Welcome and Question of the Month discussion

Question was: “What are some ways you think PSU could save money and/or make money?” After collecting these question sheets, there seemed to be a lot of things written – we’ll hear them at our next OS Meeting.

Presentation by Kelly Donovan, Sustainability Fellow

This student presentation was extremely informative and very well done showing all the initiatives the students are participating in for sustainability. For a copy of this presentation, please contact Kelly Donovan at kedonovan@plymouth.edu.

Presentation by Alyson Boyd, Nicaragua Club

This student presentation was also very good and provided information on the Nicaragua Club that many OS members probably did not realize. For a copy of this presentation, please contact Alyson Boyd at aboyd1@plymouth.edu.

Presentation by Sherry Osgood, Welfare Committee, on use of Wage Works cards (FSA, HRA)

Flexible Spending Account (FSA for medical expenses) and the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) are both used for the same eligible expenses and basically work the same way. Both programs are facilitated by Wage Works and each person who has an FSA or an HRA should receive a Debit Card in the mail. The debit card is used in the same manner as you would use a credit card. If you do not have one you can go to the WageWorks.com website and request one or call 1-877-924-3967 to request a card. If you do contact Wage Works please check and make sure they have your correct address. The cards do come in the mail in a plain white envelope and can easily be mistaken for a credit card application so please be sure to open all of the envelopes.

FSA are pre-tax deductions so you do have a tax savings. The FSA amounts are chosen by the employee and deducted from the employees pay check as it is their money being spent. It is a “use it or lose it” program so employees need to be mindful when making a choice on the amount they believe they will spend over the period of the calendar year. USNH does allow staff to use their money up until March 15th of the next year so - instead of 12 months to spend their money they get 14 1/2 months to spend the money.

The University System of NH has put $500 per year for 2009, 2010 and 2011 into an HRA account for employees who have been enrolled in the Harvard Pilgrim Health care plan on January 1st of each year. If you were enrolled in Harvard Pilgrim on January 1st for one year you would only have received $500 in your HRA account, two years you would have only received $1000, etc. The great thing about the HRA is that the money not used each year rolls over into the next year and, as of today, the money remains in your account until spent. Now, that could change at any time in the future.
If you have both an FSA and an HRA account any claims would be deducted from the FSA account first and would not be deducted from your HRA balance until all of your FSA money has been spent. That way you are assured of using your money first.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry Osgood at 53188

Approval of February meeting minutes

Approval of the February minutes will be postponed until our April meeting to give OS members more time to review prior to approval.

Treasurer’s report

$945.72 in our regular account with $346.60 in our food account.

Welcoming committee – introduce new OS members

Welcome to Keisha Sheedy who joined Undergraduate Studies.

Report from SPPC/Welfare on Total Rewards

As your SPPC representatives, Colleen Kenny and I would like to make sure you are all aware of the important changes that affect you.

The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees has already approved the following changes:

- As of January 2012 the University System of New Hampshire will implement self-insurance and pharmacy carve-out. This is being done to save an estimated $3.3 million dollars each year. We will no longer be having the option of choosing between Harvard Pilgrim or the other health insurance options currently available to us.
- The USNH will no longer deposit $500.00 each January into our Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA) that could be used to cover prescriptions and co-pays, as well as other health care type expenses.
- The BOT voted that an additional savings of $2 million dollars/year will need to be achieved by the redesigning of our current medical plans; this is above and beyond the money saved by becoming self-insured.
- It was also approved that an additional savings of $1.8 million/year will be achieved by reducing the USNH contribution to our retirement accounts.
- There were also changes approved to reduce paid time away and longevity pay for new hires.

The work that we need to focus on immediately is what changes can we make to our medical plans and retirement accounts that achieve the requirements of the USNH Board of Trustees ($2 million medical plans and $1.8 million in retirement) with the smallest negative impact to each of us?

All of this and much more will be reviewed and discussed at the University wide Open Forum with SPPC is scheduled from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m – Heritage Commons on Friday, March 11, 2011. Please become involved by attending this meeting, as changes are going to be made and we want to make sure everyone’s concerns and suggestions are heard. If you can’t make the meeting and you would still like to have input please feel free to email Colleen Kenny cmkenny@plymouth.edu or myself mmarsh@plymouth.edu and we will bring your information forward without identifying you.

