

SSRC Minutes

June 3, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

The committee discussed our goals for the coming year. They are, in no particular order:

- *Vacation Limit Awareness.* Many support staff are not aware that earned vacation time must be used within 18 months; once the maximum is reached no more vacation hours are added. However, the maximum figure is complicated because it is based on actual hours worked, length of time at the college, etc. It is desirable to have some sort of system that would notify employees when they hit their maximum number of accrued vacation hours. Retta will talk to Elena Machin and Kristin Lovig to find out if E-time is capable of sending a notification to an individual when the limit is met. That way the individual could plan to use some vacation time instead of losing it. An alternate idea is to raise awareness of the policy.
- *Updates to the Staff Handbook.* During the past year the committee pushed for the Office of Human Resources to update the Staff Handbook. The committee agrees it is important to continue this effort. Kristin Lovig said many parts of the handbook which needed updating are nearing completion, though she could not give a specific date for distribution. Methods of distribution will be discussed.
- *Updating SSRC Handbook.* What is the definition of “support staff” as it applies to this committee and those whom we represent? Kristin clarified that it has to do with being in an hourly non-exempt position. This committee wants to better define this as well as make updates in general to the SSRC handbook. We also brought up the question of whether there is a voice for non-hourly employees who may not fall under the representation of the SSRC, but who may also not fall into a supervisor category.
- *CPR Training.* Randye had been pursuing interest in this during the past year. Kristin feels the new Wellness Coordinator should be approached to organize this.
- *Continue to make Dining Services staff feel like part of the support staff group.* The importance of having a member of DS serving on the SSRC was stressed. We wondered if Dining Services staff receive the *Laurel Leaf* (hard copy).
- *Not lose sight of staff low morale and other issues that emerged from the 2007 Staff Survey.* It was suggested that Henry Rietz can be invited to talk to the committee about how the college is using the information from the survey.

- *Supervisor Interaction: Job Descriptions, Staff Annual Reviews, and Supervisor Review Process.* We want to raise awareness for having up-to-date job descriptions for all support staff, and continue to ask for all to have annual reviews by their supervisors.

Kristin mentioned that the Job Description Questionnaire is available to everyone on campus, as are job descriptions. It is the supervisors' job to write staff job descriptions, but staff are encouraged to talk to their supervisor about the job description, and that may include the staff looking over the questionnaire in preparation. The Office of Human Resources continues their effort to increase the rate of return for staff annual reviews performed by supervisors. One of the committee members asked in situations where a supervisor does not reliably perform annual reviews or update a job description: "what is the next step" that can be taken by a support staff? The Office of Human Resources has tried to catch job descriptions that seem to need updating and follow up with those supervisors. The committee may pursue posting the questionnaire on our webpage, and/or announcing this information in the Laurel Leaf.

[The Job Description Questionnaire can be found at: [\\Storage\HUMAN_RES\Campus_share\Forms\](#)]

Some staff support the idea of having a review process for supervisors, such as evaluation by those being supervised, but some also are wary because it would be hard to maintain anonymity (and honest evaluation) in cases where only a small number of staff report to a supervisor. The idea of a "360" review was mentioned, which would also include input from a supervisor's peers and a supervisor's supervisor. Kristin stated that some other campuses have "360" (or similar) review processes, and she suggested the possibility of a task force at Grinnell College to discuss review components.

The website will be updated as soon as possible to reflect the current members.

The next committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 1, but it may be rescheduled for after the July 4th holiday.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Peterson

SSRC Minutes

July 1, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Ranae Hamor, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

The committee approved the June minutes, which will be posted on the SSRC website. Kristin approved posting the Job Description Questionnaire on the Human Resources website.

We started the meeting with an update of the E-time and vacation time issue discussed last month (*see Vacation Limit Awareness paragraph in June 2008 minutes*). Unfortunately the current software is not capable of providing individual reminders when vacation time has reached the maximum number of hours one is allowed to carry. Elena Machin had sent a recent message by email (June 27, 2008) to staff with a table of maximum vacation hours based on years of service. The committee thought it beneficial to have this table reproduced in the Staff Handbook. We would also like to start a tradition of posting it in the *Laurel Leaf* and *Campus Memo* about twice a year, beginning in September when more staff are back on campus. (It was noted that only about half the regular Dining Services staff work during the summer, and we aren't sure if hard copies of the *Laurel Leaf* are distributed during the summer, even though they usually are during the academic year.)

The committee began discussion of updates needed to the SSRC Handbook. We went over better defining "support staff", clarifying the voting procedure, possible changes to the organization of the staff luncheon, and ideas for emphasizing the benefits of having a representative from Dining Services on the committee. We also briefly discussed how to present these updates to the staff body when the handbook revisions are complete. Next month we will continue work on this project.

