Employee Council Executive Meeting  
12:00 – 2:00, September 17, 2008  
Jones Room, Woodruff Library

**Member Attendees**
Engelhardt, Matt; Long, Nina; Derry, Michael; Morgan, Siân; King, Linda; Ashley, Sharon; Bowling, Jess; Kerry, Sandy; Williams, Brenda; Adiri, Yaffa; Goetz, Betty; Howard, Marsha; Murray, Margaret; Spikes, Shanda; Kimberl, Elizabeth; Worthy, Robin; Luchrs, Karen; Chebat, Patricia; Chokiemski, Toni; Duncan, Carol; Hayes, Darlene; Bragg, Colin; Blalock, Wes; Flanagan, Jay; Stanfield, Frances; Dobbs, Ashante; Hinson, Katherine; McBride, Bill; Sheldon, Linda; Moreland, Sonia; Bryant, Cindy; Ratliff, Susan; Winsett, Dianne; Vickery, Blair

**Alternate Attendees**
Ingram, Terry; James, Jonetta; Sanders, Rhoda; Keeler, Cathy; Paige, Norma; Troyer, Kathy; Meier, Cindy; Millsaps, Cynthia; Ashford, Shaneesa

**Excused Absences**
Ndubuizu, Iruka; Blackmon, Melissa; Wilson, Brenda; Varnado, Margie; Shema, Judy; Brownsberger, Shelly

**Unexcused Absences**
Doherty, Susan; Woods, Tracy

**Welcome**
President Matt Engelhardt welcomed all members to the meeting, thanked the Executive Committee for their hard work over the summer and for putting together the orientation binders, and introduced today’s speakers-President James Wagner; Ozzie Harris, Senior Vice Provost for Community/Diversity; Tracy Clark, Associate Director for Programming, Schwartz Center; Katherine Hinson, Communications Director, Human Resources.

Matt Engelhardt also briefly introduced the theme for the year “Talk to Me: Communication in Community”, and discussed the new format for the meetings, i.e. no caucus meetings, as well as the various opportunities for taking part in Emory events throughout the coming year (sports, arts, building tours, etc.)

**President James Wagner**
Emory University is a destination for faculty, staff and students; this year’s acceptance rate is 26.6%, down from 43% in 2003. Other good news: Emory was recognized this year as Georgia’s Conservationist of the Year, and the Chronicle of Education listed Emory as one
of the greatest universities at which to work; we ranked in the top 5 of 13 of the 20 areas. These are great achievements, but there’s still work to be done.

The best communities allow “ideas to do battle, rather than people doing battle”. Emory does this well as the academic level, but could do better at this on an employee level – there are barriers that prohibit employees from bringing difficult conversations to their employers. President Wagner hopes that the Council will look at how to overcome these barriers during this year of examining community and communication. Wagner then spoke about how important the Council is to the University as a feedback mechanism. Being a member of Employee Council means that you need to take information back out to your communities in addition to bringing issues forward.

In closing, Wagner wanted to talk about some of the upcoming challenges this year. There are some outside pressures on the university that will make it difficult for us moving forward. The economy is a big challenge; Emory also has to pay increased fuel and food prices. Emory has chosen to honor people first with salaries – pay raises and new hires. Emory is suffering because of the way it has chosen to invest – its short term could be as much as $10-12 million short. Emory will need to move funds around to cover shortfalls.

The other major challenge will be Grady Hospital. It’s unfortunate that the new direction is taking place just as the economy is suffering. Fortunately, Grady has a great administrative Board and Emory will be a key player in the future of Grady.

Questions:

1. Question: Cindy Bryant: “I was taught that there are three things that you don’t discuss in the workplace: sex, politics and religion, and I was wondering what your point of view is on this now, given what you said earlier.”
   Answer: Wagner believes that Emory can lead the way by talking about everything that needs to be human. We need to have some discussion around the intersection of science and faith, gender, sex, politics, etc. and how it makes us who we are.

2. Question: Bill McBride: “What is the current state of the endowment?”
   Answer: The endowment is currently at about $5.5 billion. We will struggle, as it’s mostly invested in stocks, but the impact won’t be huge if the downturn is short term. Emory may need to take more out of the endowment than normal to cover this shortfall. Fortunately, Emory just began a new phase of campaigning. The endowment is not just a savings account, it’s an integral part of how Emory operates.