Michelle Marsh & Colleen Kenny
SPPC Representatives

Report from OS representative on PA Evaluation Task Force

A survey will be coming out soon for OS to provide some feedback on the 3 PA’s participating in this first evaluation. The 3 PA’s are Steve Barba, Steve Taksar and Julie Bernier.
UPDATE: Task force update - Professional Administrator Evaluation (PAE) Survey:

The PAE task force created the PAE survey tool which was implemented by the Learning Technologies and Online Education section of the ITS department. The survey responses were TOTALLY confidential and COMPLETELY anonymous.

The PAE survey was successfully launched mid-March and remained active for input through 4/3/2011. This evaluation process was designed to do the following: 1) provide relevant, useful information to principal administrators through a formal process; 2) capture perceptions from a diverse group of stakeholders; 3) be easily implemented in the future, on a regular basis.

In this initial PAE survey cycle (2011), three Professional Administrators were evaluated: Stephen Barba, Julie Bernier, and Stephen Taksar. In the next PAE survey cycle (February/March 2012), the final two Professional Administrators will be evaluated: Richard Barth and Sara Jayne Steen.

Thank you to everyone involved in bringing this significant project to our PSU community, and a special thank you to all OS members who took the time to participate in the PAE surveys.

Report from OS representatives on VP for University Advancement search

March 9, 2011 - Search for Vice President for University Advancement. Steve Barba is the Committee Chair. Other members are: Bruce Wiggett, Kerry Keating, Cynthia Vascak, Kit Otto, Barbara Lopez-Mayhew, John Scheinman, Gerry Buteau, Beth Beaulieu, Mark Fischler and a President's Council member to be named [Note: subsequent to this meeting, that member is Theresa Koehler]. We met once on March 1. We are getting help again from the consultant who helped us last time (under a new name), Archer-Martin Associates (from Nantucket). An ad (national) will be placed soon. The “Leadership profile” that describes PSU and the position are being finalized now.

UPDATE: At this point, the VPUA search is still in the hands of the consulting firm. Archer-Martin Associates has been receiving and reviewing applications, and the search committee will be participating later in the process.

Announcements

Any questions/comments on committee/representative reports on blog?

None

Any committee/representative need to share important item from their report?

A reminder that the Fundraising Committee is still looking for baskets for their fundraiser. Anyone wishes to create their themed basket for this event, please contact a member of the Fundraising Committee. Baskets will be due between April 1 and April 21, 2011.

Other announcements from Speaker/Senate

A reminder of the President’s State of the University Address this afternoon.

Other announcements from OS members

A thank you to all the committees that attending the bylaws revisions meeting. It was a productive meeting and committee participating was greatly appreciated.
April meeting will be review of updated bylaws; voting to approve/not approve updates

50/50 drawing – Good luck!

Committee Meeting Notes:

Parking Committee Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2011.  3pm-4pm, HUB 109

Present:  Kerry Keating, Kathy Melanson, Peter Orszagh, Jasmine McLoughlin, Mary Hill, Chief Doyle, Sgt. Hutchins, Ellen Shippee, Mark Casale, Zhizhang Shen, Rick Barth, Steve Taksar

• Kerry Keating opened meeting by telling committee that concerns & complaints regarding parking issues, ranging from ticket prices, to appeals, lot maintenance schedule, commuter issues, etc. have been extensive.

Student Survey

• Peter introduced a survey he implemented by on behalf of student senate, which was filled out by 79 students. Discussion ensued that although this is not a statistically valid survey, the information collected could be useful.