Topics that grew from the handbook discussion included supervisors needing to be reminded that staff are paid for attending the staff open meetings, and ideas for getting information out to all staff including Dining Services (such as using the *Marketplace Messenger*).

The next meeting of the SSRC is Tuesday, August 5, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Peterson

SSRC Minutes

August 5, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Ranae Hamor, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, and Roger Bauman.

This meeting was a continuation of our review of the SSRC Handbook. In addition to changes discussed last month, we talked about adding a format for the general meetings and examples of how candidates are nominated. Responsibilities of the committee positions were reviewed, and we discussed attendance at general meetings and how minutes are distributed. Proposed changes to the luncheon procedures will have to be discussed with Human Resources. Shannon generated an electronic copy of the Handbook text, so she will make the changes discussed by this committee. We will review again with Kristin Lovig before the revisions are approved.

The next meeting of the SSRC will be September 2, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson

SSRC Minutes

September 9, 2008

Members present: Shannon Geisinger, Randye Jones, Retta Kelley, Ranae Hamor, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

Meeting opened by continuing discussion of SSRC Handbook revision. Formatting and rewording changes were discussed.

Elena Bernal '94 joined the meeting as our guest, to tell us about an assessment process on the topic of Campus Climate on Diversity. The assessment process will take place over the next year and a half, beginning with meetings to gather issues. Consultants are (Sue) Rankin and Associates. They will conduct a series of separate meetings with faculty, staff, and students, to hear all issues of diversity. Participation time will be provided to all staff, and a location will be provided if needed.

Twelve groups are meeting on September 10, 2008. The SSRC will be among the staff involved in one of these. In this first round of meetings, the consultants have prepared four questions and they will take notes of the resulting discussions. Thereafter the consulting team will visit campus approximately monthly, sometimes meeting with small groups and sometimes with larger groups. It was proposed that a visit coincide with the support staff general meeting this fall. They could provide an overview of the assessment process, answer any questions, and begin a general discussion of staff concerns.

The consulting team will formally respond to concerns while maintaining confidentiality. Findings may be disseminated to the entire campus around early February. Senior administration will meet with the consulting team to decide what to do about concerns. This concluded the presentation by Elena.

Our fall general meeting was discussed. We propose a "Staff Open Meeting, with Support Staff Discussion to follow." Kristin Lovig will be invited to give us an update on the Staff Handbook, which should be close to a release of the revision at the time of Fall Break. Rankin and Associates will be invited to give us an overview of the campus climate on diversity assessment. We anticipate having time to break out into smaller groups of support staff for discussion with the consultants. We agreed upon Wednesday, October 22 as the date of the fall general meeting. JRC 101 will be reserved, and the Office of Human Resources will provide refreshments. Randye will design the invitations.

Other committee business discussed before the close of this meeting: the luncheon committee has been notified; continued discussion of how luncheons are organized and what role HR plays; before the next SSRC meeting the members will read the handbook revisions and be ready to finalize it.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson.

SSRC Minutes

October 7, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Randy Jones, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

Meeting opened with planning for the Fall General Meeting:

- Kristin Lovig will provide an update on the Staff Handbook. If the benefits portion of the handbook is not ready for release, we ask that she explain that the goal is to equalize the sick-leave benefits of support and administrative staff, and why the issue is so complicated.
- We will mention that the Fall President's Staff Meeting occurs the next day, Oct 23. President Osgood will update staff about current college matters such as the financial market and its impact on our endowment, the marketing plan for the college, and building updates.
- Elena Bernal '94 will provide a brief overview of the Campus Climate on Diversity assessment process, and introduce the consultants visiting from Rankin and Associates.
- A discussion among Support Staff (hourly, non-union college employees) and the consultants will constitute the remainder of the meeting (roughly one hour). The format is likely to be small groups, each with a consultant.
- Human Resources provided labels to distribute the invitations to staff. Paper invitations will be sent to all staff, and the meeting will also be announced on the SSRC website, the college calendar, and in the Campus Memo.
- The meeting will be held from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm in JRC 101; refreshments have been ordered. There was some concern that the meeting is scheduled for longer than an hour, but we felt this amount of time was necessary to allow open discussion with the consultants.
- **[10/15] Please note:** Due to a scheduling conflict Rankin and Associates is unable to be in Grinnell during our fall break. The SSRC is working with Elena on an alternate date when the consultants can be here, and our Fall General Meeting will be re-scheduled accordingly.

