agenda each Month.
- Purpose is to engage a Certificate Program and welcome staff that consider themselves Administrative Professionals, and do similar work across the University.

Lynne Paraggio – MAP President

- Often times there is free food from Caterers at the meetings.
- Terrific Networking Opportunities.
- Really good group to step up into leadership roles.
- See the Attached Schedule for this Group.
- If you would like to attend the meetings. please RSVP to manmason@gmu.edu.

Toshiko Uchiyama (IAAP Member) – MAP Vice-President

- IAAP is professional group in the United States and you can still join and be a member of this larger organization, even though Mason does not have a chapter.
- There are other Universities that have active IAAP Groups.
- Great opportunity for networking and connecting for available career opportunities.
- MAP is a society within Mason to get to know and see other administrative professionals within our meetings, get to know one another, and to find out what is going on across the University.

Laura Titkemeyer – MAP Secretary

- This is a great opportunity to Discovering Mason Resources and Networking across the campus.
- A part of this is to capitalize on the learning at the meetings and giving credit for the program Heather talked about, the Administration Professionals Certificate Program (APCP) – the purpose of which is to learn to network and grow professionally.
- If you are interested in APCP, please email hrlearn@gmu.edu for the next orientation meeting.
- Currently there are 76 Mason Members, and anywhere from 10 to 30 show for each meeting.

Business Meeting:

1) Call to order – 1:06 PM

2) Constituents' Time - None

3) Announcements

a) From the Staff Senate

- i) Budget Town Hall Meeting from 1-2:30, Nov 2, 2016.
- ii) We will not be having a Business Meeting in November but instead, are encouraged to attend the Budget Town Hall Meeting.
- iii) ~~We will still be meeting with President Cabrera on November 2nd. He is our guest speaker before the Budget Town Hall Meeting.~~ EDIT: Cabrera meeting has been POSTPONED.

b) Committee Meetings

- i) Outreach met to discuss what everyone wanted to do.
 - (1) Lindsey –Newsletter Change from “Looking Ahead Events from Staff Senate” to something new and different in the email subject, to more call out what is coming up in the events.
 - (2) Susan – makes sense to me. Doesn't HR call out something in their newsletter
 - (3) Megan & Nicole – they focus on something in each newsletter.
 - (4) Lauren – in the HR Newsletter?
 - (a) Nicole – yes
 - (5) Lauren – we are brainstorming ideas so if anyone has a creative mindset to get people's attention.
 - (6) Susan – When I email students, I use the subject line, “Are you Hungry?” And, boy do they respond.
 - (7) Lindsey – Moving forward, we are okay with changing of the subject line and focusing on things, but we'll do more thinking about a full-scale name change.
 - (8) Lauren – If you have any suggestions, please feel free to send them to me lclarkg@gmu.edu.
 - (9) Lauren – Also, if we come up with some ideas, we may survey the Senate to help us stay on track.
- ii) Events booked space in Dewberry Hall for the 2nd week in January.

iii) Awards – Eric – Cloud and myself presented the Outstanding Supervisor Award last week.

(1) John Kettlewell Jr., Technology Support Services, ITS

(2) Eileen Kennedy, Hylton Performing Arts Center, Development Director

iv) Both have been notified and the official presentation is on November 3rd, at HR's meeting with President Cabrera.

(1) Nicole – Can someone or maybe Cloud write this up so that we can present this information to Dr. Cabrera since he will be giving the awards.

c) From the floor

i) This is Cameron Carter's last meeting as a Staff Senator as she has accepted an Admin-Faculty position within the University.

4) **New Business**

a) Approve October 2016 Meeting Minutes

b) November Meeting: 12pm-1pm with Dr. Cabrera (Merten 1201)

c) Update from the Chair

i) Still figuring out who will be the next VP of Communications and Marketing for the University – we are in the campus visit stage right now, there are a few more candidates visiting and hopefully we will make a decision. There are some good candidates and I am amazed at them.

ii) Lauren – that's my VP

iii) Nicole – I am fascinated by this position because they keep asking what can we do for the staff?

(1) Internal Communications

(a) Communications at Reorgs

(b) Communications at Policy Changes

(c) Just being more open with staff and all of the candidates are excited at the opportunity to improve the internal communications with staff

(d) Other VP's and Faculty have brought this up, that internal communications has to improve so I find it heartening that everyone acknowledges it and the person they select hopefully will act on it.

d) Staff Senates are banding together and VCU is hosting this month. Megan and I will attend to see what other Senates do and together walk down the Capital.

i) Lauren – How many schools are going?

ii) Nicole – They have invited all of the State Schools.

