

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2004

1:30 – 3:00 pm in AQU 210

Members present: Laurie Dimond, Nate Rolloff, Erin Thigpen, Joanne Rhoades, Diane Tibodeau, Chris Cognetta, Randy Scott, Meg Krekeler, Rod Kirkwold, Andy Leet, Barb Dunker

Guests: Terry Snyder, Ellen Kennedy

Meg opened with **Reflection**.

Ellen Kennedy started the meeting off by talking about Service Learning opportunities. She is currently in a position that works with Tom Connery and the office of the Dean. The position was originally scheduled for three years but Ellen has been in it now for five years and it was recently extended for another 3 years. She wears many hats at the University including teaching but her Service Learning hat is the biggest.

UST is part of the community and part of the city. UST now has 6 classes that work on Service Learning and teach students to be active in the community as well as a sense of democracy. Projects in the classes put students in the community and get them to use the skills they have learned. When the students actually use the learned skills, they will remember and understand them. They won't get that from just listening to lectures or watching educational videos.

Many places in the community have lost a lot of funding and colleges and universities can be good resources. Students can donate some money but more importantly time and other resources. One of the main projects Ellen talked about was Changing Faces of MN. The project deals with many of the diverse communities we have here such as Somalis, Hmong, Mexican, etc. John Krebsbach in Academic Advising wanted something that would provide a unique experience for UST freshman and this was one way to get that. Of the 6 classes at UST mentioned previously, one of the events they do is work with students from the Abraham Lincoln school and help teach English. In doing this and building that relationship, the students at Abraham Lincoln feel they are part of the community and feel that someone cares about them. The UST students feel great about themselves for helping out, feel they understand the lives of these students and what they go through, and generally have wanted more time with the students.

UST is currently working on expanding the 6 classes but it takes coordinating, money, and other resources. The Staff Council has asked what it can do to partner with the Abraham Lincoln school and help out in any way needed. Ellen will find out what can be donated and get back to us. The Staff Council also invited Ellen to the Staff Council Breakfast. She will have a table there with information about Service Learning.

Ellen talked about another project as well that brought some publicity to UST. Tim Scully in Communications Studies took an advanced class to Nairobi, Kenya for 7 days to work on a film project. They worked with Children's Heart Link based out of the Twin Cities. Children's Heart Link sends teams of cardiac professionals to other countries to teach open-heart surgery and other techniques to other doctors. The UST students filmed these surgeons in action and also filmed the communities in

Nairobi as well as many of the families living there. The film aired on a number of channels around the Twin Cities and on PBS.

As a follow up on volunteering, Laurie is working with Jacob Cunningham to find out more about what can be done. After the previous Staff Council meeting, Jacob sent Laurie an email with some information and Laurie passed that on to the Council.

Erin will do the reflection next month.

Staff Council breakfast:

Approximately 90 letters have gone out to area stores looking for donations.

Staff Council members will not be eligible to win this year.

Erin/Nate brought a draft of the invitations. They will be modified and sent out shortly.

We will have gift bags and balloons again this year with bright colors..

The linens will also be colored again.

Fr. Dease has rescheduled his meeting so he can attend as well as Tom Rochon and Mark Dienhart.

Rod has given Laurie the 100 years of Athletics video and he will make sure the video equipment will be ready for the breakfast.

We are still working on getting movie tickets for those who cannot attend the breakfast due to job responsibilities.

Committee Reports

-Affirmative Action: No report.

-Budget Advisory: No report.

-Charitable Giving: Donations will be accepted at the Staff Council breakfast. We currently are looking at either the Family Service Center of Maplewood or possibly the Abraham Lincoln school pending further information from Ellen Kennedy.

-Diversity, Steering: They did have a meeting and there is another coming up. They are going to be looking at what their next steps are going to be. They will be meeting with Dr. Rochon on March 31st.

-Elections: There were 35 nominations and currently 15 replies. 6 of the replies were yes, indicating they would run, and 9 were no, indicating they would not run for election.

-Employee Recognition: The most common suggestion was to have it on a Tuesday or Thursday over the convocation hour.

-Fringe Benefits: They also had one meeting and another one coming up. They discussed the University's budget and were open to any suggestions. It was also discussed that raises would depend on future numbers such as the future enrollment numbers. Due to the budget, the new tuition exchange program is on hold but the current program does still exist. Anticipated UST health care spending increase will be 13% which is below the national average increase of 15%. The question was raised if there could be a Couples plan added vs. the Family plan. The University's Wellness program should also help rates over time.

-*Healthy U*: The Health Screenings at the HR Fair went fairly well. The online Health Risk Assessments can now be completed at:

<http://www.bluecrossmn.com/servicecenter/stthomas/> Read more at:
<http://www.stthomas.edu/humanresources/healthyu/>

-*Minneapolis Operations*: No report.

-*Mission*: The sub-committee is drafting the new statement with input from various areas.

-*Treasurer's report*: No report.

-*UCW*: There is a reception for all new women on campus today. Meg will be attending and helping set up.

-*University Council Meeting*: The meeting has been postponed. Barb forwarded the email regarding the meeting.

-*Website*: Latest minutes are posted.

-Meeting was adjourned.

The April meeting will be cancelled due to the Staff Council breakfast.

The **next meeting** will be Wednesday May 19th.

Please feel free to contact a Staff Council member if you have any questions or suggestions.

Council Members

Chris Cognetta	Food Service	2-4140	TMH235
Laurie Dimond	Academic	2-5300	JRC153
Barbara Dunker	Administrative	2-6920	AQU121
Rod Kirkwold	Physical Plant/Sec	2-6542	PHP111
Meg Krekeler	Minneapolis	2-4272	TMH331
Joanne Rhoades	Aux. Services	2-4342	TMH105
Nathan Rolloff	Administrative	2-6506	AQU217
Erin Thigpen	Administrative	2-6508	AQU221
Diane Tibodeau	Academic	2-6321	5016
Andy Leet	Academic	2-5600	JRC333
Randy Scott	Minneapolis	2-4100	MOH203

Staff Council Mailbox: #4387

Staff Council website: <http://www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil>

Respectfully submitted,
Nate Rolloff

Have a comment or concern?? Use this form and mail to Staff Council at mailbox 4387 or direct comments to www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil. We want to make sure we are addressing your concerns. We are always glad to hear from you.