Murray State University Staff Congress  
Draft Minutes for March 9, 2011  
304 North, Applied Science

PRESENT: Vicki D. Anderson, Terri Benton, S.G. Carthell, Laura Dziekonski, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Dana Howard, Lana Jennings, Anthony Jones, Margie Miller, Jerry O’Bryan, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Stephanie Totty, Becky Wilder, Shari Wilkins, Lisa Willis, Gina Winchester, Janeen Winters, and John Young. Guests: Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Phil Schooley, Staff Regent.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Gina Winchester called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:  
Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff, said plans are being made for the lecture series for the upcoming academic year. He welcomes suggestions of potential lecturers. At the February 25 Board of Regents meeting, Dr. Dunn presented budget guidelines for the upcoming fiscal year. Josh answered questions regarding the potential budget, state appropriations, and proposed pay increases. At its February meeting, the Board of Regents approved the doctor of nursing practice and discussed the cost of renovating Ordway Hall compared with demolishing the building.

Josh said MSU will be working with Student Search to recruit students nationally. These services will be in addition to the university’s current recruitment efforts. Questions followed. He noted that Fred Dietz, Executive Director for Enrollment Management, can further answer questions regarding recruitment. Gina Winchester asked if Staff Congress would like her to invite Mr. Dietz to speak at a Staff Congress meeting. Members indicated they would like Mr. Dietz to speak at a Staff Congress meeting.

The next Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for May 20.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said he distributed copies of the Staff Survey Summary at the February Staff Congress meeting. He also distributed copies at today’s meeting. The summary will be posted on the Staff Congress webpage. Copies of the survey summary and comments will be kept in the Staff Congress office. They are also available from Phil upon request.

Phil presented a handout and talked about the MSU sick leave buyback for KTRS members which was passed by the Board of Regents. This information will be included in the Personnel Matters newsletter from Human Resources. The board also voted to give Dr. Dunn authority to implement a time and leave reporting policy.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY FEBRUARY MINUTES: Dana Howard said her name was omitted from attendance list in the January minutes. Debbie Plummer said her name was misspelled in the attendance list in the February minutes. Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the January and February minutes as corrected. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried.

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY TREASURER’S REPORTS: Laura Dziekonski presented the January and February Treasurer’s Reports. Lana Jennings made a motion to approve the January and February Treasurer’s Report as presented. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:  
Executive Committee: Gina Winchester thanked everyone for attending today’s meeting. She encouraged Staff Congress members, especially committee chairs, to read the comments sections of the Staff Survey. The Executive Committee met with Dr. Dunn on February 17. She thanked Orville Herndon for presenting edits to the Code of Ethics at that meeting. The next Executive Committee meeting with Dr. Dunn is scheduled for April 7. She does yet not have an agenda for that meeting.

Gina said that because Jordan Smith has accepted a position at another university, his position on the Judicial Board is now vacant. Please email Gina with any recommendations for the Judicial Board replacement. Josh Jacobs explained the responsibilities of the Judicial Board.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Sheri Riddle said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet Friday, March 11. She gave an overview of the agenda for that upcoming meeting. Gina Winchester added that at the February Staff Congress meeting, Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources, explained the difference between KTRS and ORP and why the university is supporting KTRS. The Insurance and Benefits Committee is continuing to look at options for those enrolled in ORP and is considering a recommendation to make Wellness Center privileges a benefit for faculty and staff.
Sheri reported that subcommittees of the Insurance and Benefits Committee have been formed to discuss the tuition waiver benefit, the suggestion to provide a parking benefit to employees with 20 or more years of service, and medical insurance for extended family members. The committee is considering amending the definition of immediate family for the Sick Leave Policy and the wording of the Sick Leave Bank Policy. A handout regarding the Sick Leave Bank was distributed to Staff Congress.

Gina Winchester added that the Insurance and Benefits Committee meetings are open to the public.

