

Professional Staff Senate Executive Session

June 22, 2010

Present: Amy Carpenter, Kevin Halle, Terri Heggemeyer, Valerie Knight, Nick Muir, Jamie Mackling, Marilyn Yates

Absent: Mary Carstens,

Guests: Kyle Nelsen, Chad Altwire, Karen Granberg, Phil Pfaltzgraff, Lin Brummels, Robin Labenz, Marcus Schlichter, Marilyn Quance, Charissa Loftis, Jeannie Wriedt, Heather Reinhardt, Beverly Buhrman, Kaye Young, Derek Anderson, Jason Barelman, Cheryl Waddington, Quinn Nisley, Amanda Rusch, Debbie Johnson

Call to Order:

Senate Chair Nick Muir called the meeting to order at 2:05pm.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Jeannie Wriedt and seconded by Amy Carpenter to approve the June 2010 minutes. Motion passed.

Executive Session:

A motion was made by Valerie Knight and seconded by Jamie Mackling to begin an executive session. Motion passed.

Point of Order:

No business and no voting may be held during an executive meeting.

Purpose of Session:

A discussion of the Classification Capsule and the concerns brought forward by professional staff members.

Concerns & Questions

- What is the purpose of the classification capsule?
 - This is just the first step in developing a full job description. This title/description is to replace the CUPA titles/descriptions as a generic description across all three campuses.
- Should the capsules match the CUPA codes?
 - Not necessarily.
- Why is the capsule so short as compared to the large survey completed?
 - See previous question. Future steps will have employees work with their surveys to develop longer job descriptions that one would see when applying for a similar position.
- What does CUPA stand for?
 - College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
- Was there something not working before that made this survey/change necessary? Was something broken? Will this fix it?
 - Previously, job descriptions were based upon CUPA codes. However, CUPA is not as up-to-date, and not very friendly. The Board, the Special Masters, and the Supreme Court all indicated that it was not a viable system by which to compare salaries.
 - The new description will be for similar positions across the college system in order to make us more unified, eliminating the multiple different titles that currently exist on the separate campus for the same positions.
- Who put the capsules together?
 - The consultants who received the multi-page job description surveys. It was not developed through Human Resources.
- Who has the power to change and/or elevate titles?
 - Unknown.
- How will these impact the union contracts?

- Unknown.
- How will salaries be compared if we don't use CUPA?
 - Unknown.
- Previously the support staff had gone through a similar process of changing job descriptions. Salaries were changed to meet title changes? Will this happen to the professional staff?
 - Marilyn Quance, President of the NSCA chapter, indicates that she will do all that is in her power to prevent this.
 - It is unlikely that job descriptions changes will result in changes if your position remains the same or similar as it is now.
- What about future employees who come in? Will the title changes/descriptions enable salaries to be reduced for those incoming?
 - Unknown, but possible.
- Is there a timeline, or at least an explanation of the steps involved in this process?
 - One has not been communicated from the System Office.
 - What is known:
 - Supervisors (i.e. Non-union contracts) will be working on their classification capsules in the future
 - A future step includes working with the surveys to develop a full job description.
- Can we see the comments from our supervisors regarding the long job description surveys?
 - Yes. Come to HR where you can read them.
- There has been some confusion regarding the content of the emails for the communication capsules.
 - Emails should have been received by all supervisors; however, some indicate this was not the case.
 - Some employees were under the impression that they should provide comments regarding capsules on their own, while others were under the impression that they should work with their supervisors.
 - Intent was that employees work with supervisors to finalize the title and description.
- Why were staff never informed that the title changes would effect the 2010-2011 contracts?
 - The intent was to include that information.
- Will a change in job description on the contract affect salaries?
 - From HR email (6/20/10): "Salary levels were set in accordance with Section 12.2 of the 2009-2011 NSCPA/NSCS Bargaining Agreement and were approved by the Board in June. The study and capsule writing process does not change the salaries that were approved by the Board. In September, the Board will receive an update regarding any classification titles that were amended."
- How important are the capsules in the long run? If "I" had known that the title would be used immediately on "my" contract, I would have fought more for it and would have placed more importance on it. Should I have put up more of a fight for it to be the way it really needs to be? Should I try to fight for the person who would follow me in my position?
 - While the new titles will be on the new contracts, they are not set in stone.
 - It is unknown how much these capsules will affect things in the long-run.
- If you disagree with a title on a contract, what should you do?
 - You have the right to dispute a contract while remaining employed.
 - Do the following:
 - Give notice to HR that you are working on a remedy.
 - Inform your supervisor that you are not okay with the contract and try to work with him/her on it.
 - If possible, sign the contract with a caveat that you disagree with the title used.
 - Keep following-up on the issue until it is resolved.
- There has been an overwhelming feeling that Human Resources works for the system office and is not a representative for WSC Staff. Why haven't they been more proactive in bring information to employees?