Other things discussed:

- The Fall Luncheon information will be posted on the SSRC website.
- There was a request for a follow-up to the HeartMath training. Kristin mentioned there could be a state-funded study in our community in the future.
- A web-based system for employment application is being sought by the college. Staff from Human Resources, the Office of the Dean, and Information Technology Services are spearheading the product selection.
- The SSRC suggested that funding be put in the Human Resources budget to subsidize the staff luncheons (rather than ask for the Office of College Services to subsidize the luncheon each time). This would make accounting easier for the luncheon committee.
- Human Resources is considering a Leadership Development Program for employees.
- We continued review of the SSRC handbook, covering General Meetings and Communication.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson

SSRC Minutes

November 4, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Ranae Hamor, and Kristin Lovig.

Rescheduling and details for the Fall General Meeting:

- A tentative date/time is set for December 11, 2:00-4:00 pm. Elena Bernal '94 is working on exact timing of the visit by Rankin & Associates.
- The first half-hour of the meeting will be led by the SSRC members.
 - We hope to have the revised SSRC Handbook posted online and ready to announce at the meeting.
 - Kristin Lovig will report on the status of the Staff Handbook revisions (section 1 "Employment").
 - Elena Bernal '94 will give an overview of the **Campus Climate on Diversity** assessment currently being conducted, and introduce the consultants from Rankin & Associates.
- A discussion among Support Staff (hourly, non-union college employees) and the consultants will constitute the remainder of the meeting (roughly one and a half hours). Rankin & Associates are likely to have 2 consultants here for this visit. Attendees may be divided into smaller discussion groups. Since Rankin & Associates are only sending 2 consultants, available members of the SSRC will assist in taking notes during the small group discussions.
- **The consultants are here to listen to the Support Staff of the college -- this is our chance to speak up about our perceptions of the campus climate!** We encourage all Support Staff to attend! We will mail invitations to all Support Staff by campus mail.
- Human Resources can provide us with pencils and paper, in case anyone wants to submit an anonymous question or topic during the meeting.
- Shannon Geisinger will reserve JRC-101 as soon as the time can be confirmed with Rankin & Associates.
- Randye Jones will send out the invitations (labels from HR) and post in the Campus Memo. We need to also ask Barb Shell to post a copy by the time clock where Dining Services staff clock in and out.
- Stephanie Peterson will post on the SSRC webpage.
- Kristin will let supervisors know about the meeting, and order refreshments.

Kristin Lovig provided SSRC members with a copy of annual performance review documents (Performance Assessment Questionnaire, Employee Evaluation Report, and the Policy which is provided to supervisors); committee members may make comments to be considered by a proposed task force whose purpose will be to revise the policy and documents. Members of the task force are

expected to be a selection of supervisors, staff, and administrators, with revisions hopefully in place before the next annual employee performance review period (2009).

The college is pursuing a web-based system for employment application; the selection committee has seen demonstrations of two products, and hope to demo two more before choosing a product for use.

The SSRC's initial suggestion to change how the funding is provided for the staff luncheon has been rejected (see Oct 2008 minutes). Our goal was to make accounting easier by having funding in one account. Perhaps rather than have all the funding in the HR budget, it could all be in College Services?

It was noted that the invitations for the staff luncheon that were sent to Dining Services staff arrived only a day or two before the RSVP deadline.

Webpage changes:

- Stephanie created a draft of an online nomination form. The link should appear in the left-hand side menu on the main SSRC webpage.
- Ranae Hamor's email was incorrect on the SSRC webpage and will be corrected.
- The "officer" positions held by the SSRC members will be added to our info.

An "SSRC Box" was found by a past member; it will be opened by the current committee at the December committee meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson

SSRC Minutes

December 2, 2008

Members present: Retta Kelley, Randy Jones, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

This month we made our final review of the SSRC Handbook, which we have been updating throughout the year; we reviewed preparations for the Fall General Meeting; and we discussed performance reviews.

SSRC Handbook:

After a couple minor corrections, it will be ready to post online. A recap of the major changes: defining "Support Staff", explaining the committee structure, expanded section on committee selection, and clarified the election process.

Fall General Meeting:

Our discussion here focused on our preparations for the staff interaction with Rankin and Associates, our guests at the Fall General Meeting. We want to have a "question bucket" at the back of the room; Randy can get a supply of paper cards, and Randy or Kristin can bring pencils.

We want to stress that note-taking will be anonymous and confidential; some of the SSRC members and some staff from Student Affairs have been recruited to assist with taking notes. If the large group splits into smaller groups, we should ask that "folks be thoughtful about which group you participate in," depending on what folks want to comment on. We have three smaller rooms reserved (in addition to JRC 101), in case more private conversations are needed during the discussions with Rankin and Associates.

