

SSRC MINUTES FOR 2007-2008

Meeting of **May 24, 2007**

8:30 a.m., Grinnell House

New Members:

Randye Jones, Burling Library (2-year)

Retta Kelley, Employment and Career Development Service (2-year)

Terri Phipps, Office of the Dean (1-year)

Remaining on the Committee:

Connie Morrison, Dining Services

Julie Owens, Academic Support - Steiner

Leaving the Committee:

Beth Bohstedt, Burling Library

Kathy Miller, Biology

Committee Responsibilities:

Julie Owens - Chair*

Retta Kelley - Luncheon Coordinator

Randye Jones - Communications

Terri Phipps - Secretary

* Pending acceptance. Julie was unable to attend the meeting.

Attending: Kristin Lovig, Retta Kelley, Terri Phipps, Connie Morrison, Kathy Miller, Beth Bohstedt, Randye Jones

Committee members introduced themselves. Current and returning members spoke of their experiences on the committee. Everyone agreed that being a part of the SSRC was a learning experience, and that other staff could benefit from participating on the committee as well. SSRC allows staff the opportunity to take a leadership role and feel as though they are working to benefit the campus community, which can lead to higher morale.

One topic to be addressed in the coming year is that of **campus well-being. Stress** is a major issue at all levels of the College. It is important for the SSRC to be mindful and respectful of the Wellness Committee's work. It was suggested to have a co-sponsored open forum to discuss wellness issues. Trying to balance home, work, and other responsibilities can be quite stressful. This discussion led to a theme for the coming year: "Finding the Balance".

Student help is just one cause of stress. We are fortunate to have many responsible, hard-working students. There are also a number of students who do not show up for scheduled hours, do not follow rules as set by their departments, and who do not complete projects as assigned. This adds stress to co-workers (usually other students or staff) and supervisors, all of whom must add the negligent student's work to their own. Students do not often face consequences for these actions. The mission of the College is to educate students. Is the College graduating students who will be successful in the

workplace?

It was suggested that student employment be addressed at New Student Orientation, including being responsible employees (working as scheduled), following departmental policy, and using e-Time. Student supervisors spend a great deal of time correcting student hours, sometimes more than when students used paper timesheets. Student workers should be aware that they need to treat campus jobs as they would any job in the "real" world.

A student worker handbook will be created to address general expectations in the workplace. This handbook will be given in addition to current handbooks/contracts specific to individual areas.

Dining Services has had tremendous difficulty getting and keeping student help. The work is much more difficult than it was in Quad and Cowles. Poor air ventilation/circulation makes working conditions uncomfortable. For example, the dishroom is usually over 80 degrees with high humidity. There are no windows for ventilation.

Kristin will look into the student pay scale. More difficult jobs should be paid at a higher rate.

Staff Luncheon committee assignments: The current list is out of date. Terri distributed a draft revised list. Committee members should send comments to Terri by June 1.

Respectfully submitted,
Terri Phipps

Meeting of **13 September 2007**

Attending: Randye Jones, Retta Kelley, Connie Morrison, Terri Phipps, Kristin Lovig

SSRC meetings will be held from 11-12:00 the first Monday of each month.

Julie Owens has resigned her position at the College. That leaves two positions open on the committee as we had no alternate. The SSRC will announce a call for volunteers to join the committee in the Memo and the Laurel Leaf.

Julie's resignation also left the Chair's position on the committee open. Part of the Strategic Plan is to encourage staff to participate in leadership opportunities. Chairing committees provides that opportunity. After some discussion, Terri agreed to chair the committee. Connie will be Secretary. Retta and Randye will continue in their earlier roles (Luncheon Coordinator and Communication/Web, respectively).

Recurring meetings, such as the SSRC and others, will be announced in the Campus Memo.

Randye will draft a blurb for the Memo and Laurel Leaf to recruit two new members. The blurb should state that one year's employment is required before joining the committee. Topics for the coming year include:

- Finding the balance between work and home lives
- Planning information sessions ("What is it" series)

Stress Management

Wellness issues

Those interested in the committee should contact Terri.