- Many staff still feel that there needs to be more communication and clarity. Some suggested action steps are below.
- HR is your representative. However, they have been essentially “placed in the middle” between the system office and the employees, creating tension.
- There are more issues than the job description issue creating anxiety among staff. Some of these include the resignation of the president, the vacancy of a VP and budget concerns, which add to the feeling that employees have no one to go to.
- HR is not receiving some answers to questions themselves. They have not been forthcoming from the system office.
- HR welcomes staff to come speak to them about any concerns.
- What single person can I talk to? Who is in charge?
 - Uncertain.
- Is the Professional Staff Email being maintained?
 - This issue was addressed at the last Senate meeting. A process/procedure has been put into place to keep the listing accurate and up-to-date.
- To who can we address issues in the future?
 - Send an email to the Senate President (Nick Muir), the Union President (Marilyn Quance), and Director of HR (Cheryl Waddington) for them to address at a future representative meeting.
- How can I make an anonymous comment?
 - Send a note via campus mail.
- What if I have a private issue I need to address?
 - Talk to your supervisor.
 - You may also contact the NSCA office in Lincoln for further support.

Suggested Action Steps for Human Resources

- Provide more clarity and transparency of communication.
 - Add additional information/details/clarity to emails.
 - If HR is receiving no answers from the system office or other entity, the staff need to be communicated that this is occurring.
 - If a question is received and is relevant to the entire staff, the answer should be forwarded on to all.
- Provide more face-to face sessions.
 - Supervisor meetings – Needed so that supervisors can better understand the process in order to convey and communicate issues to their employees.
 - Employee meetings – Provide more opportunities for open dialogue
- Communications Forthcoming:
 - List of Old Titles and the New Titles that will replace them

Senate/Union/HR Representative Meeting

- A decision was made to have a weekly/biweekly (?) meeting of the Senate President (Nick Muir), the Union President (Marilyn Quance), and Director of HR (Cheryl Waddington) in order to address any issues and disseminate answers to the Professional Staff.
- Employees are encouraged to email them (suggested to copy all three) questions and concerns to be discussed and forwarded on to the appropriate individuals and/or office.
- Communications requesting answers will include a Reply On/Before date to ensure timeliness. These will be proceeded with follow-up inquiries.
- Will meet and create an agenda to meet with Chancellor Carpenter so to address our concerns.
 - Professional staff should forward questions/concerns to the three reps as soon as possible so that they can be included.
 - HR will contact the Systems Office requesting a meeting during the chancellor’s visit on June 24.

What YOU Should Do

- Commit to letting someone know if you don't understand something. Ask questions! Ask for clarity! Human Resources, the Professional Senate, and the Union representatives want to know your questions and concerns. Email them, call them. Stop by to visit . Awareness is important.

A motion was made by Marilyn Yates and seconded by Charissa Loftis to end the executive session. Motion passed.

Approval of Notes as Minutes:

A motion was made by Jamie Mackling and seconded by Philip Pfaltzgraff to approve the notes from the executive session as minutes. Motion passed.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 3:36pm

Minutes prepared by Valerie Knight – Secretary