• Discussion surfaced around various items on the survey.
  o Mark Casale referenced a survey item regarding the lot maintenance schedule. He stated that the schedule is very straightforward and easy to understand.
  o Kerry mentioned that she’d spoken with one student who literally didn’t understand the schedule. Conversation ensued regarding holding students accountable for taking time to thoroughly read pertinent information vs. communicating to them in ways they understand (smaller chunks of information, bullets, etc.)
  o Ellen explained that students created the current lot maintenance schedule, in conjunction with Physical Plant. She noted that it was created years ago and suggested it might be time to revisit it.
  o Peter requested lots be named rather than numbered, to make it easier for students to remember.
    Ellen also explained that several years ago students requested lots be color coordinated so they would be easier to designate. At one point in time they had multiple signs on each lot post, such that no one could read all the information easily. Therefore, they color-coded lots and now information for each lot can be found on line, via iParq, in their office and through UPD.
  o Chief explained that similarly, ticket prices were increased appx. 4-5 years ago at the request of students/student senate. Apparently many students who had valid permits were not able to find parking in their designated lots b/c students with no permits were occupying spaces. Therefore, ticket prices were increased as a deterrent to those students/visitors without permits.
  o Everyone agreed that probably the most major issue we face with parking is communication. Ellen thought we’d done a better job this year of ensuring students had access to the lot maint. schedule. Group agreed that this has to be major push on our part. Chief suggested a section on their web site similar to an FAQ page where we say, “did you know.....” Jasmine stated that a huge contributor to her ability to communicate with Chief Doyle was the fact that he has attended Senate meetings recently and has shared information with them. Group also discussed other methods of disseminating information. Jasmine suggested using Orientation sessions, first- year seminar classes, and creating an entire tab on my.Plymouth dedicated to parking , etc.
  o Kerry mentioned that on the survey notes faculty & staff paying for permits. Apparently there is a misperception among students (senate) that UPD is dependent upon ticket revenues in order to operate. Students are feeling like they’re being ticketed more b/c UPD needs the funding. Are there other revenue options? Rick Barth noted that PSU is one of the few schools that does not require
faculty & staff to pay for parking permits. Steve Taksar stated that if we were looking to implement anything in order to impact this next fiscal cycle, we would have to push that through sooner than later.

- Kerry reminded the group (students especially) that nothing could be pushed forward quickly until more research was done and formal surveys, in conjunction with Institutional Research, were completed so we receive accurate information.
- Steve suggested that rather than addressing each issue found on the survey, we focus on those with the majority of references, which include: more parking availability, prices (permit fees & ticket prices), appeals process and lot maintenance (schedule & tickets incurred b/c of lot maintenance).

Sub-Committee Work

- Kerry suggested to group that we develop sub-committees/ working groups. Smaller groups with key players, in order to target specific issues and research solutions for those. Group agreed and brainstormed sub-committees. We then assigned particular issues (those from the student survey as well as others we’ve discussed at previous meetings) to each group. The groups are as such:

  - **iParq** - Laurie, Kim, Sgt. Hutchins, Jasmine, Chief Doyle & Kerry. Issues to include: appeals process, payment methods, ticketing, communication dissemination, perceived treatment by students, permit fees, etc.

  - **Lot maintenance** - Ellen, Mark, Zhizhang, Peter, Sgt. Hutchins, Jasmine & Kerry. Issues to include: current schedule, lot numbers vs. names, alternate dates, communication of maintenance, dissemination of schedules, etc.

  - **Long-term planning** - Rick, Steve, Peter, Jasmine, Ellen, Mark & Kerry. Issues to include: long –term changes and implementations (such as removing first-year parking privileges, possible parking garage, UPD, etc.).

Campus Safety Committee

Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2011

**Attendees:**
Tammy Hill, Rachel Roy, Sherry Osgood, Kim Bownes, Anil Waghe, Mary Petz, Creig Doyle, Tom Driscoll, Kathryn Melanson

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**
S. Osgood moved to accept the minutes of the 12/2/10 meeting. C. Doyle seconded the motion. Motion was passed voice vote.

**Loss Data Review:**
**Faculty & Staff:**
S. Osgood stated there have been 29 incidents between 12/2/10 and 3/3/2011; the majority of them being slips and falls incidents. Overall numbers were good considering January and February yielded the highest snow amounts since the 1800’s. Discussion followed.

**Students & Visitors:**
T. Hill stated there had been one student incident.

**Old Business:**
- **Night Walk/Blue-Light Phones**
T. Hill that PSU’s ITS is in the process of a full evaluation of emergency Phone services on the campus and that we will keep the present system in place for now.