5) **Old Business**

a) Outstanding Supervisor Award Status

b) Advocacy Committee

i) Tuition Reimbursement: Eric/Susan

(1) Eric and Susan have communicated

(2) Nicole – Gather all of the information and have a conversation eventually with Linda Harber even though ODU is the only school that has something different.

(3) Eric – the dream is still alive I would say. I've been in communications with Jessica Cain, employee relations, and I have done a lot of work with her, with the school and different things. When I brought it up to her, initially she was like "no, no, we've brought that up and cannot do anything." Then I further explained and said, "All I am asking is for a 1-to-1 transfer. So that the 12 credits that an employee gets, they can just put someone else's name in place of their 12-credits." She thought that all dependents should get in-addition to what the employee gets. "No, instead of the employee, it's a family member. Just change the name of the person getting the tuition."

(4) Nicole – Some of the policies that other schools have regarding this changes are

- (5) Eric – Old Dominion’s is the main one.
 - (6) Nicole – VCU has one and it is very similar to what ours is like.
 - (7) Wajaht – Mary Washington, they have a very interesting one.
 - (8) Nicole – I’d be interested maybe that you should reach out to those schools to see how they pay for it. This is probably going to be one of the biggest hurdles you’re going to run into is, “We don’t have the money to pay for it, in that kind of way.”
 - (9) Eric – Old Dominion actually gave me feedback so I have written documentation from them, and I have Jessica to lend the ear of Linda Harber, and that’s why I say the dream is still alive. It hasn’t been completely shut down. We are either getting closer to a concrete answer as to why we absolutely cannot do it, or I think potentially there could be down the road, serious talks to get the employee to transfer to another person. So, we will keep it working and keep talking.
 - 10) Nicole – absolutely, if we can talk with Stacy to.
 - 11) Susan – I can talk to Stacy. She’s the one that kept asking me about being on that committee and I can ask her about this.
 - 12) Nicole – I am a little worried about this because I have been told in the past, “Don’t mess with it, or you’ll lose it.” It is walking a fine line and I want to make sure we have all of the information before we go and try to have that conversation.
 - 13) Wajaht – Who was this that said this to you, because Cabrera has said that we have a retention issue and this would be a good way to retain people.
- ii) Gym Access: Lindsey/Nicole – Working on.
- (1) Susan – I have given a lot of thought about this. I don’t want to go to a gym that is free. Have you ever been to a YMCA? They don’t have clean towels to clean their equipment. They don’t have spray bottles to clean your equipment. There wouldn’t be TV’s on every exercise machine. There wouldn’t be someone there to watch over those machines and call for repair. Who’s going to pay for it? If it’s free, you’re going to pay for it somehow, by yet another “no increase” or somehow they are going to tap into student fees. Someone is going to have to pay for it, it cannot be free. There has to be a minimal cost.
 - (2) Lindsey – In the conversation last time, what kind of access can we get? It doesn’t have to necessarily be free. Finding out and compiling all of the information about all of the gyms on campus and communicating this to staff and finding out if there are some better options out there for staff.
 - (3) Ann – The gym is \$250 a year per membership. I pay something like \$12.83 per payroll deduction, and it’s next to nothing.
 - (4) Susan – If you go even twice a week, you’ll find out you cannot go anywhere else for this price. You’re already parked. What does a membership cost in comparison to your place of employment?
 - (5) Why does the gold membership cost more for things like Yoga?
 - (6) Susan – because they have to pay the instructor.
 - (7) Lindsey – you can use 1 credit from your 12 to take a reserved spot for these classes.
 - (8) Barb – Here in Arlington, at least you have a gym. (Maybe we need to advocate for gyms at Arlington and Sci Tech?) This would be good for us to do as the Staff Senate.)
 - (9) Chris – We have three gyms.
- iii) Bookstore discounts: Lindsey – I sent an email.
- iv) Communication of Reorgs: Christina
- v) Parking: Amanda/Ann
- vi) Safety & Crisis Preparation: Christina
- (1) Talking about her experience in class about the Run, Hide, Fight speech she gives at the beginning of campus and her experience during the incident where the

