Results for Classified Senate Survey Spring 2012

Purpose
The purpose of this survey is help the Classified Senate better understand staff participation in, and staff expectations of its organization and shared governance.

Key Survey Findings

• 91% of respondents felt it was important for the Classified Senate to continue.

• 31% of respondents are currently involved in the Senate as a segment rep or serve on a shared governance committee.

• To get more staff involved, 48% of respondents wanted the Senate to provide more communication on opportunities available to staff.

• 13% of respondents were not interested in getting involved with the Senate. That is up from 5% from our Fall 2011 survey.

• Email was the preferred method of communication (74%) respondents would like the Senate to use to communicate with them.

• We need to continue to improve communication amongst classified staff and increase collaboration between the Senate and ACE.

Sample

• A request was sent via email to 119 classified staff for the online Classified Senate Spring 2012 survey.

• There were 45 respondents, for a 37% response rate. Up 8% from our Fall 2011 survey.

• The responses were anonymous and administered through SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool.

• The survey consisted of 9 multiple-choice and 1 essay question.
Results

1. Do you think it is important for the Classified Senate to continue?

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<th>Do you think it is important for the Classified Senate to continue?</th>
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<td>[Yes; 91%]</td>
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Comments:

- Classified Senate should remain the body where decisions about how and the venue through which Classified participate in shared governance.
- It is one way to have our voice heard.
- Classified Senates are Vital in making decisions about shared governance issues
- I am worried that our current budget situation will be an opportunity for the higher-ups to get rid of classified shared governance
- Yes, as long as the group has teeth, and is not regarded as an afterthought by administrators who want to push thru their agendas, i.e. smoking policy, position ranking. You will never convince me that these administrators "forgot" to include Classified Senate. They routinely ignore the Classified Senate because they can; their interest in the Classified Senate is directly proportional to where the college is in its accreditation cycle: the closer and more involved we are in accreditation, the more "leaders" give a whit about involving Classified Senate. Since we're done with accreditation, Classified Senate is back to being an afterthought at least where administrators are concerned.
- I think classified should be united under their bargaining unit memberships (which are the sole representatives for classified staff at the bargaining table) and that energy to promote shared governance and a strong classified staff should not be diluted with two groups.
- I don't think the current administration really cares nor do they want to hear what classified staff has to say.
- It is vital not only for classified staff to have a voice in governance, but also to assist the institution in meeting accreditation standards.
- It depends on what the purpose of the senate really is.
2. Are you currently serving on Classified Senate as a segment representative or on any Classified Senate sub committee?

- Yes: 31%
- No: 69%

3. In the past 3 years, have you participated in any position on Classified Senate or as a governance committee?

- Yes: 47%
- No: 53%
4. If you have participated, or are currently participating by regularly attending meetings, etc., please tell us how much each of the following items are your reasons for participating:

- I find that a lot of information is shared at these meetings and it helps keep me informed.
- I have participated in the past, so that’s what I based my answers above on.
- I have had to pull back from participation due to position cuts within my department and hope to secure a position in the upcoming election.
- I participate in all the above through my bargaining unit because I have an interest in making sure the classified voice is heard in shared governance.

5. If you have never participated or you are currently not participating, please tell us how much of the following items are reasons for not participating:
Comments:

- I have watched others participate and felt the amount of extra work that lands on me when they attend. I do not want to do this to my co-workers. Some jobs on campus seem to have a lot more time to spend talking, socializing & attending meetings. My job does not come with this relaxed coverage & ability to walk away whenever I feel like it.
- Until managers are willing to give their employees time off, participation will be limited. And it can’t be lip service from the prez’s office to the manager’s ear.
- I have participated in this type of group before and it is a lot of work and very little appreciation.
- Office culture doesn’t encourage participation in anything that takes staff out of office for anything other than lunch, breaks, and specific department-related training. Former staff targeted for discipline because participation took them away from the office.
- I have participated in the past, but it’s hard to get away when offices are so shorty staffed.
- The meetings happen either outside of my work hours or during another meeting :-(
- Classified Senate is a feel-good organization but has no recognized authority in decision-making. Lack of release time and dilution of classified staff unity with bargaining units weakens us.
- I only work in the mornings.
- Our President pays lip service to the entire "shared governance" concept. I think she smiles and pretends to listen because she’s required to do so.
- I do have a very heavy workload, but part of the reason I haven’t participated is the "them against us" mentality that always seems to be present at classified meetings. Maybe it's "Pollyanna" of me, but I feel we’re all in this together; its counter-productive to always feel that kind of sentiment within classified gatherings.

