Present: Jean Brickey, Haiyan Chen, Alicia Cohen, Sue Ellen Crocker, Cathy Hill, Shannon Jarrott for Fred Piercy, Cindy Koziol, Mike Naff, Tom Tucker, Linda Woodard, Caroline Dudding, Wyatt Sasser

Absent: Robin Atkins, Catherine Caldwell, Lay Nam Chang

Guests: Ennis McCreary, Office of the Graduate School, Student Ombudsperson; Pat Burton, Human Resources

Chair Tom Tucker called meeting to order at 8:37 AM. The agenda was approved with one change.

1. New Business

- Ennis McCreary, Office of the Graduate School, Student Ombudsperson

  Ennis McCreary gave a short presentation related to her position as Graduate Student Ombudsperson and the possibility that a similar position could be a benefit to staff. Her current position is in a two-year pilot phase; she is currently gathering information and tracking how students use the service. Her office is located in an informal space on campus that is central and not located in an area or building that would make students feel uncomfortable meeting with her. She views her role as an advocate for fair treatment and acts a change agent, tracking demographic data and trends to make suggestions for policy changes. Ennis suggested that a faculty/staff ombudsperson would be very helpful to an individual who might be hesitant to visit Human Resources or other administrative offices for confidential assistance.

- Employee Assistance Program Policy

  Pat Burton and Linda Woodard gave an overview of the Employee Assistance Program, explaining that the program has been in place for over 20 years. Recently, a formal policy has been developed and is currently being discussed with the commissions. The policy does not change current staff personnel policies; it describes the employee assistance program and how it is used. Commission members felt that while the program worked well, there needed to be an increase in the number of local counselors. Suggested changes included adding the types of leave that can be used for referral visits and a statement that the policy is in accordance with the state contract. A copy of the final policy will be provided to the commission once it is approved.
2. Old Business

- The Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs proposed changes to the definitions for AP faculty.
  Tom Tucker indicated that there would be more to report on this topic in January.

- Emeritus Policy for Staff – Subcommittee Update
  Tom Tucker indicated that several universities have an Emeritus Policy for staff and that he will forward the information that has been provided to him to commission members.

- Staff Leadership Award – Subcommittee Update
  The subcommittee is in the process of finalizing the award program. Under consideration is adding the requirement that all nominees must have been in their present position for at least six months. It was suggested that winners be given a ceremonial check at the awards presentation since the award payments are made through the normal payroll process. While the winners will be invited to participate in the McComas Leadership Seminar in May, there was a discussion on whether to invite nominees. It was decided to wait until after the nomination process is complete to make a decision. When the nomination guidelines and forms are complete, the materials will be sent to commission members.

- January Meeting
  Tom Tucker stated that there will be no invited speaker in January. The time will be used to focus on discussions of Higher Education Restructuring activities.


The commission has approved the diversity dimension guidelines. It will be sent electronically to deans, directors, and department heads and most staff employees. Hard copies will be mailed to staff employees in Pay Bands 1 and 2.

4. Other Business

Linda Woodard extended her appreciation to the members of the commission that attended the forum for the candidates for AVP of Human Resources. Linda also informed the commission of the scheduled forums to be held for three other candidates extending into mid-January.

Respectfully submitted,

Lou Ann Phipps
Recording Secretary