The document created by Julie last year about the SSRC will be placed on the website. Kristin will forward the document created by Susan Wilson to the committee. This document was the result of Susan's meeting with SSRC members, and clarifies the purpose and duties of the SSRC.

Kristin shared some ideas with the committee that Human Resources is planning or would like to implement. Grinnell College and other businesses in Grinnell, such as Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance and Grinnell Regional Medical Center, have the same difficulty in retaining staff. **Affinity groups**, such as the Young Professionals group coordinated by Dan McCue, will be created to encourage interaction, with the hope that it will encourage staff to stay in the community. Dan McCue will act as a liaison to other businesses. It is not clear how these groups will communicate: email, listserv, PioneerWeb.

Terri met with Elena Bernal, Special Assistant to the President, who is very interested in staff issues. Elena will be invited to meet with the SSRC at the October meeting, and will also be invited to speak at the fall open staff meeting.

Retta will contact appropriate offices next week regarding hosting the **fall luncheon**. She will also contact Susan Schoen requesting funds from the President to help subsidize the meal. Committee members should look over the Hints for Luncheon Coordinators page and send any comments to the committee before Tuesday.

We have a number of staff members with strict dietary restrictions. Staff luncheons provide an option for vegetarians, but no other restrictions. Connie stated that Dining Services handles multiple dietary needs on a daily basis, and could easily accommodate any needs that a staff member may have. Invitations for staff luncheons should include an opportunity to request an alternate meal. The host department will gather these requests and forward them to Dining Services.

Offices hosting lunches should contact Human Resources for a list of retirees to invite.

"What is it" series: Last year's committee began discussing ways to build appreciation and understanding of what various offices on campus do. We would like to continue building on that idea this year. One suggestion is to hold Open Houses.

A survey will be sent to staff as part of the NCA re-accreditation process. More information will be forthcoming.

Kristin would like to implement a **Staff Ambassadors** program, starting with the SSRC. This program will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Wellness: Human Resources met with Greg Wallace and Jason Anderson regarding wellness issues. A "Healthy Lunch" buffet will be held at the Athletic Facility in October, and will include a tour of the facility and discussion of the wellness benefit. Greg will also be invited to the open support staff meeting to talk about wellness issues.

Anyone with an interest in wellness can join the Wellness Committee. Those interested should contact

Dave Zeiss.

Meetings of interest to staff as listed in the Sept. 13 Laurel Leaf
Grinnell Regional Women's Health Focus, October 23 (Register by Sept. 21)
"Don't Shoot Skinny Rabbits," September 25 (Register by Sept. 14)

Kristin will email supervisors encouraging them to support staff participation in these events.

Respectfully submitted,
Terri Phipps

Thursday, **October 4, 2007**

Attending: Terri Phipps, Kristin Lovig, Retta Kelley, Randy Jones

We established our meeting dates for the remainder of the year:

November 1

December 6

January 3

February 7

March 6

April 3

We discussed dates and times, for our '**Fall SSRC Meeting**', attempting to include as many departments as we can. We want to incorporate more of the "What Is It" theme into this meeting. We hope to have the following people present specific topics; Henry Reitz -- NCA Re-accreditation, Scott Baumler --the campus wide survey, Elena Bernal -- diversity on campus.

Continuing the "What Is It" theme, we discussed hosting Snack & Chats focused on individual departments in order to build appreciation and an understanding of the work they do.

We will attempt to sponsor a **tour of the Noyce Science building** over fall break. Retta will be contacting Stephanie Peterson and working on the logistics of this project.

Fall Luncheon will be taking place on Wednesday, October 24, in Quad. We will suggest that the committee send out a second reminder and directions on how to get to Quad in Main Hall.

We will be requesting an **e-mail account** for the SSRC. Randy will work with ITS to set this up.

We had a lengthy discussion regarding educational programs for support staff, including a Staff Ambassador program. Kristin will forward a link to the program.

We agreed that the campus community needed to be more aware of the committee in regard to our purpose as well as our goals for the year. Randy will draft blurbs for the memo.

We are focusing on wellness this year, specifically balancing work and home lives. Susan Wilson offers training based on this issue. Kristin will contact Susan for more information.