The college has been working with Rankin and Associates to also set up separate meeting times for Dining Services (because of their shift times, 1-3 was not optimal), and Facilities Management (not included in "Support Staff"). Dining Services will meet with them on the same day as the General Meeting, but at 1:45-3:00 pm. FM has been more difficult to schedule and had not been arranged by the time this committee met on December 2.

Performance Reviews:

At the November SSRC meeting, Kristin Lovig handed out some documents regarding the annual performance review process, for us to review and discuss at this month's committee meeting. Some of us had asked other support staff to also look at and comment on the documents, and during this meeting we generated lots of comments, especially on the document which gets distributed to supervisors: "Grinnell College Administrative Policies & Procedures: Annual Performance Review Process."

Discussion included the timeline: staff want supervisors to be held accountable for completing

staff performance reviews, perhaps better define the timetable for both the process and for supervisor accountability and better define “special circumstances” which may delay review deadlines. What can the employee do to ensure their supervisor provides a review? Supervisors should be reminded to focus on performance of the employee, not any personal conflicts.

The phrase “if available” is unclear (in section IIB), it seems to refer to “previous performance review and goals”, not just to the goals.

Some staff report not getting to have input in the process (that is, not all supervisors provide the self-assessment document), they are just handed the final evaluation at their review meeting. The last question of the Performance Assessment Questionnaire is great – staff can comment on supervisor without feeling threatened. This self-assessment is now just “recommended”, can that be made mandatory for all staff?

There is a perception that staff annual performance reviews are tied very closely to compensation, that performance reviews are not just about how an employee is doing. We discussed whether the two could effectively be separated. Could the cost-of-living raise and merit raise be split and awarded at different times of the year? Would supervisor work-load associated with staff reviews be eased a bit if reviews were tied to employee anniversary dates for example, rather than all being done at the same time? What are the benefits of a “continual” review process (rather than “Follow-up” as stated in section IID); monthly or every six months was suggested for future consideration. It was noted that supervisors themselves have greatly varied situations, regarding how many staff they are responsible for reviewing, how they seek input for the review, how they complete the review process with the employee, even how often they personally interact with their employees throughout the year. Recommend rewording “provide both positive and negative feedback”; we feel negative feedback should be immediate when situations arise in the workplace.

Closing the discussion, Kristin gave us the general timeline she is working with to review these documents: distribute to supervisors via listserve and hold a Lunch-and-Learn in mid-December, perhaps also a general meeting in December; a task force to be assembled in January (including representative staff members and supervisors) to meet weekly for a month to make revisions.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Peterson

Support Staff Fall General Meeting, Minutes

December 11, 2008

Retta Kelley, Chair of the SSRC (Support Staff Relations Committee), introduced the current committee members and began the meeting with an overview of what the committee has been working on this semester. We have been revising the SSRC Handbook; it is now available online at the SSRC website. Revisions include defining "Support Staff" and clarifying the committee structure and election process. We want to periodically place a vacation limit reminder in the Laurel Leaf and Campus Memo. Vacation maximums will be clearly defined in the revised Staff Handbook. The committee has been allowed to provide input into a review of the policy for staff performance reviews. If anyone has ideas they want to share, or are interested in participating in a task force which will meet in January, contact Kristin Lovig in the Office of Human Resources.

Kristin Lovig next addressed the staff with an update on revisions to the Staff Handbook. The Staff Handbook has been split into two parts: Employment, and Benefits. President Osgood and Dean Smith now have portions of the revised Staff Handbook, which they plan to review with "extreme care."

Elena Bernal '94 then gave a brief overview of how the college is evaluating our Campus Climate on Diversity and introduced our visiting consultants from Rankin & Associates.

This assessment is a proactive initiative of the college, facilitated by Rankin & Associates, with the final outcome to be a plan of action for improvement. Today's "fact-finding" visit by Rankin & Associates is for gathering evidence of staff members' everyday experiences in the workplace and in the campus community. They are here to listen to the challenges that we want to talk about. Similar sessions have taken place with other groups on campus. Rankin & Associates will then develop a survey; this follow-up survey is a very important part of the process. We are encouraged to participate in the follow-up survey, and we should encourage co-workers and other support staff members to participate. The honesty of respondents is critical, and all responses are handled with confidentiality. Rankin & Associates will analyze the data as a group, and no names or other identifying information will be reported.

Sue Rankin went to lead a separate discussion with Dining Services staff which was occurring at the same time. Stephanie C., also from Rankin & Associates, stayed in JRC 101 with support staff. She gave us a definition of "climate" to think about when we answer the four questions, which are reproduced here:

***Climate** is considered the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential.*

Question 1: How would you describe the climate for the Support Staff at Grinnell College? Please feel welcome to provide examples.

