

MACER May 16, 2024 Meeting Notes

Management Association Committee for Employee Relations



Representing Management: Paul Beaudin, Vivian Cavazzi,

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

Meeting held in President's Conference Room

NECCPA President Linda Giampa began the meeting at about 3:00 PM, May 16, 2024.

1. **“Revitalizing” the Lawrence Campus** – Linda Giampa said that there has been discussion of that topic around the college and asked what it mean. Paul Beaudin responded that the Lawrence campus is often seen as not being vibrant, but one should visit the Dimitry Building at 9:00 AM when Early College classes are there and Tuesday evenings there are many hybrid classes. Faculty security concerns at Amesbury Street have been at least partially addressed. Paul said that he was at Dimitry on Tuesday evenings and other administrative personnel are also there. He mentioned that in the fall a full Business program will be in place there to appeal to MassReconnect students. Linda expressed concerns that except for Tuesday, there is no one to support evening faculty when supplies are needed, etc.

Paul also indicated that that Noemi Custodia-Lora is looking into improving the physical appearance of the campus. Linda asked that when cleaning takes places during the summer on either campus that staff be notified ahead of time to avoid disrupting the work of people who work during the summer.

2. **Space Changes in Lawrence** - Paul said that there were plans to move Adult Education from 420 Common Street to L-200 and *Academic Coaching* to L-255. *It was not clear what would happen to faculty offices in L-255. (Update: We are working with management to ensure faculty will have space – faculty will be informed once the final decision is made)* The Academic Center there, he said, will probably continue to exist depending on the direction that the Integrated Student Centers take. Paul also expressed concerns that the public spaces in which advising takes place there may not be the best approach to ensuring students' privacy.
3. **Input from Advising Discussion** – At the April 30 President's Staff Meeting employees were asked for suggestions on what improvements could be made to the way that students were advised. Paul said that about 150 people participated with about 300 suggestions. There were about 20 common themes that emerged with varied opinions. One suggestion that was frequent was that it would be best to stop shifting students around to different advisers. Also mental health needs of students should be considered. Should faculty be compensated for taking on students beyond their 18-student requirement? Employees can continue to make

comments until May 28 using this link:

<https://northernessex.wufoo.com/forms/z1vhkqhm0ty0luf/>

Paul sent out an e-mail to all employees on May 17 that outlined some of the input from the meeting.

4. **Fresh Start Program and Plagiarism** – At the All College Assembly Meeting on April 29 there was a discussion about excluding students who received an “F” in a course on account of plagiarism. As part of the Fresh Start program F’s are dropped and not counted in a student’s GPA. A committee approved this policy, but community college legal counsel indicated that this would not be a good idea. One of the reasons is that policies on plagiarism vary depending on the faculty member and to enforce a uniform policy would jeopardize academic freedom. At the ACA meeting there was a discussion in which faculty members were made to feel that their grading was arbitrary and also were not consulted before the policy was amended to include Fs for plagiarism in the Fresh Start policy. Paul admitted that the attempts at humor at the meeting were perhaps misplaced.
5. **New Employee Feedback** – Vivian Cavazzi introduced a new initiative that would ask new employees to review the college at intervals in the first year. She said that the college hopes to improve retention this way and to point out problems that could be addressed before employees leave in their first few months of employment. Especially, she said, the College is interested in finding out if the job was what employees expected it would be. It might then be used to train supervisors and management. The survey is not anonymous, but it is not used in performance evaluation. Linda suggested that this needs to be taken into account as employees might not be completely honest if they believed their employment was at stake. Steve Russell suggested that the survey be administered to faculty at the end of the first semester and at the end of the first year. 30 or 90 days is not enough for a faculty member to really have a complete impression of the work. Paul agreed. Vivian agreed that this would be a good idea.
6. **DCE Back Pay** – Linda asked if payment for raises in the recently ratified DCE contract would be made on June 7. Vivian responded that most of it would be done on that pay date. The remainder would be paid on June 21.
7. **Mace Bearer at Commencement** – Steve suggested that the mace bearer, who is a senior faculty member, be introduced not just as “mace bearer” but as “Professor of” Steve added that this request had been made at MACER some years ago and the results have been uneven. Paul agreed with the suggestion.
 - *Update: At commencement on May 18 the mace bearer was introduced as “faculty member” and not introduced as “Professor of English” as was discussed.*

The meeting ended at about 4:15.

Next MACER meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 20 at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Russell, Ph.D.
NECCPA Secretary