Respectfully submitted
Retta Kelley

Wednesday, **October 31, 2007**

Attending: Terri Phipps, Randye Jones, Kristen Lovig and Retta Kelley

47 staff/faculty toured the Noyce Science Center during fall break.

113 staff attended the fall luncheon. Awesome!

Fall SSRC Meeting: Will take place on Tuesday, November 6 at 2:00 p.m. in South Lounge. We went over who will be speaking and their general topics.

A **Wellness Event** will take place on Wednesday, November 14 and will be open to all staff. This will be a great stress relief and wonderful way to get out and tour the new Athletic Facility.

We discussed working on the theme "**Finding the Balance**" and suggested that we get a speaker for campus. We are still in the preliminary stages of planning for this event.

Snack and Chat is being planned for late January, prior to students returning. We will be discussing stress relief and coping skills.

Spring Break Programming was discussed, regarding wellness events and a health fair. We will see what we can finalize by the next meeting.

Staff break rooms were discussed. Many of our buildings do not have adequate break facilities. Retta will draft a memo to Marci Sorter requesting that all new construction incorporate complete staff lounge areas and break areas. We would also like to encourage staff in buildings that do have break areas to extend a welcome to staff in neighboring buildings to share their break rooms.

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Respectfully Submitted,
Retta Kelley

**SSRC Fall Meeting
November 6, 2007**

Terri Phipps opened the meeting and introduced Henry Rietz.

Henry spoke on behalf of the committee working towards re-accreditation in Sept. 2008. He said the committee has an educational mission placing emphasis on:

- How we can do better
- Training for leaders and social justice
- Diversity and well being
- Balancing your work loads
- Said a survey would be sent to all staff and support staff

Henry introduced his committee member Scott Baumler.

Scott emphasized the importance of the survey in campus and community efforts. The results will be shared with the public in the fall and that they are looking for continuous feed back devices. He said there are over 200 committees on campus and there is a need to raise campus awareness and participation.

Either Henry or Scott may be emailed with questions for the committee.

Terri then introduced Elena Bernal ('94), Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Achievement.

Elena asked, "What is diversity?" She states that it is beyond race and gender. It is the differences of each person, their power and privilege equity. She said she will work to broaden conversation

infrastructure to make it personal, not students, not faculty.

She wants to address:

- What is going to change the equity policy of staff of color for hiring
- Is there acknowledgement of support staff coming from others than those they work for
- Are we correct in scrapping a search and expanding the search area just for cultural diversity?

Elena has an open door policy for questions and can be reached through campus email.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

December 6, 2007

Terri Phipps opened the meeting with further discussion on break rooms for support staff. Rhetta Kelley suggested that correspondence with anyone concerning the issue should come from Human Resources for future construction projects. Kristin Lovig will polish the current letter and forward to Marci Sortor.

January is Wellness Month and the January Snack and Chat is aimed at stress reduction and practical tips to dial down stress. Possible Wellness topics could include a speaker on campus, chair massage, tai chi, or yoga.

Terri said Sparkpeople.com is a web site dealing with all kinds of health issues and has been beneficial to many in the campus community.

There will be a blurb in the Laurel Leaf about upcoming changes in benefits and Jim Mulholland will be contacted about a benefits fair this spring.

Marci Sortor has been contacted about tours of the old Dag House. Currently construction is still underway and moves into the building are hoping to take place about 10 days before classes resume.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

January 9, 2008

Members present: Terri Phipps, Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Vicky Bunnell, Kristin Lovig, Connie Morrison

Terri opened the meeting saying that Dag House was now being referred to as 1205 Park. She has been in contact with Lynn and Laureen about tours. Because construction is still going on and offices will be moving shortly, dates being looked at would be Jan. 11th or Jan. 19th. Group discussion decided that two tour times, one morning and one afternoon, would better serve the campus. People taking the tour need to be extra careful because of the construction. Kristin suggested that invitation notification be sent from the SSRC.

There may not be a January Snack and Chat but the Wellness committee is promoting "Lighten up Iowa". Weight loss teams will compete in weight loss and wellness activities. It's suggested that even if you

don't participate on a team that you use the stairs at least 3 times a day for exercise and promote a conscious effort to move away from your desk.