Question 2: What do you feel is the greatest challenge at Grinnell College facing members of the Support Staff community?

Question 3: What suggestions do you have for improving the climate for members of the Support Staff community?

Question 4: Please describe any other concerns you may have about the climate at Grinnell College, not necessarily those facing members of the Support Staff community.

Small group discussions followed for the rest of the meeting time, with all notes being gathered by Rankin & Associates at the end.

If anyone missed this opportunity to speak out and they would still like to comment before the survey is released, contact one of your SSRC members for more information.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The Support Staff Relations Committee (SSRC) is concerned with working conditions and general benefits at the College. The SSRC is not mandated to involve itself with personnel matters relating to specific incidents or individual cases.

Feel free to contact the current members!

<i>Retta Kelley, Chair</i>	<i>Career Development, 1127 Park St.</i>	<i>ext. 4940</i>	<i>kelleyla@grinnell.edu</i>
<i>Shannon Geisinger</i>	<i>Conference Operations, JRC 206</i>	<i>ext. 3178</i>	<i>geisings@grinnell.edu</i>
<i>Ranae Hamor</i>	<i>Dining Services, JRC (Baking)</i>	<i>ext. 3661</i>	<i>rhamor@partnercom.net</i>
<i>Randy Jones</i>	<i>Library, Listening Room</i>	<i>ext. 3365</i>	<i>jonesran@grinnell.edu</i>
<i>Stephanie Peterson</i>	<i>Academic Support, Science 1232</i>	<i>ext. 4107</i>	<i>petersos@grinnell.edu</i>
<i>Roger Bauman</i>	<i>Physical Education Complex</i>	<i>ext. 3834</i>	<i>baumanr@grinnell.edu</i>

SSRC Minutes

January 6, 2009

Members present: Retta Kelley, Ranae Hamor, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, Roger Bauman, and Kristin Lovig.

The committee meeting began with a review of the Fall General Meeting which was held on December 11, 2008. We felt most of the participants in the small break-out groups opened up for some good discussions; many of the topics were similar to those brought up in Rankin & Associates' first fact-finding visit to Grinnell College. About 15 staff from Dining Services were able to meet separately with Sue Rankin. The follow-up survey from Rankin & Associates will be ready to deploy around February 16, 2009. The company has emphasized the confidentiality of all survey responses. Kristin asked that a couple sentences be revised for clarification before publishing the minutes.

The committee moved on to new business items. We discussed whether we need a listserv strictly for Support Staff. (Listserve is e-mail lists that are mainly used for announcements.) There is currently a listserv for all Staff, but the SSRC ran into a situation before the Fall General Meeting when it would have been nice to send a message to just Support Staff. We talked about whether such a list could possibly be maintained by Human Resources or someone on the SSRC, or if it could be "opt-in" and require less hands-on maintenance. We know that some Support Staff do not have easy access to e-mail. Stephanie mentioned she currently has experience with Lyris listserv maintenance, but didn't think that was very common among staff, so it could be harder for future committees to maintain a listserv. No decision was made at this time.

Mr. Briscoe (Office of Security) wants someone from the SSRC to serve on the Parking Committee; meetings will likely be over the noon hour. Roger volunteered, and Shannon is willing to be a backup if needed.

The SSRC Secretary (currently Stephanie) needs to make a hard copy of new minutes to send to the Dining Services SSRC member (currently Ranae) for posting in the D.S. staff area. A footer should be included in future minutes, listing the "SSRC purpose" statement and all of our member contact info, along with the date of the next scheduled committee meeting.

Kristin briefly updated us on an "appeals" procedure which is being considered for inclusion in the Staff Handbook. Though we didn't discuss details, the procedure would outline a review process for problem resolution.

We discussed the idea of a comment box. Though recent years have shown that many Support Staff are willing to speak up with questions and comments at open meetings,

we recognize that not everyone feels comfortable doing so. We would like to have a box at the open meetings for people to submit comments/questions/ suggestions, for items that are applicable to the meeting at that time or items that they want the SSRC to consider at future meetings. After some discussion however, we do not wish to allow anonymous comments, even though submissions would be treated in a confidential manner. The reason is that we want to be able to contact the person if we have questions and also so we can follow-up and give feedback on the item, thus hopefully preventing the frustration that may arise with anonymous submissions.

“Pocket Meetings” is an idea where some SSRC members would be available in a certain location at a certain time, for any staff member to drop in and talk. These could be scheduled at various times of the year. For example, two SSRC members might be available during a common break time in the Spencer Grill, and have the meeting date/time/location announced in advance so staff are aware of it. Discussion of this idea was positive in nature, but nothing is being scheduled yet.

