Labor-Management Council Minutes

Meeting Date: November 21, 2017

Cochran Room, Kilcawley Center

**In Attendance:** Dr. Martin Abraham, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs and Council Co-Chair; Dr. Kevin Ball, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Planning; Mr. Allan Boggs, Director, Labor Relations; Ms. Connie Frisby, President, YSU-ACE and Council Co-Chair; Dr. Mary Lou DiPillo, Associate Dean – BCOE; Atty. Holly Jacobs, Vice President and General Counsel; Neal McNally, Vice President, Finance and Business Operations; Ms. Debbie Moy, ACE representative; Dr. Jennifer Pintar, Associate Provost for Academic Administration; Dr. Steven Reale, Vice President, YSU-OEA; Mr. Kevin Reynolds, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. AJ Sumell, President, YSU-OEA; Mr. Shawn Varso, YSU Chief of Police; Mr. Ed Villone, President of APAS; and Ms. Brittany Bowyer, Office of VP for Finance and Business Operations.

**Check-in and Announcements:**

**Enterprise Risk Management** – Mr. McNally mentioned that Sue Viglione in EOHS was recently named as enterprise risk management officer and would be working to assure departments and offices across campus are in compliance to reduce any risks.

**Retirement of Chief HR Officer** – Atty. Jacobs announced the posting of a labor relations position to prepare for the upcoming retirement of Mr. Reynolds. She hopes to have this position filled by January 1, 2018. She also mentioned Mr. Boggs would be retiring sometime thereafter as well. Ms. Moy asked why all positions aren’t posted and if there is a policy stating this. Mr. Reynolds said positions for full-time and part-time staff are posted. Mr. Boggs added that temporary positions are not posted because they are only needed for a certain date range. Mr. McNally said occasional service appointments aren’t posted and they don’t receive fringe benefits. Atty. Jacobs mentioned that when reorganization occurs within an office or department that job descriptions might change, but no job posting is needed. She also said search waivers can be done without posting a position. Dr. Reale asked if there was an update on filling the director of faculty relations. Dr. Abraham said no.

**Meeting Topics:**

**Overview of HLC Preparation** – Dr. Kevin Ball, associate provost for academic programs and planning, was asked to update the council on the upcoming Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visit for YSU’s 10 year reaffirmation of accreditation. He said accreditation is important to assure students and parents that a school has a quality program and a good reputation. It is also needed to receive financial aid help. Dr. Ball provided the council with a document titled *A Quick Guide to Prepare for the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Campus Visit with the Higher Learning Commission* (see handout). He said representatives from HLC would be on campus March 26-27, 2018 to meet with YSU’s HLC steering committee and would probably want to meet with faculty, staff and student groups as well. He said the steering committee is comprised of chairs, deans, faculty and staff from across campus. The committee has met for the last three years to begin the preparation for this visit. He went on to say the committee created an assurance argument to propose to HLC. Contained within this document are five criterions to be addressed for accreditation. Referring to the handout he mentioned the five criteria and statement that the handout had other important information worth a quick read. He said this handout, the argument and other documents are also listed online at [www.ysu.edu/accreditation](http://www.ysu.edu/accreditation).

The one section on the front on the handout addresses the question of *What am I expected to know in order to prepare for the HLC visit;* and Dr. Ball briefly touched on the key points of YSU’s mission statement, the 2020 Strategic Plan and the Assurance Argument. The back of the handout had sections of questions the HLC representatives might ask to the faculty, staff, students and even the Board of Trustees when meeting with them. He mentioned the handout was created with help from Presidential Mentors, SGA and the Board. He said the HLC representatives would be sending information prior to the visit for what types of meetings and other things they would like to do while visiting campus. The steering committee thought this handout would be a helpful tool in providing background and knowledge to the campus community to learn about the accreditation process, so they can engage with the HLC representatives when they visit. He and the committee are hoping for a good turnout by the campus community at the meetings. Also, by sharing this handout he and the committee are open to feedback and any pertinent input that others may provide and ask that they contact him or Dr. Pintar.

Mr. Reynolds asked if the campus meetings would be in a group setting. Dr. Ball responded that all of the meetings have been different at other schools and that HLC might request different meetings geared towards specific areas like Shared Governance or labor issues. He said once they find out from HLC what types of meetings they want to have then the committee will work on doing mock interviews to prepare for open and honest dialogue with the representatives. Ms. Moy mentioned the HLC survey that went out to the campus community for comment. Dr. Ball stated that the HLC communication survey was setup to allow the surrounding community and campus community to comment anonymously and directly to HLC. HLC will be sending the comments to YSU probably 30-60 days prior to the visit for us to respond back to.

