

ERAC Committee Meeting December 2014 Minutes

Jennifer Jensen, deputy provost, Academic Affairs
Gary Lutz, vice provost, Institutional Research

Jennifer and Gary came to discuss the upcoming campus climate survey. The University is making a particular effort to do a survey that fills the specific needs here at Lehigh University. Questions were asked about surveys that will focus on the needs of staff. Jennifer said that, at this time, she does not know of any surveys that are designed specifically for staff only. Currently, Jennifer and Gary are talking to many people on campus, seeking input and trying to determine the breadth of a campus-wide survey and how to encourage Lehigh employees to participate. Jennifer and Gary invited ERAC to contact them with suggestions or if anyone wants to be involved in a bigger way.

One of the challenges is defining the meaning of “climate.” The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) report focused on racial issues on campus. Lehigh would like to complete a more comprehensive survey that does more than meet the OCR requirement. In discussions with various campus groups, Jennifer stated that it’s possible three different surveys would be beneficial to fit the three different employee classifications at Lehigh. It was mentioned that many adjuncts feel left out of the group since they are not classified as either staff or faculty. It was suggested that there be a town hall to present survey results. ERAC could help in that regard. As a group that represents staff, ERAC can be helpful in ensuring staff issues are represented and could assist with the communication effort.

Timeline for this to take place: Theoretically, OCR has placed a March deadline for Lehigh to have a survey ready for their approval. Jennifer and Gary said we’re caught between “Let’s not rush it and let’s not drag our feet.” If Lehigh can demonstrate that we are trying to do this in the best way possible, there may be some leeway with the deadline. Beyond completing the survey, Lehigh must also determine what will happen with the results. Jennifer supports publishing the information in some way. Gary acknowledged that it is important to have a survey that leads to progress and steps for Lehigh. It was suggested that the University determine if the Cornell Interactive Theater Ensemble (CITE) presentations were beneficial to faculty/staff. If so, the University should consider holding more workshops. We have agreed that ERAC will be in touch in the beginning of the New Year. If anyone has any feedback, contact Jennifer.

Message from the Carla Kologie, Chair of ERAC

Carla would like all ERAC members to think about recommitting to ERAC. Attending monthly meetings is required, but the majority of our work comes through the committees. Carla suggested that we all need to consider how much time we can realistically commit. That may have changed from the summer or September and, if so, let’s figure out ways to make things work. Committees are counting on every member to contribute. If committee participation becomes a concern, contact Carla. No comments received.

Committee Updates – *Please email or upload the 2-year strategy if you did not hand it in.*

Campus Climate Committee – Brenda Bachman

Two-year plan is completed. One Campus Climate working group goal for the spring is to have a mixer with the CEC and FSCN. Tentatively May 20, 2015, in the Gander Room.

Communications Committee – Bob Bruneio

Communication Committee has reported that they have been working their tails off. The Focus Group Feedback went very well with 31 attendees. Kudos to Ashley Baker on presenting! Glenn presented suggestions for the new logo that incorporates the tag line, “Staff Matters.” There were a few suggestions, so Glenn will email .jpeg versions of ERAC logos for members to pick one. CPR/First Aid class has trained more than one hundred Lehigh employees so far and more than one hundred more are signed up for the spring trainings as well. Very successful program! The website is being updated. The Communications Committee is meeting tomorrow to discuss a fine tuning of things on the website. We announced at the Focus Group Feedback that it will be out early in the New Year.

Events Committee – Glenn Strause

Knowledge @ Noon scheduled for December (safety); January (financial aid); February (ergonomics). The Iron Pigs game is set for June. The Phantoms have called nearly every week to put another date on the calendar since the last trip to the Phantoms game was very successful with 200 Lehigh attendees. We will add another game in the near future but won't include bus service because of costs and the fact that parking was not a problem at the PPL Center. We also need to have more pictures taken from these events so that we can share them on our website and with all employees.

REACH

No new news to report.

Awards Committee

No new news to report.

Liaison Committee – Travis Spencer

The group is looking to continue last year's model, so there are not many changes. The key is for all ERAC members to set up the appointments with your designated liaison. Post your meeting notes on the Excel form after you meet with your liaison. Check Google Docs to make sure your campus liaison partner is correct. If you have met with your liaison, update the sheet and if you have not yet met, please do so ASAP. We have increased awareness about ERAC by meeting with our liaisons. We also had a lot of good feedback from last year's meetings. We have added a couple of new groups (e.g. Campus Climate, etc.). Clara was able to meet with Dr. Henry Odi and he was interested in speaking with the group about the initiatives that is working on.

Toni Lee Febbo, director, HR Svcs, & Gary Falasca, director, Facilities Svcs.

ERAC thanked Toni Lee and Gary for joining us at our meeting to discuss the University's weather policies and issues resulting from bad weather. Toni Lee discussed the importance of knowing your employee classification. This is in your position description located in the portal. You are either essential services, instructional or non-instructional. Five possible scenarios for inclement weather: university open, open with delay, open with limitations, early close, and closed. The facts that are used for determining the appropriate scenario: forecast of severity (snow depth? ice?); timing (when does it arrive? how long does it last?); University activity (weekday classes, weekend, break period, exam period, athletics, and other scheduled events?) Toni Lee and Gary cleared up several questions. The key is communicating with your supervisor to create a plan before bad weather hits. ERAC members are encouraged to share this information with staff members in their respective areas.

New Business Updates

ERAC members interested in volunteering to assist at the holiday party should contact Carla this week so she can send your names to HR.

In January, a member from the CEC will present information on the updated Harassment Policy. We need to be aware of what the changes are and to encourage all staff members to participate in the annual online harassment training. (N.B. Moved to February meeting, per Carla.)

We have been invited to meet with incoming president Dr. Simon in the spring. Think about discussion topics and how ERAC can present a positive impression of our accomplishments. Travis Spencer suggested that we combine this meeting with a regular meeting to avoid scheduling an additional meeting. Perhaps, we can move an upcoming meeting to 11 a.m. and meet with Dr. Simon at noon for lunch that same day.

The Executive Committee meets with Vice President Pat Johnson approximately every six weeks. She has asked us to think about a campus-wide staff meeting to be run by senior leadership. What format, time, location? What topics are staff interested in seeing presented? Bring ideas to next meeting.

President Clayton's Holiday Reception well received. ERAC will thank President Clayton for this staff event.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m. Janice Stoudt made the motion; Travis Spencer seconded.
Submitted by, Morgan Nelson, ERAC co-secretary