Staff Council: Meeting Minutes

#6 – Thursday, November 16, 2023   
Chair Room, Rubin Campus Center/Zoom

Attendees: L. Baghsarian, W. Battelle, A. Boertjens, N. Caligiuri, J. Cluett, A. Curran, D. Dubois, R. Gardner, M. Hamilton, K. Hollan, P. Howe, C. Keller, A. LeSane, N. Luiz, K. Marengo, S. Miles, E. Morganelli, T. Scola

1. Meeting was called to order at 9:02am
2. Meeting minutes from 11/2 were approved.
3. Chair Report:
   1. The task force for exploring working hours is established and has begun meeting. The charge is shared in Teams. The task force will be given a standing agenda spot for pertinent updates. The goal is to provide recommendations to leadership by the end of January focused primarily on flex/hybrid work policy and summer hours schedule.
   2. President Wang will be attending our 12/7 full council meeting to share her vision for the future of WPI. No preparation is needed by Staff Council members.
   3. Chair Scola discussed the involvement of staff in major searches such as the current one for our new Provost. Currently, we are formally requesting that one of the President’s appointed search seats be a staff member for the Provost search.
4. Sub-Committee Report Outs:
   1. Elections – no major updates. This group will share the election timeline on Teams to ensure we’re all on the same page.
   2. Community Engagement – looking to survey staff to gauge interest in community involvement activities/events. We want to provide opportunities for volunteer/charitable work if it aligns with the wants of our community. The group is also continuing to work on getting distribution list access.
   3. Feedback form – There haven’t been many entries recently, but are prepared for an uptick after the Harvest of Thanks event.
   4. Events & Planning – Harvest of Thanks event is next week. All details are worked out and staff council members are asked to arrive 15 minutes early to help with setup/prep if possible. A sign-up sheet for “shifts” at different stations will be posted in Teams.
   5. Communications & PR – announcements for Harvest of Thanks have been published via WPI Today and the campus TVs. A request was made to VP Lauren Turner to ask Management Council to encourage their staff to attend. For future events, be sure to loop Roxanne in for any announcemnts.
   6. Climate Survey Working Group – the survey has closed with a high response rate. Data should be available in early Spring and pertinent info will be provided to Staff Council to help steer our work.
5. Amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws:
   1. The proposed amendments regarding eligibility for re-election and executive committee election timeline were shared with the whole group and added to the Teams site. They will be available for review & comment until Monday 12/4.
   2. The proposed amendments will be voted on by the full Staff Council at the next meeting on 12/7.
6. It was decided that a working group should be established to move our Staff Council goals into a formal Strategic Plan document. This will also allow for better monitoring and reporting about our achievements and progress each term.
   1. Lead: Mike Hamilton
   2. Members: Caitlin Keller, Amy Curran, Elena Morganelli, Bill Battelle, Theona Scola
7. Bill Battelle reported out from his participation in the Staff & Faculty Profiles. He will keep us apprised of the progress and gather feedback from us as appropriate. Currently, faculty profiles tend to be more robust and few staff are aware of their ability to edit their profiles.
8. New Business:
   1. It has been requested that we explore the possibility of reflecting staff representation on search committees formally. Faculty have formal representation as outlined in their handbook. It would be beneficial to connect with Mark Richman, Secretary for the Faculty, to collaborate on this effort.