Mr. Boggs asked when preliminary findings from the visit would be shared with YSU. Dr. Ball stated an initial rough draft would be given to YSU to provide further information on any questions HLC might have first. Dr. Sumell thought the final findings would be given to YSU in July like they were 10 years ago in 2008. He went on to say he thought the handout was a good idea, but thought it should be simplified for the campus community as it looked a little intimidating. He thought the guide could be narrowed down to touch on a few key points, the mission of the university, strategic plan and the campus community’s role listed on the sheet instead of having individuals go to the website for more information. Dr. Ball agreed the document could be reworked to make it simpler. Ms. Frisby said the IT chair brought back the information sheet and shared copies of it with the departments in the college. Mr. Villone asked if there could be one designated person per building to have distribute the information and be the person to relay information to and from the community to the steering committee or maybe a training video could be made with the key information that the campus can watch at their leisure to learn about the HLC visit. Dr. Ball thought a video would be a great idea and that it might be a more effective way to distribute the information on accreditation. Mr. Villone thought by doing a video it would be a practice in good faith efforts for people to be involved. Dr. Ball thought maybe the steering committee could be the ones to disperse the information to others and shift their roles to team leaders to assist in the learning process.

**LMC 2018 Schedule of Meetings** – Ms. Bowyer passed around a handout of the upcoming 2018 council meeting dates with the location of the meetings to be determined. The council had no changes as this time.

**Overview of the Tuition Guarantee Proposal** – Mr. McNally was asked to give a brief update on the tuition guarantee proposal. He said a draft plan had been created and sent to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) for their feedback. Once YSU hears back from them they will answer any questions ODHE might have or clarify any information as needed. The tuition guarantee will basically collapse about five fees including the information technology fee, transportation fee, career services fee and the one time graduation/matriculation fee; into one general fee to simplify the bill sent to students as those fees will be combined for a 6% increase to the tuition fee. Other fees such as college fees are variable and changeable; these fees can’t be rolled in to the plan as they would lose their flexibility. The university and other colleges needed to propose this type of plan as tuition is currently frozen by the state, and is the only way to increase tuition. The tuition guarantee will only be used on incoming freshman and will begin summer 2018, current students will remain unaffected. Dr. Abraham said the tuition guarantee is a great plan for students and parents to know what the cost of college will be for four years as it will not change and fees will be simpler to read and understand on the bill. Dr. Sumell asked if other schools are implementing this type of plan. Mr. McNally responded that all 12 schools have created and have or will begin to implement their plan, except for the University of Cincinnati as they are still on the fence.

Ms. Frisby asked what the estimated change in revenue would be for YSU. Mr. McNally said the revenue projection from tuition will be a small realization of about $1.5 million with flat enrollment next year. Mr. Villone asked if the tuition rate would change if a student drops out. Mr. McNally responded that the state wants students to graduate in four years, but that exceptions would be made to extend the tuition guarantee for those in the military or a serious illness or disability. We just need to have the academic advisors and students on the same page if an exception is needed.

Dr. Reale wanted to know what student fees are really for. Mr. McNally said there is a list and breakdown of what fees cover online, but they would need to be revised and accessible once the tuition plan is implemented. Ms. Frisby asked if employees would have to pay the transportation fee under the tuition remission offered to employees. Mr. Villone thought employees might be made exempt. Mr. McNally said he would need to look into this, as the plan was created for students, not from an employee aspect. He said the transportation fee was $115 and was increased to $155, but with a request from the state the $40 increase needed to be removed. He figured a way to recapture the $40 loss would be to offer students premium parking and access to shuttle services that they currently have. He said there is a lot of red tape with the state efficiency requirements and with the upcoming changes in Columbus as the governor leaves office soon, the instability could create changes to the efficiency mandate going forward.

**Short Staffing** – Ms. Moy wanted to share her concern about the short staffing not only in her area of Disability Services, but in other office across campus. She wanted to bring this matter up to the council to be aware of the serious nature this issue is creating and how it is having a trickle-down effect within offices, other departments between faculty and staff and even affecting the services provided to students due to limited staff. In her office they are responsible for proctoring test for students with disabilities, so that they have more time to take the test and a quiet space to do so. The testing process requires the office to get the test from the instructor, give the test to the student and then return the test back to the instructor for grading. She said problems arise when they can’t get ahold of the instructor to return the test, so they contact the department administrative assistant or secretary to ask them for assistance and this sometimes causes them not to be able to assist other faculty or students that may need something. She emphasized that one person can’t do it all and student workers can only help so much and even funding for student workers is low.

