Minutes 9/16/08
54 in attendance.

Clancy: Called the meeting to order at 6:15. The lengthy process of reaffirming all voting members was then carried out. 49 voting members were affirmed. Committee Reports were then called for.

Chairs: Discussed new course proposals and special topics. It was recognized that much of this could be done by e-mail. There was discussion about what Chairs committee does and how its redundant due to the fact that Faculty Body already has a committee that addresses this. Also, chairs discussed the department chairs and the fact that there is no compensation standard across the board. Also they talked about the need to have full time Faculty teaching, not adjuncts.

Co-Conveners: The co-conveners asked whether there is any student representation on the faculty body committee that makes these decisions.

Chairs: Didn’t think so. It was also elaborated that because of the division chairs and the faculty body committee there may not be a need for Chairs Committee.

Dining Services: Discussed what will happen when there is inclimate weather at Cowpie. As a possible solution it was suggested putting tables in the lower glad space. In addition there was also conversation about putting picnic tables on the Cowpie lawn to cut down on soil compaction. There was also discussion about a proposal to limit classes at 11 and 1 to cut down on lines to diversify when people go. No formal decision was reached on this. They also talked about the sack lunch option and the fact that not many people were utilizing this. They acknowledged some of the issues such as menu availability and may be working to make the meals for the week known. Finally the idea of using the meal plan in Sage but that would mean that it would need to be a Sodexho facility, something the students didn’t feel was a good idea.

Safety Committee: Reported that Safety Sue is no longer with us she will do the CPR/First Aid training however. Topics discussed that had carried over from last semester included safety valves for gas stoves in addition to installing fire extinguisher alarms for high problem fire extinguishers (Chapel). Also the fact that we cannot use the composting toilets in the Ecodorm. Unsure if anybody is working on it.

Paige: Cameron Lash and Jake Salt are working on this.

SC: In addition the insurance company noted that the fire doors being open in Sunderland and Dorland were an issue and suggested automatic door closers. Also curious is there was a temporary Safety officer will be implements in the interim.

Cathy: Ian is working on this.
PAC: Discussed the Board of Trustees meeting and the agenda. There will be a focus on student involvement and service. Paige will be contacting everyone soon to pair students with trustees for lunch before the Trustee meeting. In order to avoid the lines and provide a quieter atmosphere there will be a buffet set up in Canon.

Brian O’Loughlin (Sodexho manager) and John Ehrlich (CFO) were introduced with the intention of discussing meal plans and the various aspects.

John Ehrlich: gave a brief introduction of who he was, were he was from and what his job was.

Brian: gave a brief history of the meal-plan. Until about 5 years ago the only option was the 21 meal plan. 14 meals was developed in response to students but because of the size of the college nothing smaller could be established. Maybe as the school grows and expands this could be explored.

Chris: What if there was the option of having X amount of meals per semester to use as we please.

New Guy 1: What about having something like the salad bar always open for students to go in and eat.

Brian: It’s a concept known as “continuous feeding”. Its something that’s been thought about but no plans have been implemented.

Rachel S: how would a set amount of meals effect the budget and pricing?

JE: could be a possibility because of the new card system and the fact that it tracks meals eaten vs. paid for. It would be an issue of figuring out appropriate costs. Again, the options are somewhat limited due to size.

Brian: The college is billed for each student on the meal plan based on a sliding scale (determined by the number of students enrolled). Currently students are billed $5.95 for three meals a day. There’s also a missed meal factor which accounts for the fact that students wont eat all the meals they pay for.

Rachel R: why cant we scan our card twice for a meal?

Brian: its based on the missed meal factor that is incorporated into the billing.

JE: $5.95 doesn’t just cover meals but also salary of the [Sodexho] employees. In reality this is a fairly cheap price and can only be done because of Sodexho’s national buying connections.

Torrie: How much does the school make on the meal plan?
JE: It basically comes out even because the school bills just what Sodexho charges. It's really not a profit making venture.

Brian: Continued that any left over goes into the general fund and helps to keep other costs at the school down.

NG1: How can we move forward on the issue with alternatives?

Brian: Would need to see what students really want, narrowed down from a big list to true wants so that costs can begin to be assessed. Stressed that it needs to be a fairly large portion of the student body.

Rachel S: What happened to the big survey Sodexho did last year?

Brian: It's called the satisfaction survey. The results were compiled and the write in comments were assessed and dealt with as best as possible.

Jesse: Why is the 14 and 21 meal plan not proportionally priced?

Brian: Basically because the difference between the two plans doesn’t effect the number of meals eaten.

Kate: Curious what percent is local.

Brian: 17% of the food is from the farm and garden. He also works with Mountain Food Sources and asks them to buy local when a comparable price presents itself. It’s definitely influenced by the season and mostly conventionally grown because organic is more.

Alex: Informed the body that our cafeteria is #2 greenest in the country.

Rachel: Thanked Brian for coming and stated that if students had further issues that they could come to the co-conveners or Dining Services reps.

Brian: Also welcomes students to send him e-mail directly or to meet with him in person.

JE: Wanted to also state that the Sodexho letter that went around was shared with regional executives of Sodexho. They thought that some of the facts presented were old and outdated. They’re going to respond to it and maybe some avenues for sharing would be through Caucus and the Echo.

