

MACER January 18, 2024 Meeting Notes

Management Association Committee for Employee Relations



Representing Management: Paul Beaudin, Mike McCarthy, Chris Sicuranza, Vivian Cavazzi,

Representing NECCPA: Linda Giampa, Jeff Mejia, Louise Michaud, Laura Mondt, Trisha Portanova, Steve Russell

Meeting held in President's Conference Room

NECCPA President Linda Giampa began the meeting at about 3:00 PM, Thursday January 18, 2024.

- 1. New Chief of Staff** – Chris Sicuranza introduced himself as Lane Glenn's new chief of staff. He recounted his extensive experience in government and stressed his open-door policy.
- 2. New DCE Grievance Coordinator** – Jeff Mejia introduced himself as the new Chapter DCE Grievance Coordinator. Jeff is also the Assistant NECC Baseball Coach.
- 3. Impact of "9C" Cuts** – These are cuts to the FY 2024 state budget recently implemented by Governor Healy due to shortfalls in tax collections over the past six months. . Mike explained that \$15 million has been cut for the Dept. of Higher Education budget, mostly in workforce development It's unclear how these shortfalls will affect the FY 2025 budget now under development. This may impact programs like free community college. Linda mentioned that this could affect MCCC contract negotiations, and it seems that too often MCCC members are last in line when it comes to funding. Mike said that there is no way to predict that, given how in government funding different pools of funds are dedicated by law for specific purposes.
- 4. Classroom Assignments** – Linda asked how it is that classroom assignments are made in rooms that are substandard, such as those in the basement of Amesbury Street, when there appear to be other rooms more acceptable that are empty. Steve pointed out that in his own case he had a class assigned in the basement classroom on Amesbury Street at 9:30 and another in the Dimitry Building at 11:00. Paul explained that the reason for that is probably because at 9:30 Tuesday and Thursday, Early College classes need the Dimitry Building rooms. The problem could be avoided by scheduling, if possible, regular classes at times other than that 9:30 slot.

Paul talked about how he is evaluating all spaces on campus and looking for ways to consolidate classes into fewer buildings, especially during evening hours. This has the advantage of making those buildings where classes are held feel more lively and less desolate.

5. **COVID Policy** – Linda expressed concern that people with COVID may not be notifying people with whom they have had contact, and who should test themselves. What is unique about COVID is that one can be infected and not feel sick. Vivian responded that while it is recommended that employees do report their condition, HIPAA regulations prohibit the college from making those disclosures about employees. Paul suggested that a memo to the college community recommending that those who have tested positive for COVID notify the college. This could include students also.
6. **Salary Adjustments** - Linda said she understood that new salary calculations will be distributed to members during the second week of February. Under the current Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) the 60-day appeal period which members have expires on February 8. Linda asked if a new MOA could be drawn up to extend the 60-day period to 60 days beyond when the new salary calculations come out. Vivian said she did not think that the MOA could be done locally. The timeframes were set at the state level. She also said that there have not been any inquiries since December 22 about salary calculations.
7. **Request to Employ (RTE) and Part-Time Employee Status** – Linda expressed concern that some employees who should be classified as Part-Time Professional Staff are being hired through the RTE process. She said that RTE should be used for someone working for a specific time. Some of these employees should be benefitted. There are some on RTE status that come back every semester. Vivian responded that she, too, has been concerned about this and will be trying to identify employees whose status is questionable. There would be some budget considerations to any reclassification.
8. **New Employees** – Linda expressed concern that often employees in an area do not know that a new hire is coming to the area and thus are not prepared to welcome the new person. A new employee should be celebrated. Sometimes managers do not even know that a new employee is arriving. Vivian agreed that this is a problem that needs to be addressed. The college no longer asks new employees to come before their start date to complete paperwork. Usually that happens within 3 days of the start date. She will look into making this better.
9. **Gallup Employee Morale Survey** – Linda asked if more detailed results from this survey will be shared with employees. There was not adequate time given to it at Convocation. She asked if the slides would be shared. Discussion ensued about the low morale at the college and how to differentiate between the cause being at the group level or at the institution level. The questions on the survey seemed not always to be clear or relevant. Chris indicated that the questions are designed to provoke discussion and to get at the root of the problems, rather than simply complain about situations.
10. **Jail Employees** – Paul asked that there be a conversation with the Union about using “Column H” to determine salaries of some employees at the jail. This allows paying “off the grid,” when it is too difficult to find people willing to work for the grid salaries.
11. **Live Q&A** – Chris reported that it will be possible to have a live college wide Q&A for employees to ask management any questions they like. This will be appearing very soon.

The meeting ended at about 3:45.

Next MACER meeting is scheduled for Thursday February 15 at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Russell, Ph.D.
NECCPA Secretary