Stephanie volunteered to place a vacation limit reminder in the Campus Memo in January after the spring semester has started.

The committee received a question asking why Kristin Lovig is included in the committee meetings. The reason is that she is our liaison with the administrators of the College, and she can also keep us informed about things that may be of interest to Support Staff. We (the SSRC) concern ourselves with issues that affect Support Staff in general. After discussions by the committee, we can decide with Kristin how to follow-up on issues.

The committee discussed a vacation issue that was brought to our attention. However, we deemed the issue to be isolated in nature and referred it to Kristin and Human Resources.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The next committee meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, February 3, 2009.

The Support Staff Relations Committee (SSRC) is concerned with working conditions and general benefits at Grinnell College. The SSRC is not mandated to involve itself with personnel matters relating to specific incidents or individual cases.

Feel free to contact the current members!

<i>Retta Kelley, Chair</i>	<i>Career Development, 1127 Park St.</i>	<i>ext. 4940</i>	<i>kelleyla@grinnell.edu</i>
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<i>Roger Bauman</i>	<i>Physical Education Complex</i>	<i>ext. 3834</i>	<i>baumanr@grinnell.edu</i>

SSRC Minutes

February 10, 2009

Support Staff Relations Committee members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Ranae Hamor, Shannon Geisinger, and Stephanie Peterson.

Several members had conflicts on the February 3 date, so this month's meeting was postponed till February 10. Our agenda for this meeting is:

- the spring general meeting,
- the spring luncheon,
- and continued discussion of some of last month's topics.

The date and time for the spring general meeting has not yet been set; we are targeting the second week of spring break. We decided to invite President Osgood to address Support Staff about budget and economic issues facing the college and staff in particular.

Other ideas regarding the agenda of the general meeting:

We'll contact Elena Bernal to find out if there is any news to share with staff about the Campus Climate Assessment project.

We discussed finding out who is serving on the Benefits Committee, wishing to present those names to staff just for information purposes. (Randye mentioned that the Diversity Committee is working to create a list of all committees on campus, though a completion date is not known.)

Elections are held at the spring general meeting. Our communications officer will submit an announcement to the Campus Memo asking for nominations before the general meeting; nominations at the meeting are also welcome.

As part of the general meeting we also want to include some open discussion time for Support Staff to voice their concerns to the SSRC (in addition to having a comment box available for people who aren't comfortable speaking up in a group).

Continuing a discussion started last month, we decided to try a comment box at the general meeting. The purpose of the comment box would be for folks to bring their concerns to the attention of the SSRC. We will announce at the meeting that the comment box is available, and that we encourage people to include their names, which will be treated with confidentiality. With a name, we can get additional information if needed and also follow up with that person. We cannot guarantee follow up on anonymous comments. We do not plan to read any of the submissions at the general meeting, simply because we can't guarantee that we would have any immediate answers. Randye thinks she can supply the box and some note cards.

There is sometimes confusion that the fall/spring general meeting and the fall/spring luncheon are the same thing. They are not! According to the SSRC Handbook:

"The primary purpose of these general meetings is to provide an opportunity for group discussion and presentation of issues for the SSRC to relay to the administration."

The luncheons are a more social event, organized by a rotating schedule of campus offices. These two events are also typically held on different days.

The luncheon committee has set the date for the spring luncheon. It will be Tuesday, March 24, 2009, at Noon, in the Quad Dining Hall. Invitations to staff with information on how to RSVP will be distributed by the luncheon committee.

We continued our consideration of creating a Support Staff listserv. This listserv would be an email list of only hourly non-union Support Staff, used by the SSRC for occasional announcements. We basically agreed it is a good idea, but the listserv should be moderated by multiple members of the SSRC to ensure proper content. That means, if any other member of the list tried to send a message to the whole list, someone on the SSRC would have to “approve” the message before it would be sent to everyone on the list. A footer should be appended automatically to all messages, giving recipients the option to opt-out of the listserv, and warning that the list is not for general use and is moderated by the SSRC. In addition, a member of the SSRC would be appointed to work with Human Resources to maintain the accuracy of the listserv. Retta will contact ITS to begin the process of setting up the listserv, and Stephanie can attend a set-up meeting as well. Once the listserv is set up, the committee must have a routine of following up any email communications with hard-copies to Support Staff members in Dining Services.

From the listserv discussion, an concern was brought up about Support Staff members in Dining Services and their lack of time during working hours to check their college email account. We wondered whether something could be set up similar to Wellness time, where a short amount of time might be provided weekly for them to access a computer and check their college email accounts.