An Identity Theft workshop will be held on January 16th in JRC 101. If you didn't catch it the first time around you are urged to attend this workshop on one of the fastest growing crimes.

The break room program information needs to be sent to Marci Sortor. Kristin will take care of finalizing the draft and send the proposal to Marci.

Terri suggested a spot light on Wellness in the Laurel Leaf with a link to Sparkpeople.com. Wellness =motivation +time. It needs to be a lifestyle change.

Human Resources is working on the Benefits Fair for this Spring. April is Tranquility Month.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

SSRC February 7, 2008

Attending: Terri Phipps, Randye Jones, Connie Morrison, Kathy Miller, Retta Kelley, Kristin Lovig, Vicki Bunnell

Open house tours of 1205 Park (the former Dag House) will be held Feb. 22, 2008 from 10:00-12:00. A question was raised to see if Laureen and Lynn had a budget for refreshments. Kristin thought that the SSRC should cover the cost since the tour is technically an SSRC event. A memo to the Laurel Leaf should cover the event date, time and blurb covering the fact that the building is the Center for International Studies, Prairie Studies, etc.

Kristin has a meeting set up with Marci Sortor to discuss break rooms for support staff and the space needed.

It's possible the Snack and Chat will move to April. April will be "Tranquility Month". Topic ideas could include: How do you de-stress?

Tuesday the 13th, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) will be here to talk about Climate in Iowa: How to be prepared. Meeting will be in JRC 101. Bring your brown bag.

The Spring Luncheon Committee is working on the event. Much thanks to Retta for getting the information out to them.

There were questions regarding updates or notification on support staff pay grades. How many are there? What the positions are and the salary ranges. Kristin said Jim Mulholland would have that information. She would talk to him about what information could be released without crossing confidentiality lines.

The Staff Survey is close to being released.

Randy Jones has agreed to post the SSRC minutes to the web.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

March 6, 2008

Members present: Terri Phipps, Randy Jones, Vicki Bunnell, Retta Kelley, Kristin Lovig, and Connie Morrison.

Kristin has written a memo to Marci Sortor concerning the implementation of break rooms in future construction projects. Marci responded positively and there was discussion of the pros and cons of combining break areas. The thought was that the people concerned should be consulted as to the viability of combining the break areas.

There was a suggestion of installing exercise equipment such as a Swiss Ball, small weights, or bands in the break rooms. A book of exercises pin pointing specific body areas was also suggested.

Randy asked if benefits would be discussed at the spring staff meeting. Kristin said it may be possible to ask Jim Mullholland to speak on the subject. It may also be possible to ask Jim about pay grades, salary ranges and which positions fall into which grades but there are areas to which Jim could not speak because of privacy issues. Current job descriptions would make pay grades more easily decided.

The staff outlook survey results were discussed. The results show that there is still a problem with communication and morale.

Staff members are encouraged to get training, with or without remuneration, to achieve eligibility for higher paying jobs. Classes offered through the college should be offered to all staff members who would benefit.

It was mentioned that maybe the college needs a "Communications Task Force" for campus wide information and the distribution of such.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

April 10, 2008

Members present: Terri Phipps, Randy Jones, Connie Morrison, Kathy Miller, Kristin Lovig and Vicki Bunnell

Terri announced that the Spring Open Support Staff meeting will take place Tuesday, May 6 from 2:00-3:30 P.M. at JRC 101. Jim Mulholland will be asked to speak about pay grades and job levels. Summer work shops will be discussed and election of committee members for next year's SSRC will be held. Terri will give an overview of accomplishments of the current SSRC.

During administrative professionals week there will be chair massages provided by the Grinnell Regional Hospital massage therapists with help from a therapist from Dave Paulson Hair Design.

Kristin reported that she had emailed the appropriate people in regard to low impact exercise books and equipment being placed in break areas but has had no response. (Update: Kristin has since received a response that alternate work-out spaces are not being considered at this time. It has been suggested that employees utilize the fitness facility.)

