

June 14, 2024
10:30 AM

Staff Council Meeting

Attendees: Joy Skinner, Kay Grigsby, Abbie Raum, Brenda Cummer

Not Present: Adrian Norris, Kris Steege, Jamie Hollaway, Dean Cockerham, Stephanie Newsom, Beth Sinnwell, Sheila Kittleson, Ryan Callahan, Amy Wilson

Minutes

Agenda item: Holiday Calendar

Discussion:

We were informed of a departure from the usual on the 2024-2025 holiday calendar regarding one discretionary holiday. Instead of having Easter Monday off, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving will be given as a holiday instead. This was decided due to the 2024-2025 academic calendar. The week after Easter will be Tour Week, and it makes more sense to have the entire week for Tour Week rather than a shortened week due to a holiday.

Agenda item: Staff Handbook Updates

Discussion:

This discussion point will be moved to the next meeting so that Jamie Hollaway and Amy Wilson can speak further on the progress that has been made on the Staff Handbook review.

Agenda item: Wellness Activities

Discussion:

As planned at our last meeting, Joy reached out to some instructors at The Wellness Center to discuss scheduling chair yoga or other monthly wellness activities for the staff. While no specific dates have been chosen, everyone seemed excited at the possibility and willing to put in the time to create this event.

At our next meeting we will also confirm that The Wellness Center and Human Resources are able to collaborate on automatically uploading attendance for those participating in Wartburg's insurance's wellness challenge points.

Open Discussion: Staff Inclusion

Discussion:

Points were brought up and discussed regarding ways to include members of staff that are typically left out of faculty and staff initiatives on campus. It was asked whether it would be possible to have the annual flu shots set up in a way that staff members who are not on Wartburg's insurance policy can still participate using their own insurance.

The necessity of creating programs and initiatives that are accessible and inclusive of hourly employees such as those in dining, maintenance, housekeeping, and security was also discussed. Since these individuals often have tight schedules, or a specific amount of work that needs to be done during each shift, it is unlikely that they are able to participate in "drop-in" activities such as chair yoga. The Staff Council also agreed that individuals from these departments would be invaluable voices on the Staff Council.

While no decisions were made, we intend to continue looking into these points moving forward.

Open Discussion: August Leadership Retreat

Discussion:

An invitation was sent out by the President's Office to RSVP to an August Leadership Retreat including Staff Council, Faculty Council, and Senior Leadership. As a new member of the council, Kay asked about the day, and it was explained that this retreat serves as a way for Senior Leadership to inform Staff and Faculty Councils about upcoming initiatives, gather feedback from campus employee leaders, and create an open discussion. A similar day was held in 2023.

Open Discussion: Dress Code

Discussion:

A question regarding the current state of a campus dress code was brought up. Different departments are currently handling expectations of work attire differently, and there is a divide between some departmental staff on whether a more business or more casual dress style is appropriate for Wartburg.

After checking the current Staff Handbook, it was noted that there is not a current campus-wide dress code for staff. Joy and Abbie, who have both worked at Wartburg since before the COVID-19 pandemic, remembered that the general campus expectation for work attire used to be more formal, and that since the pandemic, there is a more casual atmosphere for most departments.

Two points arose in this discussion, first, that Wartburg employees are staying true to the "brand" of Wartburg that we wish to convey, and that second, employees are able to dress appropriately for their job and duties for the day. We currently defer to individual departments to dictate what appropriate attire looks like for the jobs within their purview. We will continue this discussion in the future as we review the Staff Handbook and decide whether to make a formal decision on whether the Staff Council's stance should be recorded for clarity.

Open Discussion: Fall Event Planning

Discussion:

We were asked to consider ideas for staff events for Fall 2024. Some ideas that were suggested included a dessert potluck or departmental dessert swap, opportunities for different departments to mix informally for team and relationship building, and possibly pairing new employees with a Staff Council member for informal check-ins as they settle into their new job.

We feel that it is important to encourage Wartburg relationships and our friendly culture as a key aspect of our success as an institution and an important benefit of working here. Events and programs that promote team building and engagement can only help us build a positive employee identity and campus culture.