- (2) One of the items brought up was, why are we getting this alert, what are we supposed to do, or go? It would be nice to be given some guidance in the alerts as to what to do and get that information out to everyone.
- (3) Eric – It is legal in the Commonwealth of Virginia to walk on campus with guns. All we did was alert the community that there were two people in the area suspected to have guns and the email just said to stay away from that area. The only reason why it went out is because there was a delay in confirming whether or not it was ROTC, because we thought from the beginning that this could be ROTC. We were coordinating with ROTC folks to say “are you doing training today, that you didn’t tell us about? They didn’t tell us about the training, so we immediately said it’s probably ROTC. But we couldn’t confirm. Because of that delay: is this ROTC, we had to send out the message. The people reported were in a different location from where they were supposed to be. To be proactive in this situation, if we didn’t send a message out and it turned out to be a threat, we’d get scrutiny for that. And, we knew if we did send the message out, it probably would cause some panic. We went with the position of let others know that there are people in the area with guns or suspected of having guns, just so they know. It lets you know as much as we did. The email was more descriptive than the text. It said stay away from that area. There are a lot of things that have changed from this. The Major General in charge of ROTC programs changed a lot of things. Starting with marking their weapons appropriately, so they look like training guns. They changed protocols as far as changing policies requiring ROTC to give the Police Department notification that training is going on. This was actually good that this happened because it was sort of a training exercise for everybody. The feedback received about not giving specific feedback in the text message. That actually has been addressed. One answer to the text message aspect, is that we are only limited to a set number of characters that are in each text message. That’s why the email follows up and the text message says to check your email for more information, just like if there is a closure for snow or inclement weather. The text message is the quickest way to let everyone know that there is something going on, but the email is more descriptive. Next time we will text “Go to your email for instructions, just so people know that.”
- (4) Christina – Are there any trainings for Students, Faculty and Staff that can educate us on active shooter protocol and we go through each department to train everyone for various emergencies?
- (5) Eric – That is a really good idea. EHS does do periodic trainings. But, how many people go to their website or seek out their posters or handouts? There is a lot of stuff out there, that as a University, we could do better at distributing that information to everybody. We do need to be more proactive in getting that information out.
- (6) Christina – yes, more engagement would be helpful.
- (7) Eric – I will try to get something to send out University wide that says here are the emergency preparedness guides.
- (8) Wajaht – My understanding is that Mason people are not allowed to have guns?
- (9) Eric – Mason affiliated individuals, no, they cannot. But your average Joe, he can around right now with a gun and there isn’t much we can do. He cannot go in a building, but he can walk on open public space all they want.
- 10) Lindsey – can we send this information out to everyone, every semester? This kind of information needs to get out all the time.
- 11) Eric – Good point, yes. We do send out an annual report every year about specific information.
- 12) Nicole – Perhaps as part of the crisis preparations that you’re planning on doing, an FAQ page with links to the Active Shooter Video or embed that video on the

13) Susan – Right here we are the leaders of staff. When that alert came out, this was the moment where what we trained for and I sprang into action, because no one was going to die on my watch. We locked the office door, hung a sign, and were still able to peer out if someone needed to be let in. But, I would never ever depend on this University to save my life. If my life is going to be saved, I need to know what to do. Just like every one of you needs to know what to do. So, if you didn't jump into action when that call came out, you need to figure out what to do, before it happens. Not when you get that text. You need to be ready and prepared to show your staff that you're a leader and that you're ready to take action to save lives, or avert some sort of tragedy.

14) Eric – If a department requests a training for active shooter, we go to that specific department and provide the training. This is something that is not very well advertised. This is a program that we do. Spread the word that we can do this for each department.

15) Christina – There has to be a way to mandate this training every year so that everyone knows what they are supposed to do. People should have to know they are required to do this. We should look into having this mandated.

16) Lindsey – Nicole, did you say you're an EHS coordinator? Is this something that every department or every building is supposed to have?

17) Nicole – It's a voluntary thing. I went through and got first aid training. There's this thing that you can coordinate for your floor or building, for emergency preparedness. I went ahead and did the training so that I could provide this service to my office.

18) Dan – I bet most places don't even know who their EHS coordinator is.

19) Susan – I bet most places don't even have one.

20) Nicole – Go to the EHS website. There are some opportunities there.

Nicole:

Send questions in preparations for Dr. Cabrera's meeting, ahead of time, by the 27th of October. Also, for JJ and the Provost's Budget Town Hall.

Christina:

What happened to the venue where we could submit comments and question about how to save the University money?

Nicole:

I'm not sure what happened with that.

Adjourn – 1:50 PM

*Meeting documents

October Meeting Minutes

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 2; 12:00pm-1:00pm (Merten Hall 1201; SciTech, Bull Run Hall 254; Arlington, Founders Hall 119B; 703-249-8067)