Another topic from last month: informal meetings where some SSRC members would be available in a certain location at a certain time for any staff member to drop in and talk. Several of us have volunteered to be available for drop-in discussions, probably at the Spencer Grill. Dates and times to be determined.

The committee received a question asking about a grievance policy for the college. We reported in last month’s minutes that there may be a policy related to this issue (an “appeals” process) in the revised Staff Handbook. The SSRC members present felt that having a written policy in place is important to Support Staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The next committee meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, March 3, 2009.

The Support Staff Relations Committee (SSRC) is concerned with working conditions and general benefits at Grinnell College. The SSRC is not mandated to involve itself with personnel matters relating to specific incidents or individual cases.

Feel free to contact the current members!

<i>Retta Kelley, Chair</i>	<i>Career Development, 1127 Park St.</i>	<i>ext. 4940</i>	<i>kelleyla@grinnell.edu</i>
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Support Staff Relations Committee meeting minutes

March 3, 2009

Support Staff Relations Committee members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Roger Bauman, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, and Kristin Lovig.

Spring General Meeting:

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2009

2:00 P.M.

JRC-101

Open portion of meeting: President Osgood has accepted our invitation to address staff with a brief overview of the current economic conditions and answer economic questions from the floor. Elena Bernal (or Retta on her behalf) will give a brief update on the campus climate assessment on-going with Rankin & Associates. We will also give an update on what the SSRC has accomplished in recent months.

Support Staff only portion of meeting: Nominations will be accepted, and voting will be held to elect new members to the SSRC. (Nominations are also invited before the meeting: email SSRC@grinnell.edu or submit the online nomination form at the SSRC website <http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/humanresources/ssrc/>; nomination form is a link in the left menu). We will announce our comment box for items to be considered by the SSRC during its scheduled monthly meetings.

Planning logistics: Randye will advertise the spring general meeting and elections in the Campus Memo, and she has labels from H.R. to send out printed fliers. Shannon has the reservation on the college Calendar. Kristin will order refreshments. Randye will supply a box and cards for the Comment Box. Stephanie will post on the webpage.

Spring Staff Luncheon:

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2009

NOON

QUAD DINING HALL

The luncheon committee has sent invitations for the Spring Staff Luncheon; the announcement is also posted on the SSRC website.

Shannon has been working on updates to the published luncheon planning checklist. She gave us an overview and distributed the draft for review, which we will discuss next month.

Parking Committee Update:

Roger is currently serving on the Parking Committee; he shared topics discussed at the February 6 parking meeting and listened to our comments. Kristin noted that a bicycle

commuter reimbursement is being discussed by the Benefits Committee in response to federal legislation.

Other Brief Business:

Release date is still undetermined for the revised Staff Handbook. Draft sections are under review. The college is getting bids for short-term disability insurance options. A question brought to the SSRC regarding a written grievance policy was again mentioned; there is a draft of a policy included in the draft Staff Handbook.

Stephanie brought Benefits Fair brochures for the committee members. This brochure is available at this URL, courtesy of the Laurel Leaf:

<http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/collegeservices/laurelleaf/wellness/includes/BENEFITS%20FAIR%20BROCHURE2009.pdf>

We ran out of time and were not able to discuss other business carried over from last month: distribution list and outreach. We will add these to the agenda for our April meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2009.

The Support Staff Relations Committee (SSRC) is concerned with working conditions and general benefits at Grinnell College. The SSRC is not mandated to involve itself with personnel matters relating to specific incidents or individual cases.

Feel free to contact the current members!

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Support Staff Relations Committee meeting minutes

April 7, 2009

Support Staff Relations Committee members present: Retta Kelley, Randye Jones, Roger Bauman, Shannon Geisinger, Stephanie Peterson, and Kristin Lovig.

Mark Schneider and Barb Trish discussed with the SSRC an idea the faculty have generated. The basic idea is an "emergency" fund to which any college employee could contribute. The funds could help overcome some current economic shortcomings, and recommendations for approving individual applications for use of funds might be handled by a future committee of faculty/staff/administrators. After receiving some questions and positive feedback from us, they plan to write up something for wider distribution.

The Benefits Fair was mentioned. Running April 8 & 9, it offers a variety of exhibits and information sessions.

The Spring General Meeting for staff was well attended. Minutes have been posted. Kristin will begin planning the meeting in May when the new members are welcomed to the SSRC. The salary level below which employees might see an increase is still unknown; this will probably be decided at the Trustees' meetings in late April.