• Any Other Old Business
   None

New Business
• Boyd Roof Concern
   A. Waghe stated that there are no railings out on the Boyd roof. Another faculty member approached A. Waghe with the concern over sloped roofs and icy conditions. According to T. Hill, only certain people have keys and there are several access points to the roof. T. Hill asked that A. Waghe have the faculty member that raised the concern contact her directly so she can address it. **Update: T. Hill never received anything further on this issue.**

• Town of Plymouth Emergency Plan
   T. Hill stated that the town of Plymouth and PSU are trying to match-up plans when it comes to emergencies. The Town is updating their emergency plan. Several people from PSU are on the plan committee. **Update: This is still in the process.**

• NH DOL Safety Summary Form
   T. Hill handed out a draft NH Department of Labor Safety Summary Form to all members present. This form, required by NH DOL every two years, asks for the names of every safety committee member. T. Hill wanted members to be made aware of the information that is on the form since it contains committee member names. If there are any concerns or questions regarding the data, T. Hill needs to be informed no later than December 10th as the form must go to USNH offices before final submittal to the state by December 31. **Update: This form was submitted to NH DOL; this is something that’s done at the system level not at PSU level and requires all names of committee member names be posted.**

• Committee Membership
   T. Hill stated that they are still asking for a student representative for future meetings. Nothing has been heard back from the Senate. **Update: T. Hill will continue to work with Student Senate to try to get student participation – thought there would be one present at this meeting.**

• Any Other New Business
   o T. Hill stated that she’d received numerous calls about parking lots about snow and ice. She further stated that we typically get a January thaw which allows the Grounds Department to clear lots. This year we did not get that thaw making some snow removal impossible. With regard to sidewalks, there are many that PSU can’t touch as they belong to the Town of Plymouth. In the winter time students are being encouraged to use the sidewalk on the northern side of the Holderness/Plymouth Bridge, as the southern side becomes part of the snowmobile trail and not maintained.
   o M. Petz stated that she’d like to see the smoking poles on campus cleared out better for disposal of cigarette butts.
   o K. Melanson stated that it might be helpful to date or update areas of concern (i.e. there are times when caution tape or cones are put up to make people aware of danger but that they can remain there for numerous days/weeks with no change, or the wind blows them away, leading people to think it’s resolved.

Next Meeting:
Late April/Early May
A motion was made to end the meeting.
Moved by T. Hill and C. Doyle seconded the motion.
Meeting Adjourned @ 3:25 P.M.

Faculty Meeting Notes
March 2, 2011 Meeting
Kit Otto, OS Faculty Observer

This was the first meeting since December due to bad weather on February 2.

The Provost reported on the process of selecting of a new set of “comparator institutions” for PSU. The comparator institutions are now other regional comprehensive universities.

Terry Downs, faculty representative to the SPPC, had submitted a written report on the 2/18 SPPC meeting. He noted concerns were expressed by members of the SPPC about the overall process used by the Board of Trustees (BOT) in their effort to lower benefits costs. The purpose of this SPPC meeting was to focus on retirement plan and medical insurance changes. The BOT has apparently decided on an across-the-board decrease in the USNH retirement contribution (as opposed to the graduated contribution by age). The SPPC has received information on a variety of ways in which our medical benefits might be reduced. The campus constituencies will have a voice in picking the pain we think we can best manage. Downs recommended that faculty prepare by reviewing what their current benefits are on the WISE website (and this is sound advice to members of all constituencies).

The USNH Chancellor and campus Presidents had testified before the House Finance committee the previous week. One statistic that Pres. Steen noted was that students in other states get more scholarship/grant dollars than NH students do, and that NH students graduate with higher loan balances than students in other states.

A motion to have the chair of the Faculty Welfare committee appoint a second faculty member to serve on the SPPC was approved. For now this is seen as a temporary, but necessary measure “due to the fast paced action being taken on employee benefits this spring”.

The faculty welfare committee proposed a faculty resolution (addressed to the Board of Trustees). Because the faculties at Keene and UNH are unionized, the PSU faculty discussed their concern about equitable treatment between the campuses. At the same time the union battles going on in Wisconsin and Ohio were note. Some faculty expressed the hope that we could avoid undercutting the bargaining power of the unions operating on the other campuses.