Laura Dziekonski said some staff members have approached her with a request to modify the tuition benefit to allow employees to take more than one class during working hours. Anthony Jones noted that some employees are not allowed to take any courses during working hours even though they are willing to make up work hours during the day. Gina Winchester said it was noted at the February Staff Congress meeting that discrepancies exist among campus departments regarding staff being able to use the tuition benefit during working hours. She added that taking a class during working hours is at the discretion of the supervisor.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Orville Herndon said Jordan Smith’s position on Staff Congress is now open due to his resignation to accept an off-campus job. His resignation letter was read at the February Staff Congress meeting. Another vacancy also exists in Staff Congress due to Jane Page’s retirement from the university.

Orville reported on the development of the on-line voting process for the upcoming Staff Congress election. He made a motion that this year’s Staff Congress election be conducted on-line. Debbie Plummer seconded. Discussion followed. Regarding on-line voting, Gina Winchester asked the Credentials and Elections Committee to develop solutions for staff whose jobs don’t require the use of computers or who are not familiar with computers in general. The committee will present its proposed solutions at the April Staff Congress meeting. A verbal vote was taken on the motion to conduct the 2011 Staff Congress election online: one person voted “no,” the others voted “yes.” Orville said the sample ballots will be mailed the week after the April 13 Staff Congress meeting.

**Staff Recognition Committee:** Terri Benton passed around a folder containing Years of Service certificates and pins not claimed at the August 2010 Staff Recognition Luncheon and asked Staff Congress members to take certificates and pins to the appropriate co-workers. The 2011 Staff Recognition Luncheon will be held during the week of August 1 through 5. The specific date will be determined based on Dr. Dunn’s schedule so that he can speak at the event.

**Staff Special Events Committee:** No report.

**Communications Committee:** Laura Dziekonski said the newsletter has been drafted and is ready to be printed. She noted what items were included in it and asked if anything else need to be added. No one had any additions.

**Working Conditions Committee:** Jerry O’Bryan asked if anyone has heard of plans for any currently filled positions, such as brick layers and painters, to be cut, with the work being contracted to off-campus providers. Gina Winchester and Phil Schooley both replied that no proposal to cut currently filled positions exists. Gina added that as part of the budget process, Dr. Dunn sent a memo to directors and vice president’s asking in what areas they would be cutting their budgets in order to meet the one percent give-back/reduction in state appropriations.

**Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee:** Debbie Plummer said four applications were received for the spring scholarship, which was awarded to Zachary Doss, son of Breathitt staff member Robin Doss. One applicant did not purchase books at the university store which is a requirement for the scholarship. The committee is developing an application guideline document which will be posted on the Staff Congress webpage.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

**Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee:** Christian Cruce emailed her report to Gina. Christian will schedule a committee meeting after spring break. She welcomes any suggestions for the committee.

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:**

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:**

**Intercollegiate Athletic Council:** Sheri Riddle said she assisted Dr. Gesler with fall student exit interviews.

**Naming Campus Facilities:** No report.

**Judicial Board:** No report.
**Sick Leave Appeals Committee:** No report.

**OLD BUSINESS:** No report.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Gina Winchester said Laura Dziekonski will be trained to run Elluminate at Staff Congress meetings when Sheri Riddle is unable to attend the meetings. Gina asked for opinions on moving the Staff Congress meetings to 304 N Applied Science or other locations. Discussion followed. Members may email suggestions and comments to her.

John Young said a staff member told him that employees are not aware they can use their tuition waivers for their dependents taking bridge or Racer Academy courses. Discussion and additional questions followed. Gina Winchester noted that Mr. Dietz of Enrollment can answer these questions when he addresses Staff Congress.

John Young said that staff who leave work to pick up their children who are dismissed early from school due to weather conditions must use vacation hours to stay home with their children while staff who are released from work when the university closes early due to weather conditions do not have to use vacation hours. The staff who leave early to pick up their children must use vacation hours for the remainder of the day including the hours the university closed early. If employees notify their supervisors they will arrive late to work because the schools will be opening late due to weather conditions, the employees do not have to use vacation hours. Gina asked John to email her the specific information which she will forward to Human Resources. She will ask Human Resources for related policy information. Lisa Willis added that the Breathitt Veterinary Center usually remains open when MSU’s Hopkinsville campus is closed due to weather conditions. As a result, the Hopkinsville campus staff are paid for those hours while Breathitt staff must report to work in order to be paid. Discussion followed.

**ADJOURNMENT:** John Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.