

Directors' Council General Meeting
Thursday, 10/26/23 – 2:30 p.m.
UC 211

Members Present: D. Ackerly, R. Chabayta, A. Cladera, W. DiGisi, D. Ferrier, L. Fornarotto, S. Freeman, R. Garcia, B. Gessner, R. Gordon, D. Keane, P. Lazzaro, C. Lowe, A. Mayo, F. Mbayo, D. Minnich Spuhler, J. Oudhnarine, J. Pinkston, E. Reyes, D. Robinson Lewis, R. Tindall, J. Tumlin, N. Weiner

1. Introduction of Steering Committee and New Leadership/Open Positions (3)

Donna Minnich Spuhler opened the meeting and introduced the Steering Committee and the Leadership Team: Chair: Donna Minnich Spuhler; Vice Chair: Nancy Weiner; Secretary: Jan Pinkston; Leadership Team: Leana Fornarotto, Denise Robinson Lewis, Jill Guzman, Salwa Zito, Roy Garcia, Judy Linder, and Fengai Mbayo. Minnich Spuhler noted that three positions are still available on the Leadership Team and encouraged anyone who is interested to contact her for more information.

2. Introduction of New Members

Minnich Spuhler recognized new members: Deborah Ackerly, Brandon Gessner, Jessica Oudhnarine, and Andres Cladera. They were welcomed and presented with gift bags.

3. “Open the Front Door” Communications Framework

Reggie Tindall from Human Resources gave a presentation on effective communication and presented the framework, “Open the Front Door” (OTFD). She explained that the acronym stands for: Observation, Thinking, Feeling, and Desire. Tindall said that the premise is to empower individuals who are dealing with conflict in the workplace to have conversations with each other before escalating the situation to their manager and/or involving Human Resources in the matter. She noted that resources are available on the HR website such as a Performance Management Tool Kit and are also available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Linked-in Learning. She concluded by reiterating that everyone should focus on taking the time to communicate with others. Minnich Spuhler thanked her for the presentation and told the membership to watch their email for an opportunity to give Tindall feedback on this program.

4. Director's Council Committee Revisions Discussion

Minnich Spuhler discussed the various committees and their purpose, noting that each committee has a chair.

Membership - Maintains the roster, helps recruit new members, and welcomes new members.

Professional Development - Works to develop key-topic programs and activities for the general meetings.

Assessment – Looks at understanding assessment needs. Minnich Spuhler noted that most people seem to have an understanding of the assessment culture at WP, and she questioned if assessment matters could fall under Professional Development, rather than devoting an entire committee to this subject.

Community – Focuses on engagement on campus, charitable work, working with student organizations, and coming together as a community to help our community.

Nominating – Nominates leadership team and annual awards. Minnich Spuhler noted that the processes for this committee need to be updated and it could be changed to being more about recognition than nominations.

Minnich Spuhler questioned if any new committees are necessary, such as an Equity and Justice committee, or at the very least, topics related to equity and justice should be placed under Professional Development. She again noted that a survey will be sent to the membership, and she encouraged the members to share their feedback on the survey or tell the group during this meeting. A member suggested that a committee could be related to understanding the student body in terms of demographics and retention issues, especially the decline of black/brown students. A member suggested adding resources (building grants, supports) under the Professional Development Committee. Another member suggested an Events committee that would organize attendance at various events that are experiencing low attendance (e.g. WP Presents). Minnich Spuhler noted that this is in line with another suggestion from a member about hosting social events like a happy hour, etc. that would be similar to the ACE Net coffee hour and other events that encourage engagement among our peers. She noted that it could be as simple as bringing a friend to the next Directors' Council meeting. She reiterated that everyone should watch for the survey and complete it

5. Giving Opportunities

- WP Fall Giving Day: 11/8-19 - Wren DiGisi
- Pioneer Pantry Donation Drive
- Director's Council Scholarship

Wren DiGisi announced that the hike with Provost Powers on 11/10 at 1:30 p.m. will support the emergency support fund. She also noted that Fall Giving Day will feature the Pioneer Pantry, and that First Generation Scholarships and scholarships are available through the various colleges. There is also a Director's Council Scholarship that currently has \$220.00. She noted that \$1,000 is needed by June 30th in order to award the scholarship. Donations may be made by going to the main giving page on the WP website and writing in "Directors' Council Scholarship." All donations are tax deductible. A member noted that \$1,000 can make the difference in retaining a student and that even as little as \$200 can make a difference. The member noted that \$10,000 was raised from the AHSS Last Mile Race and that all funds will be used for students. A member suggested having a Directors' Council team for the race. Minnich Spuhler noted that the Pioneer Pantry recently relocated and while AmeriCorps is supplying food and support, the pantry receives no funding from the university and relies on donations. She stated that individuals are invited to drop off food or use the Amazon Wish List, and she encouraged the members to convey this information to their colleagues, community members, and friends.

6. Announcements

Saturday, 10/28 is the last home football game and will include a car show. The NBC Alumni Event was mentioned, and the Distinguished Lecturer Series with Chita Rivera will be held on 10/30. Donations are needed for the annual Honors Coat Drive underway now through 11/15. The next Directors' Council General meeting will be held 12/12/23 from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. in UC 168 A/B.