Reports from other committees:

- Parking Committee – Roger said the last two meetings were cancelled. They meet on Friday, April 10. It was noted that a handicapped parking spot has been designated behind HHH.
- Diversity Committee – Still working on generating a comprehensive list of committees on campus. There may be increased opportunities for staff involvement on some committees (EcoCampus is one example). The Conference Operations office schedules most committee meetings and could maybe help identify committees missed by the Diversity Committee.
- Employee Performance Evaluations – Shannon and Roger have been on the committee which is revising the documents and process, and Kristin of course has been involved, too. They described for us the new document and said evaluators will have a training session about using the new evaluation system. There are several pilot groups who will try it out this spring.

Other new business included a question from an employee about how certain Wellness activities are approved. There is an opportunity at the Benefits Fair to talk about Wellness programs with director Jennifer Jacobsen.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

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SPRING GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2009. 2:00 P.M. JRC-101.

Minutes from the open portion of the meeting:

- Matt Imber '09 invited the campus community to the All-Campus Hoe-Down on April 4. The Hoe-Down is sponsored by the Wellness Program and Student Affairs.
- Marci Sortor (Associate Dean and Vice President for Institutional Planning) gave an overview of the current economic conditions and answered some questions from the floor. A few of the main points follow. There are four main sources of money for the college's working budget: Gifts, Auxiliaries (e.g., bookstore, dining services), Tuition, and Endowment. About half of the operating revenue comes from our endowment. The current economy really has hit all sources of the college's revenue in some way.

When planning the next year's budget, there are some guidelines put in place by the board of trustees. For example, the college can only spend 4% of the total endowment in a given year, and there is a 5% limit on how much spending can be increased or decreased to the next year's budget. These amounts are calculated from a 12-quarter rolling average (averaged over the previous three years), so the operating budget is somewhat insulated against large cuts or gains from year to year.

All areas of the college are looking at ways to dial back spending. We have already cut back on endowment spending and discretionary spending. The fiscal year 2010 (July 2009 to June 2010) budget is still evolving, but basically we are already operating at the necessary decreased level of spending given the reductions we have already made. Early modeling of the FY 2011 budget also considers a 5% decrease. Even if the market has started to rebound by then, remember the 12-quarter rolling average which will create a slow rebound for the budget, but that also allows the endowment to recover more before our budget sees those increases again.

A question was asked about a pay freeze. At present the budget proposal includes a small increase for those under a certain level of compensation. A question was asked about promotions. That doesn't have a simple answer; promotions will have to be handled on a case-by-case basis. A question was asked about reduction in staff benefits; specifically the tuition remission. There is no planned reduction in benefits; the tuition remission is set by the associations (ACM or GLCA) to which we belong.

- Elena Bernal '94 (Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Achievement) gave an update on the campus climate assessment on-going with consultants from Rankin & Associates. The survey will be released in the next week (available online or on paper, with a version for students, staff, and faculty), and supervisors will be contacted regarding employees being compensated for their time to complete the survey.

Your honesty when taking the survey is very important. Elena stressed the anonymity of your responses. Computer IP addresses are not collected while completing the survey online. All responses are collected by Rankin & Associates, who then compiles the data and reports back to the college. Anyone who has questions about how the survey responses are kept anonymous can contact Elena or Rankin & Associates.

The survey will take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Because the survey is anonymous, people who take the survey online will have to complete the survey at one time (it cannot be saved and returned to later). However, it can be taken from any computer.

What happens after the survey? Data will be reported back to the college in the Summer of 2009. This will include findings and recommendations from the consultants. College administrators will develop strategies for improving the campus community, and in the Spring of 2010 the college expects to start implementing those ideas.

Minutes from the Support Staff only portion of the meeting:

- Retta Kelley gave an update on what the SSRC has accomplished in recent months:
 - Facilitated the “fact-finding” discussion for support staff with Rankin & Associates in the Fall of 2008.
 - Input into the Staff Handbook.
 - Input into revisions of the performance review process; we may see some of these changes already this spring.
 - One of us was asked to serve on the Parking Committee.
- Results of the elections for new members of the SSRC:
 - Sondi Burnell (Academic Support), 2-year position
 - Nettie Vaverka (Admission), 2-year position
 - Lynda Hendrickson (Financial Aid), 1-year position
 - Karla Landers (Library), Alternate

Congratulations new members! Continuing members from this year are Ranae Hamor and Stephanie Peterson, who will serve the second year of their terms in '09-'10 with the new members.

- Our comment box was available for items to be considered by the SSRC during its scheduled monthly meetings. No comments were received at this time.

Thank you to Human Resources for providing the refreshments for the Spring General Meeting!

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Peterson - SSRC Secretary

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2009.

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