Randy raised the question of campus policy on CPR and First Aid. Was it in the Wellness budget? Kristin responded that she thought both courses had been taught through the Wellness Committee in the past but that it hadn't happened for the last few years. She will check into it and report back.

Randy read a letter addressed to the SSRC that had been left in her mail box at the library. The anonymous author of the letter wasn't able to attend any of the meetings held by Henry Reitz when he discussed the results of the recertification survey. The author had several items s/he was not happy about including lack of communication, low staff morale, the location of Human Resources away from the main campus, updating of the staff handbook and job descriptions.

Vicki commented that HR held workshops that would help address concerns of morale and communication. Terri responded that not everyone could or would attend the classes because of work load, time allotment or reaction of their immediate supervisor. Kristin mentioned that an update to the handbook is ongoing.

Randy commented that if the location of HR was a huge concern, that we could try a satellite office on the main campus. She mentioned an example of a school that had a satellite office for Human Resources/Payroll in the student union.

Vicki asked if HR helped promote work conditions for people with handicaps and building revisions. The answer was that FM handles building remodels and IT handled cases involving computer programs for special needs. Kristin commented that this deserves further exploration.

It was suggested that exit interviews be held not only with people leaving to take jobs elsewhere but also with people changing jobs between departments.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Morrison

Spring Open Support Staff Meeting
May 6, 2008

2:00-3:30 p.m., JRC 101

Terri Phipps opened the meeting and noted some of the work of the SSRC this year:

- Coordinated tours of the newly renovated Jesse Macy House.
- Discussed the issue of stress on health, and reinvigorated the focus on wellness of the support staff. Lovig, at the request of and in collaboration with the SSRC, sent a memo to the Special Assistant to the President requesting a break room be included in new or renovated campus buildings.

- Recommended that Human Resources explore adding low impact, cost effective exercise equipment in break rooms (-not supported).
- Promoted and endorsed workshops/seminars on the topics of health, stress management (Human Cloning, HeartMath, professional chair massages), time management, and project management.
- Initiated a Benefits Fair to be held in fall 2008.
- Recommended publishing pay grades on the web, excluding titles and descriptions in order to protect the employees' identity (still under discussion).

Jim Mulholland, Assistant Treasurer, presented information about pay grades and job levels. Pay grades include 1) merit-based pay and 2) market-based pay. Merit-based pay is determined by one's supervisor. The market-based pay is determined with assistance from a compensation specialist (Watts and Wyatt) that compares data in our area with data in other areas, including Des Moines, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids. Although the college has many employees who have longevity with the college, which means the college has more employees above the median, we have no cap on salaries. Mulholland emphasized that everyone needs an accurate and up-to-date job description because these descriptions can affect pay. When evaluating compensation, one must consider not only salary, but also benefits that the college provides, i.e., retirement, insurance (medical, dental, vision, life, workman's compensation), vacation, sick leave and personal leave.

Angie Story discussed the computer workshops offered this summer for the new suite of Microsoft Office 2007 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access) that is being installed on all computers.

We elected new members to the 2008-09 SSRC: Stephanie Peterson and Ranae Hamor will serve in the two-year positions; Shannon Geisinger in the one-year position, and Roger Bauman in the alternate position. The returning members from the 2007-08 SSRC are Randye Jones and Retta Kelley.

Suggested Issues that could be considered for next year's committee include 1) official designation of one of the positions on the SSRC be for Dining Services; 2) a proposal for CPR training; 3) issues that emerged from the staff survey : low morale, lack of communication; 4) strategies to make HR more accessible to campus. This year's committee recommends, thanks to staff suggestions, that 5) exit interviews be conducted when employees transfer departments, in addition to when employees leave the college. This year the SSRC discussed bottom up reviews of supervisors, but have not yet resolved the issue of confidentiality and protection of the employee. We also discussed access for special needs visitors and members of campus. What is already available and what should be changed needs to be coordinated with other campus personnel. An updated Staff Handbook is scheduled to be issued by the beginning of the 2008-09 school year.

Both 2007-08 and 2008-09 SSRC members have a transitional meeting on May 22.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Bunnell