

## NESS Meeting Minutes June 10, 2026

**Attendance:** Helena Dahlen, President; Barbara Ann Smith, VP; Jenny Carr; Cathy Fu; Monica Green; Melessia Jasper; Michele Kimery; Michele Mullins; Wendi Myers; Sharon Paul; Kyle Pokorny; Teresa Reese; John Roemer.

**Guest:** *Laila Shishineh*, Assistant Vice Provost and Chief of Staff to the Provost

- Laila has been at UMBC for over 16 years and has been involved in shared governance a majority of the time, both in ESS (where she was President) and in CUSS (where she was Chair!).
- In her new role, she wants to connect with shared governance groups and be a liaison to the Provost. Helena is happy for this offer.
- There's interest in bringing the leadership of each shared governance group together before the academic year starts to touch base with the Provost about priorities for the next year.
- Laila sent out a call for the development of a Faculty Advisory Board and a Staff Advisory Board. These would be small groups that act as internal sounding boards for the Provost, not as a voting body.
- Question: Where are we with the strategic planning process?
  - Answer: There was a survey this spring asking for input. The group is now working through all the feedback and expects to have a draft plan in the summer (one more opportunity for feedback at that point) and launch the plan in the first half of the fall semester.
- Leadership updates: There are three executive searches that are wrapping up: VP for Enrollment Management, Dean for CNMS and Director of the Faculty Development Center. (In other news, the university has a new VP for Admin & Finance!)

**Report from the quarterly HRSTM meeting** with Lynne Adams (*Helena, Barbara, John, and Crocetta*)

- AWA (Alternative Work Arrangement) policy and training: Each non-bargaining staff member (so exempt and non-exempt Confidential staff) must attend the training and upload their certificate in PeopleSoft if they want to do hybrid work. The bargaining unit

has chosen to negotiate on this issue, so bargaining employees will not submit an AWA agreement at this time.

- Evaluation of NESS position descriptions is almost done. So far, HR has not found any exempt staff who should be non-exempt or vice versa. Delineation between bargaining vs. non-bargaining non-exempt staff is still ongoing.
- Overtime compensation: If a staff member is required to work overtime, they can choose whether to be compensated with pay or with comp. time. The supervisor cannot choose. See [this policy](#).
- Career paths for Executive Administrative Assistants are limited when certain new positions (like Executive Coordinator) require a degree; Years of experience are not counted. Lynne says if someone wants to apply for a position that requires a degree, please contact her directly: She'll evaluate on a case-by-case basis.
- Please let NESS leadership know what topics/speakers you would like to see at the Administrative Day breakfast next May.

### **Report from previous Committee meetings**

- Faculty and Staff Caregiving Committee: *Monica Green*
  - The committee is hosting a three-part book discussion in the fall on "The Caring University" by Dr. Kevin McClure.
  - See the [committee's website](#) for more information and to sign up.
- Dining on Campus Committee: *John Roemer*
  - Similar to last year, this summer, lunch options include the Admin Coffee Shop, Starbucks, the Commons Market, one of the Commons food stalls and True Grits. (Two of the food stalls will be open when orientations are planned.) It's a balancing act between giving staff options and minimizing food waste.
  - Skylight doesn't serve food in the summer, but it's possible that, this summer, folks can pick up their food from Chartwells and eat together at the Skylight. This would be helpful when groups come on campus. John will ask for details.
  - New options: Grubhub is here and there's discussion about a fully automated convenience store near the upper end of Academic Row. Some other campuses have delivery robots...?
  - Faculty and staff have the option to sign up for a meal plan through a payroll deduction.
  - For the fall: Chick-fil-A is getting a facelift and there are some new offerings at

the Commons and True Grits.

### **Ad-Hoc Information**

**Graduation traffic** seems much worse than last year.

- Are different folks handling traffic control? Michele K confirms that police officers did traffic control in previous years, but the Events Center took it over this year. She will pass our concerns on to Officer McDermott
- No signage on walkways: Some families park anywhere and are wandering around looking for the Event Center
- Some departments have gone fully remote on graduation days, but the rest of us need to come in and do our jobs.

**Our next NESS meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8 from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm, location TBD.

--- Cathy Fu, NESS Secretary