Rachel: Asked JE to introduce himself a bit more fully to Caucus.

JE: Came from the College of the Atlantic in Maine. Also spent time in Florida and Arizona. He’s responsible for all of the accounting, auxiliary services, summer conferences, FMTS, Human Resources and Public Safety. He has contact with the board.
He’s been spending his first months here getting familiar/acquainted with the school. Hopes to be here a long time.

**Leah:** Extended thanks and props for facilitating and making yesterdays Community meeting happen.

**Rachel:** Added that had never really happened before and thanked not only John but all the students who attended as well.

**JE:** not much in the budget is confidential. It should be as open as frank as possible.

**Rachel S:** Yesterday you stated that there were 4 main ways of lowering tuition, what’s the balance of doing that.

**JE:** The school is funded through: the Annual fund, revenue from the endowment, controlling costs and tuition. Balance is important. The long term goal is obviously to raise money in the endowment. Right now Sallie Grace Tate’s goal is to raise annual giving from 500,000 to 600,000 with the eventual goal of 1 million. Controlling costs basically helps to keep tuition room and board costs down as much as possible.

**Rachel S:** with 65 less students next semester how does the budget change?

**JE:** Using a model inherited from Larry that’s already been accounted for in the budget.

**Rachel S:** With all the extra students does that mean that there’s more money?

**JE:** Yes and no. A lot of that money had to be used to convert houses into student housing, add new positions (development and adjuncts) there was very little gain and that allowed us basically to invest in positions and facilities.

**Clancy:** a last call was taken due to time.

**JE:** with no other questions John expressed that student’s could feel free to write him, other PAC members or caucus.

**Clancy:** Thanked John for coming and then announced that we were going to talk about staff forum and what’s going on there.

**Gideon:** At the end of last year, according to Staff Forum By-Laws two Conveners were elected, one from the staff and one from the faculty. Unfortunately, over the summer the faculty co-convener, Pete Turchi, moved to Arizona and obviously cannot fulfill his duties to forum this year. Staff Forum has been attempting to find a faculty member willing to step into this position. Sadly none of the faculty is able to fulfill this position.

At Forum’s meeting an effort was made to amend Staff Forum by-laws to allow the body to function with a single convener. The vote overwhelmingly failed (26-55). Therefore
according to how their body is run, they can no longer hear business. This means that they cannot hear (among other things) any proposal that must go through the shared governance process or vote to place staff and faculty members on the current compromise committee. Also, it's not an issue of willingness it seems but rather time. Many faculty feel that their time could be better spent elsewhere.

Alex(?): Can a copy of the bylaws be made available?

Gideon: Yes, we can put an electronic version on our website.

New Guy 2: What is the possibility of having two faculty fulfill one position, similar to what is happening now with Aly and Clancy in Caucus?

Co-Conveners: Because of how their body is run it may be difficult, maybe worth suggesting to them.

Ryan Frank: If Staff Forum doesn’t exist what is the purpose of Caucus then?

Rachel: Caucus basically become the governing body and right now were thinking that any formal recommendation that passes caucus would simply be passed on directly to the president. It also remains a place for student issues to be resolved.

Rachel S: Is it possible for Staff Forum to take straw polls, similar to that of caucus to get a general opinion?

Rachel: Because of how their run it would be considered new business and would be allowed.

Alex: how is caucus doing in terms of attendance this term?

Rachel: Really well, we’ve been averaging 50 people in attendance and tonight reaffirmed a large amount of voting members. This is the strongest Caucus has been in a while and when talking with other decision makers on campus decisions from caucus will carry more weight.

Chris: The problem seems to be time and effectiveness of Staff Forum. Are their co-conveners compensated as Caucus’ are?

Clancy: That was addressed and Sandy and other members of Forum feel that it would be inappropriate for this to exist. Staff and Faculty are asked to serve as a service to the school.

Cathy: This is a fairly important issue, there’s concern as to whether or not recommendations are followed.

**Praises and Concerns (with Caucus responses!)**
- Lets talk about parking stickers, tickets and where that money goes. I think the current system has a lot of issues.
- Cheapest parking stickers for a campus ever, please recognize that.
- I agree about this. I think it would be good to take a fresh look at the meaning behind our parking system.
- Perhaps one thing that could help would be to have sections of compact car parking.
- Why so costly? Where does the money go?
- A certain work crew boss suggested today that parking stickers be free at the beginning of the semester and that public safety really hammers down hard on non-stickered cars the second and third weeks, since the whole parking sticker thing is a security issue as well. Also people need to stop parking in fire lanes and other spots where they’re endangering their own cars and other drivers who might back into them.

- The food on campus is excellent!

- Thanks Brian for your positive attitude.

- Meal times: 11:00 class caps good idea. 1:00 as well? (i.e. people who get to lunch at 12:45 at least generally have time to eat)

- Rachel keeps interrupting people and guests.

- Bryson is great the way it was. What’s up with changing it?
- Bryson has a rich heritage as a wooden gym. No lunch tables!

    We think this was just an idea thrown around to generate feedback. We’re not sure that anything will come from this, certainly not in the near future as it will be closed for repairs.