6. To get more staff involved in the Senate, it should:
Comments:

• As far as I can tell from the notes that I read, the Senate is doing a good job. I appreciate that they do make every effort to provide communication and certainly they ask people to participate.
• Term limits on positions, unless there is no volunteer or nomination. Give opportunity for more people to participate.
• Most staff are just too lazy to care about going and participating. If we are to continue, then it cannot be the same people rotating through the different positions.
• Use virtual meetings so I don't have to leave my desk.
• If it weren't for Chris's outstanding and encouraging reminder of money available for conference participation I would not be going to NCORE. I missed my 10 year anniversary EOPS conference because my department did not have the money to send me, I completely forgot about the conference opportunity. Thanks Chris!
• President, VPs and deans must mandate that department managers make participation/involvement a priority.
• Information about the types of projects committees work on. I think some staff are nervous to get involved in something that they feel doesn't concern them, or that they can't contribute to.
• It is what is, The Senate is not responsible for the budget problem or the wonderful work climate that now exists due to the budget situation. How to become time and user friendly has always been problematic since it's founding many moons ago. Just keep plugging away and maybe have more fun type activities and be more group inclusive. Renew and strengthen segment activities might be the hook to turn staff on again.
• I'm sure some folks would be interested in some of the activities if they only knew what those were - such as helping with retreat, staff appreciation, staff of the month, etc.
• I don't think short meetings work. People need to speak their voice and opinions and recommendations. Short meetings cut people off from opportunities to share what they know, where they've been and have their thoughts recorded in the minutes Meetings every two weeks, 1.5 hours, in that extra 1/2 hour, a lot of voices can be heard
• Maybe we need a monthly or quarterly newsletter? If what we do is more in people's faces, they might really see what we do and our importance and want to get more involved.
• I have no idea how to get more people involved - it's not for lack of trying!!
• Join with the bargaining units to educate them about their contractual rights, protections and responsibilities.
• Chris runs an excellent meeting.
• I would participate if I thought it was actually effective in shared governance with our administration but that's not something that the senate could change.
• As mentioned above, I would be more involved if there was a more cohesive feeling among classified, faculty, and the administration.
• Senate is doing a great job considering the current situation. Senate should continue to keep meetings short, try virtual ones, communicate through as many methods as possible. Keep up the good work.
7. I would like the Senate to:

- I appreciate the reports & minutes that do come back from the Senate meeting. I hope they keep this up (from segment rep and/or senate officers). Reading these has helped me understand the working of the Senate even if I cannot attend.
- Give training on topics like 1) using social networks & internet on the job, 2) several options for 1 hour training on short-cuts for Excel, Word, the new webmail, etc. 3) evening or Sat sessions at KCI...PGA credit for classified.
- I think the Classified Senate is already doing a great job.
- Be much more vocal in telling the faculty that they are not the be all and end all of this institution and staff work as hard or harder than they do yet are underappreciated
- Fun team building Friday afternoon events.
- I love how Chris communicates with us.
- I would like the Senate to have a solid healthy working relationship with our Union. While there is some crossover in the mission between Classified Staff and Unions, there is an absolute separateness in the function of each of these groups.
- Continue to be a strong voice that complements our union.
- Combine with the bargaining units to teach people how to communicate effectively with their managers and without fear of retribution.
- Have a very clear definition of what the classified senate’s area of primary reliance is, i.e. does the senate exist only to perpetuate itself, or does it fulfill a larger role within the campus community?
8. Senate meetings should:

Comments:

- I have no idea. The notes I usually see don't tell me how long or how much over the meetings go.
- Haven't been recently, can't address this.
- I don't go to Senate meetings.
- Or as needed. Committee reports should be filed to the members after each meeting so that committee members realize the information is not just for them.
- Not a good judge. I did not attend any this year but appreciated the thorough email communication.
- I've never attended so I can't comment.
- The shorter meetings have been great.
- This is the second time there has been an option to shorten and/or lessen the meetings. It's getting a bit skewed in trying to secure a certain type of answer.
- Chris has been really good with running the meetings. Other presidents, not so much! Maybe we need presidential meeting guidelines?
- Be joint meetings with bargaining unit site meetings.
9. To communicate with me, I would like the Senate to:

10. If there are any other expectations you have of your Senate, please list them here.

- By posting classified information in the mailroom, it gives us more exposure and people who don't use email can view it.
- Cheer me up!
- I think this year was one of the best as far as communication from the President. The updates were great, sometimes entertaining but most importantly, they were informative.
- Nope
- Morale is low and getting lower. It's not the fault of the Senate, but it's hard to be interested when it seems like we just get dumped on all the time. An active Senate that seems to be accomplishing things would be a positive thing. (Not just a figure-head committee)
- The Senate has given the Classified staff a rare opportunity to attend the CLI offered by the 4CS. This is a huge wonderful milestone. Kudos!
- It'd be nice to have better communication within each segment - I mostly just hear from Chris directly but I don't hear from my own constituent. Perhaps CS could provide more training to segment reps? It'd also be nice to hear more about open opportunities for classified staff, especially regarding hiring committees. I feel like if I don't go to the meetings myself, I never hear about what is going on but I don't have time to go to the meetings and we already send someone from my segment who should be reporting back.
- Thank you for all of your hard work and everything you do for the Classified Senate.
- Educate staff that there is strength in unity. Many classified staff are not full-fee members of their bargaining units, perhaps not realizing that the bargaining units enforce our contractual agreements between staff and management and also negotiate contract language. Whether it's ACE, CSEA, Teamsters or OE3, it costs money for the units to do this. By remaining service-fee payers only, staff does a
disservice to the entirety of the classified staff. Many staff are openly negative about the unions and the people who act on their behalf and they show it by not being full members — a fact that does not go unnoticed by management.

- I don’t want to beat a dead horse, but I’ve watched the divisive attitude from the classified staff get worse and worse over the years. During this fiscal crisis, we should all be working TOGETHER; I know I’d feel more inclined to participate if there was a more positive feeling from classified.
- Provide encouragement and training for the segment reps to take more responsibility in communicating with their constituents.