Staff Council Attendees:
Lisa Heiskell, Sierra Krippner, Kat Thomas, Josh Pittman, Traci Siriprathane, Sarah Lof, Erin Merrill, Alison Vasquez, Hannah Thorne

Discussion Items

Chair Update – Alison Vasquez
- President Dobkin & HR – Monthly meeting
  - Human Resources recognizes that staff turnover may be higher than is healthy and should be a concern for the college; however, HR is still calculating current numbers for staff retention.
  - HR is supportive of Staff Council’s interest in Staff retention and would like the September Open Forum to lead to a working group. The working group would be a collaboration between HR and Staff Council that would be similar to the working group that produced the recent leave-time policy changes.
  - Milestone Award Presentation - President Dobkin thinks these awards should be delivered consistently. Our next staff forum will be about recognition, so we can discuss how these awards should be presented and pass those ideas along to HR.
- Leadership Council – The Leadership Council met on August 29th
  - The council discussed this semester’s low enrollment and frustrations at the lack of transparency in how those numbers are presented. More specifics and the way that the enrollment numbers will impact the budget will be discussed further after the October census.
  - A focus this fall will be aligning academic programs with budgets and addressing operational efficiencies using data. Leadership is trying to conduct this process with openness and is seeking input from those who will be affected.
  - Staff retention is not currently a top issue for the Leadership Council.

Suggested Items for Next Meeting –
The council would like to hear how leadership is responding to the Inside Higher Ed Compensation Survey that was recently released.
Specifically, what is the plan to address staff compensation after the budget has been balanced, what tiers will be looked at first, and what is the timeline for addressing compensation on campus?

Committee Updates – Committee Chairs

Professional Development – Lisa Heiskell
- The Professional Development Committee will be discussing what to do with the campus-wide funds for this year.
- The committee will look into whether or not we have the budget and the faculty’s interest to run the Leadership Development Series again.
  - Whatever format is chosen, it should be clear that all staff are invited to participate, not just people in supervisory roles.
  - Possible name suggestions include “Leadership Development Series” or “Leadership Skills Series.”
**Recognition** – Sierra Krippner

- **Bagels** - The Community Development Committee has chosen to use the bagel budget for outreach to different departments across campus rather than giving bagels to offices that nominate staff members for Staff of the Month. The committee may decide to give applause cards to nominators to help spread the word about the applause cards.

- **Applause Cards** - Applause cards have been designed by Marketing and Communications and will be printed soon. Staff Council will pay to have 400 printed. Other departments and offices are welcome to use them but will have to arrange and pay for their printing.

- **Staff of the Month** - The committee is also discussing the possibility of publicly displaying the “Staff of the Month” awards somewhere on campus. The display would be most effective in a public spot, possibly Griff’s Roost, HWAC, or the bookstore display window. Communications about Staff of the Month need to be clarified. The timing of the Griffin Gazette is a month off from the month of the nomination, so we need to list the month that the person received the award.

**Community Engagement** – Traci Siriprathane

- Fall Events have been scheduled and announced in the last Staff Council email to all Staff. When paint night is confirmed, the website will be updated with the fall events and links to register.

- Fall Events include:
  - Outdoor Recreation, Hike – October 9th
  - Staff Appreciation Day – October 10th
  - Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Climbing – October 11th
  - Soccer Tailgate with Nacho Bar and Salsa Contest – November 1st
  - Rodney Glore Annual Pie Contest – November 26th
  - Paint Night – December 5th

- The Community Engagement Committee gathered information about other activities that take place on campus and included information about how to get involved in the most recent Staff Council Communication.

**Staff Open Forum** – Staff Retention

**Staff Attendees**: Stephanie Santarosa, Christopher Ossana, Trisha Jensen, Sarah Demko, Winter Morse, Nell Cline, Mackenzie Bledsoe, Julie Tille, Valerie Burnett

During the open forum, attendees took 10 minutes to respond to the following questions on sticky notes and post them on posters around the room. Small groups then discussed the questions and identified the common themes that are reported below. As a group, we discussed the responses and how to move forward, as part of that discussion, we agreed that we needed more input from staff members across campus who were not present at the meeting. To address this issue of staff representation, we used the same questions to create an online survey that will be sent to all staff members. The survey will be open for responses until October 11th. The discussions at the open forum and the survey responses will be compiled and used to direct the Staff Council in creating a working group to address staff retention.

**Why do you choose to stay at Westminster?**

Common themes included: The mission of the organization, the students and the valuable experiences they bring, leave-time and flexibility, the opportunities to connect with other people on campus, the workplace as a learning environment where people are open to learning from and teaching each other, individual supervisors who provide support and flexibility, co-workers who work well together and value one another.

**What gets in the way of loving what you do?**
Common themes included: Adequate staffing and funding, high turnover in supervisors, compensation, work-load, lack of time due to unfilled or removed positions, disrespect from faculty, uncertainty surrounding if one’s work is valued by others, lack of consistency in policy and communication, no opportunity to offer feedback for supervisors.

What would improve your work/life balance?
Common themes included: A program similar to Salt Lake Community College’s program that offers 3 paid hours a week for self-care; more opportunities to work remote or have flexible working hours; more flexibility during slow seasons on campus; free parking and free gym membership; employee experience varies greatly depending on individual supervisors which points to a need for policies that institutionalize flexibility.

Do you feel your voice is heard and valued when collaborating across campus? Why or why not?
Common themes included:
Many staff members do not feel their voices are heard in conversations with faculty; staff members are not invited to the table to have a voice in important conversations; staff members feel disposable; too much talk about involving staff without action.

Do you feel comfortable asking when you have a need? (Examples include needs of family, time, accommodations, direction in your role, etc.) Why or why not?
Common themes included: Employee experience is very dependent on individual supervisors; supervisors and leadership lack training and/or clarity on policies; across campus, there is a lack of understanding of the diversity of the work being done in different offices and why they need to function differently.

Do you feel like you have opportunities for growth and development? Why or why not?
Common themes included:
There is inconsistency in funding for professional development between offices; staff would like to see professional development offerings that incorporate certifications; there is a lack of transparency in the process for internal job postings and promotions. Overall, staff members feel like they have opportunities for growth within their positions but are disheartened by the lack of a formal process for raises and the lack of recognition for when they do grow in their roles.