Some quotable quotes:
Gary McCool on what the faculty resolution really says, and a comment: “Despite our not being unionized, we are ever hopeful. It sounds a little like begging, but I’m not above that.”
Elliott Gruner on the irony of calling a program to cut benefits a “Total Rewards Program”: “It’s a little like calling slavery an employment program with limited compensation.”

The final wording of the faculty resolution that was approved is as follows (this is tentative until confirmed, but I am pretty sure):

We, the Faculty at Plymouth State University, feel it is not equitable that Plymouth State employees suffer cuts in their compensation before the unionized employees at other USNH institutions. For many years, it has been the policy of the Board of Trustees not to treat unionized and non-unionized employees differently. In that spirit of cooperation, we urge the Board to uphold its commitment to the equitable treatment of unionized and non-unionized faculty.

Faculty Forum Notes
February 11, 2011
Kit Otto, Faculty Observer
The following are rough notes on this faculty forum. I have tried to focus on issues that were different from those concerns expressed in the OS/PAT forum that took place on the same day.

Faculty forum was attended by fewer folks than the OS/PAT Forum held earlier that day—there were perhaps some 40-50 faculty members in and out. SJS began with general remarks as she did at our forum, describing the financial stresses that have caused the review of benefits.

Some points discussed that were unique to faculty:
Questions/comments about whether and how PSU faculty might be treated as compared to the unionized faculties at Keene and UNH. John Small’s response: unionized faculty are in negotiations. Our intention is to have one program, but “the union process is different.”

Other faculty comment: People are just discovering that we don’t have a collective bargaining unit. Surprise! But that was our choice, and for the most part it turns out to be pretty good.

T Downs expressed concern that he is the only PSU faculty representative on the SPPC: “I have one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel.”

Concerns about the “total rewards survey” were expressed:
-A case could be made that the participants were coerced; staff were strongly encouraged (compelled) to take the survey;
-There was no notification of possible harms (possible reductions in health care benefits);
-It appears survey was “incentivized for certain results”;
-The survey didn’t seem to fit us (faculty)
-The survey offends the research basics of being objective, reliable, valid.

John Small replied that a “conjoined analysis (has been used as a marketing tool)” is “by definition a series of forced choices”. He also said that there are members of the BOT who are “passionate about” eliminating certain things. But they had to let go of their passion when they saw the survey results.

A question was raised about why would you engage someone outside our own system HR office to do this survey. Answer from John Small: HR didn’t do it because BOT was concerned that people would be reluctant to answer if the data went directly back to HR; also we don’t have the software to analyze the results. This is why we hired outside firm to do this.

Faculty comments re how the survey didn’t fit faculty: “Paid time off” doesn’t apply to faculty. A sabbatical is not “paid time off” (It isn’t a golfing trip.)
“Performance based pay”/”merit pay”: The problem in a collegial environment is you’re not saying who is meritorious—you’re saying who isn’t meritorious.

John Small response on performance differentiation: 80% wrote in comments, hundreds wanted more performance-based differentiation. BOT will look at this issue over next 18 months so that if we decide to do more down the road the “infrastructure” will be in place.

John Small on the survey development: They had originally intended to have only one survey, but they found they couldn’t do it. They ended up with two, putting PAT’s together with faculty. Terry points out that questions were asked that were inappropriate for faculty, about benefits they don’t have (like vacation days).

Another faculty member says: Some of us didn’t take the survey because we felt it was an invalid instrument.”

It turns out the number of PSU faculty who took the survey was in the teens.
Another faculty comment: we are working on a system of shared governance here. Does BOT understand that “it felt like this rolled over us.” We need more information, disclosure. Our issues are workload, salary, compensation.

Answer to a question about John Small’s term on the BOT: Small replaced a trustee who resigned and whose term ends 6/30/11. He hopes to be reappointed (“but it depends on how the rest of this meeting goes!”)

Faculty comment that some language in the report uses “fighting words”: “Perceived value” says “you don’t know the actual value of these benefits but you can have a “perceived value”. We need truth: here are your benefits now. Here is what they’re going to look like.