Ozzie Harris, Senior Vice Provost, Community/Diversity

Ozzie Harris was pleased to attend the meeting and wants to support the Council in any way he can; he has an open-door policy. Harris welcomed the new members of the Council, thanked everyone for their service and encouraged the Council to think about what the Council does, what it could do, and to find out what the President’s Commissions are doing. These groups should work on the same concerns together rather than separately, especially since there are many shared issues. Harris also encouraged the Council to work with
organizations on campus such as Human Resources, Institutional Research, etc. to provide feedback from staff members into various processes and projects.

Harris also commented on our theme for the year, “Talk to Me” and said that it’s not only important to talk, but also to listen and how we listen. It’s an important value to listen to others in our community. Harris concluded his remarks by briefly describing the Transforming Community Project (TCP), which examines race, history, etc. The University is putting two million dollars into TCP over 5 years.

**Tracy Clark, Associate Director, Schwartz Center**

Tracy Clark handles event programming for the Schwartz Center and spoke about this year’s events, e.g. Candler Concert Series (subscription program with discounts for Emory staff) as well as free events. The Schwartz Center seeks to bring world-renowned artists to Emory for all members of the community to enjoy. There are brochures that outline all of the events at the Schwartz Center. Clark also announced the opportunity for Council members to attend the upcoming event, Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, for free.

The full schedule of events is also available online: [http://www.arts.emory.edu/](http://www.arts.emory.edu/).

**Katherine Hinson, Communications Director, Human Resources**

Katherine Hinson came to talk about the Sparkfly employee discount program. The usage is approximately 300 visits per day (25,000 visits to date), and almost all Council members have already logged onto the site to view and use discounts. There is a new flyer for Sparkfly to describe the program and the registration steps, which Katherine handed out for members to take back to their constituents.

Hinson also mentioned that it’s possible to suggest vendors to Sparkfly, and then Sparkfly will follow up to see if the business is interested in joining the program.

**Matt Engelhardt, Employee Council President**

Matt Engelhardt handed out orientation binders to all members as well as posters that members can post in their areas for constituents to know our theme for the year and who their Employee Council representative is.

Engelhardt then proceeded to walk the Council through the various sections of the binder, which included:

1. “Talk to Me” slide presentation: outlined the role of the Employee Council (and what it’s not), the role and responsibilities of a Council member, and the organization chart for the Council.
2. Strategic Plan: a report prepared by Engelhardt on the Emory Strategic Plan as it relates to staff members.
3. Employee Council Bylaws.
Old Business

*Treasurer’s Report:* Margaret Murray (see budget slide at end of report). The proposed budget was approved by all members of the Council.

New Business

*Historian’s Report:* Betty Goetz (see notes at end of report).

*Linda Sheldon,* Past President, announced that she needs two volunteers to help organize the volunteer projects: one will occur on campus between Thanksgiving and Christmas, and the other will be off campus during Staff Fest in May. Sheldon is hoping that the activities begun at last year’s Staff Fest can be expanded.

Please email Linda at linda.sheldon@emory.edu if interested in helping with these projects.

*Michael Derry,* Council Member, announced the Emory College Staff Consortium 1st Annual Educational and Professional Growth Fair on Tuesday, October 14th from 11:00am-3:00pm in White Hall Building 2nd floor lobby. This information session is open to all Emory University staff. The fair will provide you with details of professional programs, courses and opportunities that will fit and enhance the everyday lifestyles of working adults. Please see the two attached flyers with information on schools and programs attending the fair. Any questions in reference to the fair can be sent to the cscboard@emory.edu.

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2008-09 Budget Proposal from Treasurer, Margaret Murray
Historian's Report from Betty Goetz

Employee Council History

According to Original By-Laws:

The Council was formed as the Emory Employee Relations Council authorized by President Sanford Atwood of Emory University as an integral part of the Affirmative Action Program of the University announced in May 1969. The first meeting was held February 4, 1970.

General function: to act as an advisory group to central administration on matters of employee relations.