Ms. Moy mentioned an incident where a test was hand delivered to the department and signed by a student worker to give to the administrative assistant. Later on the instructor was mad because they never received the test back and thought Disability Services had lost it. When they tracked back the actions taken by their office, it was determined that they did what they were required to do, but the student who signed for the test left it on the admin’s desk. The problem was not the process, but the role and responsibility of others in the process. Mr. Reynolds asked if the test could just be scanned in and emailed to the instructor. Ms. Moy said that scanning would not work and that there are about 500 disability students that use their services and that during finals they administer about 200 tests. Dr. Abraham said scanning and emailing could be an issue of confidentiality. He said the instructor should not have been upset with Disability Services, but that faculty should know the process of how tests are administered, but that most don’t know. Ms. Moy said most learn through use of their services. Dr. Reale interjected by saying he thought the underlying issue here isn’t the process being used, but the lack of staffing that is causing disruptions and ill feelings and effecting how we provide services to students.

Dr. Reale brought up the subject of the $11 million investment in Division I athletics and asked if those funds could be used elsewhere. Dr. Abraham stated the Board of Trustees believes being part of a Division I athletics program is an important and critical function at the university. We get good quality students that come here to play sports and take classes, we have people come to games and the surrounding community supports us. Dr. Reale asked if the administration agrees with the Board. Dr. Abraham said yes and that as a teacher some of his best and brightest students in class were the ones engaged in athletics. They were driven to succeed in both academics and in their sport. The mix of academics and athletics appeals to incoming students and is overall good for YSU. He said we can’t have music students in the marching band if we eliminate football. We offer a little bit of everything. Ms. Frisby thought maybe we could limit the investments made on athletics. Dr. Abraham said that last year in the semi-finals of our football playoffs that “the catch” made by player Kevin Rader, gave YSU free televised marketing on ESPN with all the replays of this one moment and had a market value of about $8 million in televised coverage. Dr. Sumell asked if we are just reaching a tipping point where the priorities need to be evaluated to possibly reallocate some funds to address the staffing issues. Ms. Frisby agreed and said the balance is shifting.

Ms. Moy wanted to know why athletic students got to register first even before military students and that maybe we can shift the way people think about athletics and the emphasis we put on it. Dr. Abraham said this priority registration is due to athletic practices and game schedules. Atty. Jacobs thought it was a great idea to have brought up the issue of staffing and asked how we are going to find resources to address the issue. She thought by maybe creating a temporary pool of support personnel to help in a secretary/assistant role. Dr. Abraham mentioned Associate Provost Claire Berardini had brought up some concern with staffing as well. He said another challenge we have is physical geography of offices and departments across campus. He said it is nice to have a close relationship with another office or department so the support staff can help cover if needed. Dr. Reale wanted to know if the widespread perception of athletics could be changed if the $11 million investment was broken down to show what the funds are going towards. Dr. Abraham said he understood the transparency and communication aspect of the request and felt the need to convey the value of athletics. Atty. Jacobs asked Dr. Reale to attend the University Affairs committee meeting on December 6 at 10:00 a.m. to hear an update on athletics by Ron Strollo. Mr. McNally added that maybe Mr. Strollo could be a guest at the next LMC meeting.

Mr. Villone asked if there was some way to utilize the volunteers that help out at crash day through the Penguin Pride group to see if we can use them in other capacities to get them more involved at YSU. Atty. Jacobs said we can’t use the volunteers to do the jobs of current staff as it would create grievances. Mr. Boggs stated that there are criteria for “volunteers” and when they are really employees who must be paid. FLSA, IRA, and OPERS issues must be considered. Also, when using a temporary agency this carries a 24-32% mark-up. He added that OPERS makes using an internal temporary pool difficult.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

**Next Labor Management Council Meeting: Tuesday, January 9, 2019**

**at 9:00 a.m. in Kilcawley Center,**

**Cochran Room, 2020**

**Labor Management Council**

**2018 Meeting Schedule**

Updated 11/27/2017

Tuesday, January 9 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Tuesday, March 13 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Tuesday, May 8 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Tuesday, July 10 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Tuesday, September 11 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Tuesday, November 13 9-11am KC, Cochran Room

Respectfully submitted, Brittany Bowyer, Recorder