J Small says “perceived value” was deliberately chosen as a measure. “Engagement” was “way too squishy” a notion. Other surveys focus impact on turnover. They settled on perceived value. TW had never seen a place where perceived value was over 90% (but it is at UNH).

Mgmt’s objective is to have perceived value > cost. EG oracle has stock options. High perceived value.

J Small on performance-based differentiation: Survey results show there are a lot of “people who don’t believe others are working as hard as they are.”

Fac Welfare said to PSU faculty (it’s up to you to take the survey) (actually they discouraged it)

Scott: As faculty speaker I’d like to request that the administration trust the faculty, and share info even when it is still in process. It was disconcerting for me to come discuss material w/o having seen it beforehand. The longer we don’t have the info, the more confused and suspicious we become. The faculty welfare committee should have seen this info back in October.

EG: Our faculty response is in the teens. I think you have to ask us again.

Highlights of the PAT Meeting on March 4, 2011

Speaker’s Report

Diane Jeffrey had a few reminders for everyone:
- President Steen’s “State of the University Address” will take place on Wednesday, March 9th in Silver. Doors open at 3:15; address at 3:35 and a reception follows.
- Another discussion about Total Rewards will take place on Friday, March 11th at 12:30 PM.
- April’s PAT meeting (raffle drawings) will be in the Hage Room and the May meeting (Distinguished PAT Award) in the Newfound Room.

PBLG

Linda Dauer said that the Cabinet is looking for input, feedback and suggestions for high-level (whole campus) ideas and she reassured the group that the Cabinet is not looking to cut jobs in the need for cost savings.

Faculty Observer

Mary Campbell mentioned that the Faculty discussed a number of issues in their recent meeting. Those topics included
- an Early Intervention Option in the Early Childhood Education program with a possible Certificate in Early Intervention;
- Satisfactory Progress Standards;
- a 2nd faculty member added to the SPPC;
- much conversation/discussion about statements to Board of Trustees regarding unionized vs. non-unionized; and
SPPC

Phil Atkinson suggested that the age-based retirement contribution portion of Total Rewards be taken off the table as it might be biased. He asked for feedback on a possible 1% decrease across the board. Phil reminded everyone that the next open forum would be on Friday, March 11th, that the BOT would be meeting on 03/17/11 and that they would vote at their 04/21/11 meeting.

Scholarship

June Schlabach announced that there would be (3) $1,500 scholarships offered via the Financial Aid Office and that they and the Peg Rock Kenyon (non-traditional) award application deadline is 04/01/11. Nominating is open to everyone.

Welfare

Frank Cocchiarella mentioned that the Welfare Committee has been having numerous meetings recently. He also met with President Steen to discuss the in-house survey:

- No consensus on distribution of pay
- Those that work harder should get more/better compensation
- President Steen’s goal is that everyone who is doing a good job at their job should get a raise; those who go above and beyond should receive extra
- Ways to save include leaving unfilled positions vacant, charging faculty and staff for parking on campus

This sparked conversation about whether these measures would address long-term needs or if they would be looked at year-to-year and what exactly we are paying for our benefits – this to be posted on the PAT blog. Feedback will go to the SPPC.

Nominating/Balloting

A proposal to limit one of the open positions on the Welfare Committee to a term of one year passed unanimously. This brings all of the positions in line with a two-year term of three on, three off. PAT ballot is scheduled to live on 04/19/11 and committees are asked to share when and what terms are on the PAT blog.

Fundraising

Gail Carr made a suggestion on how to increase fundraising dollars: designate a tax-deductible donation to the PAT Scholarship Fund. She also announced the PAT Spring Raffle.

Announcements

Spring Fling (05/05 & 05/06) still needs volunteers for the Yellow Jacket patrols as well as for clean-up that weekend.

Northern Pass public hearing is on March 18th at 6:00 PM

Increased activity on campus during Spring Break week – both Destination Imagination and Math Competitions will be taking place

“Spotlight on Faculty” is scheduled on 03/30. This is a show & tell session to see what technology faculty are using in the classroom
PSU is hosting 3 “Accepted” student Open Houses: 3/14, 4/11 & 4/18

Respectfully submitted

Mary E. Petz