The June, 1970, minutes listed the things most affecting employee relations were job security, job classification, job evaluations, salary, medical care, promotion, raises and grievance procedure. It was also noted that the Council needed more publicity regarding its role, activities and concern for better employee relations.

In 1971 a survey was conducted among various institutes of higher education and all but one gave more holidays than Emory. The Council had requested that consideration be given to making Memorial Day a holiday, but it was denied stating that it was “not a suitable holiday because it would conflict with the academic schedule”. They did, however, vote to add New Year’s Eve.

In 18 months personnel policy had been changed on grievances, promotion, transfers, nepotism, voting time, vacation, sick leave, and emergency leave. The Council had made recommendations concerning the traffic plan and fund drives, and an additional holiday had been added.

By 1990 medical insurance premiums were split for bi-weekly staff, a child care center was available with a subsidy for graduate students, the sick leave cap had been lifted and the Campus Report was providing increased visibility of the Council.

Several things were done to raise employee morale:

- A vendor discount list was developed and circulated
- An employee relations section was developed in personnel
- The Employee Assistance Program was developed (FSAP)
- Management Assessment Program was activated
- Congratulatory letters went out with five year increments of service recognition

Inclusiveness increased with

- Representation on Senate Committees
- Working with Commissions as they were formed
- Representation from outlying areas: Grady, Carter Ctr., Univ. Housing
By 1991 Emory had 14,000 employees. Factors were defined which were needed to unify the Emory Community:

The need to be more human-oriented – Personnel Dept. renamed Human Resources
Increased communication – Many felt that information was kept confidential, not disseminated.
Diversity – Definition as a “community of scholars” isolates many of the 45% of Emory employee who do not deliver products of education

Changes in the 90’s
Recycling adopted
Town Hall meetings began
Director of personnel became V.P. of Human Resources
Employee Council membership included in Campus Directory
Funded and conducted exit interviews
All employees included in Campus Directory
Introduction of photo I.D.s
Short term disability benefits
Staff Day

In 1999 the Council again gauged its effectiveness
Strong support from President’s office and EOP, but spotty elsewhere.
Membership appointment
Child care far from ideal
Parking challenging

Three goals for 2000:
Enhance and strengthen communication between council and University administration (Inclusion in Senate Committees)

Heighten awareness of council in Emory Community
(Emory Report, Town Hall meetings, increase member attendance, Brown Bag Lunches)

Increase Community efforts
(Job shadowing program with Druid Hills High School, Baker Woods Ivy Pull)

The times, they do change

Emory has grown tremendously. This growth has affected Council relationship with administration and with the multi-faceted organization that it seeks to represent.

Today’s concerns: employee grievances, traffic & parking, medical care, sick leave policy, job security, job classification, job evaluations, salary, promotion, raises, and more publicity needed for the Council regarding its role, activities and concern for better employee relations.
But wait a minute! That’s also the list for 1970. Haven’t we achieved anything over the past 38 years?

You bet we have! Many of the benefits of today are not just the way things have always been!

Since the late 60’s Emory increased paid holidays from 6 to 10 + 2 floating holidays in 2008. Medical insurance has expanded from one Blue Cross-Blue Shield policy to a choice of vendors, new high deductible policies, dental, vision, and flexible spending accounts. The $10,000 Basic Life insurance became an Emory-paid benefit.

In the late 60’s the wait was five years to begin to contribute to the retirement. Today an employee can begin to contribute immediately and the University match kicks in after one year. Also, in addition to TIAA-CREF, accounts may also be maintained in Vanguard and Fidelity, and it is deducted pre-tax.

New benefits accrued over the period include group legal, long term care, 528 College savings plan. Child Care and Blomeyer Exercise are also available on Campus.

So as change inevitably continues, so does the responsibilities of the employee council to ensure that Emory employee life advances with the time as new solutions evolve for age-old issues.

For 2008 – 2009 the Employee Council through its committees will be addressing:
- Increasing communication with constituents
- Support of Work-Life Initiative Task Force initiatives
- Continue to advocate for a “sick leave bank” for co-workers in need
- Emory salaries vs. market salaries
- Establishment of career ladders for career advancement
- Need for a University Ombudsman