

College of the Marshall Islands

Faculty Senate – Minutes of Meeting

Friday 14th February 2020, 11:10 AM – 12:00 PM

Chair: Moarieta Ientaake, FS President

Deputy Chair: Dr. Michael Young, FS Vice-President

Minute taker: Ana Bulavakarua – FS Secretary and Treasurer

Present: Quorum of 30

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order

- a. A special welcome to Kendall Romany who is the instructor in Environmental Science
- b. Items 5 and 6 shifted to Special/Urgent business.

2. Special/Urgent Business:

- a. Faculty Senate nominee to serve as an observer on all of the Board of Regents (BoR) public meetings and to report back to the Faculty Senate Meetings
 - i. A practice in the past where we had an observer at the Board of Regents meeting who reports back to the Faculty Senate.
 - ii. Suggestion of the Faculty Senate President and an appointee of the Faculty Senate Executive team to be an observer at the BoR meeting – voted and agreed.
 - iii. Discussions also of the need for all the three members of the Faculty Senate Executive team to be fully aware of matters pertaining to Faculty Senate so each can fully represent and present for the Faculty Senate at any discussions.
- b. A motion to speed up HR's subcommittee on the sick leave policy –
 - i. Background: Fall 2018 HR made a change to Sick Leave policy (HR did not communicate the change of policy, except updating it on the CMI webpage), and Faculty Senate had reservations with the new change, recommendations were made but these recommendations were not considered. If you're sick for 2 days in a pay period, you need to get a medical certificate on the second day, and the hospital is overwhelmed at times, e.g. during the time in trying to combat dengue fever, and dragging oneself during these busy times to the hospital to get such a sick sheet can be burdensome. When you do not produce the required sick sheet, you lose out financially as you will not be paid for the said sick days without sick sheet.
 - ii. First motion for Sick leave policy to be revised to give a deadline for Committee to act on it (Faculty Senate HR representative clarified how the HR Committee Chair has not called a meeting yet).
 - iii. Second Motion: Faculty Senate recommends for all changes of policy reports to be circulated clearly in writing to the wide College Community, and for the department which made the change to communicate these changes to include previous policies and the change of policies.
 - iv. Separate motion for the Faculty Senate HR Rep and Faculty Senate Executive Team to move the recommendation forward to the appropriate authorities.All motions in 2 b ii, 2 b iii, and 2 b iv were moved, seconded, and carried.
- c. Faculty Senate Bylaws updates – the Committee has met and no substantial changes have been made. It is an update only. Faculty Senate are strongly recommended to review the bylaws. Discussion to continue at the next meeting.

3. New Business:

- a. **Student teacher evaluations to be distributed at mid-term:** in November 2019, we complied student evaluation samples to implement this semester. Nik Willson will translate the evaluation document into Marshallese and circulate it to the Faculty Senate today. Motion was carried.
- b. Standard categories for SLO analysis disaggregation – tabled to next meeting
- c. Suggestions of Marshall Islands/Pacific Maps and Emergency/Evacuation Information in the classrooms –
 - i. Suggestion of departmental responsibility to acquire the maps. Discussions of possibility of departments to fund this for particular buildings, but this can be brought up to a higher level e.g. Dean or the College, for funding. Discussions also on a deeper intention of

what is taught in the classroom – content wise for our students. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

- d. CMI's position in response to the current state of emergency – tabled to next meeting.
- e. Quick Updates:
 - i. Executive Council & Executive Officers' Report: William Reiher will begin his official duties at CMI on March 16, while Dr. Irene will commence in May. The 5 year succession plan is still in draft form.
 - ii. EMC: committee is trying to improve the registration, e.g Add and Drop to be done electronically. Any suggestion to the committee on how to improve registration process will be appreciated.
 - iii. IT Committee: Notebook computers – charge it only to 90% battery, and not leave it just charging.

All other items of the agenda are to be tabled to the next meeting.

- 3. Review of the Minutes
- 4. Reports/Actionable Items as follows:
 - a. Executive Council & Executive Officers' Report
 - b. Human Resources Committee
 - c. Curriculum Committee RSA
 - d. Institutional Effectiveness Committee
 - e. Enrolment Management Committee
 - f. Library Committee
 - g. Plant & Facilities Committee
 - h. Information Technology Committee
- 7. Discussion
- 8. Announcements
- 9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Human Resource Committee: Report from HR Rep Jordan Prokosch (2/27/2020)

Recommendation

7.4.1 change point b to read:

Sick leave is to be used in cases of accident or illness of the employee, and for the employee's mental, medical or dental examination and care.

7.4.8 c should read:

If more than three (3) days of Sick Leave are utilized consecutively for the same illness or disability, a certificate from a recognized health care provider must be provided.

7.4.8 d should be removed

Justification

When institutions are generous with sick leave it leads to less sickness overall. The current policy encourages employees to work when ill, leading to the spread of illness between employees and students and overall hurting learning outcomes. This has local impacts as well as overall national impacts.

Research shows that sick leave policies are the largest single contributor to employee retention outside of salary rates (Yamamoto 2011, Ahmad 2013). "Family Friendly Policies" such as allowing parents to take sick leave to care for children are highly correlated with retention as well (Hollenshead et al. 2005, IQPQ 2017). One of the stated goals of the retirement package discussion last year was to increase retention. High rates of turnover has been a significant impediment to this college's teaching effectiveness in the past. We should be doing everything in our power to keep employees, not taking an action that research shows will drive them away.

When employees are encouraged to take sick leave instead of working while sick it leads to an overall increase in productivity across the workplace (Uzialko 2018, IWPQ 2017). We should expect better teaching outcomes when employees are encouraged to rest when sick and work when healthy. We should also expect a healthier school and less absences from students when their teachers and support staff are not spreading illness. If this is truly a student-centered organization, we should not be making our students sick.

The most common forms of acute illness on the island (influenza and food poisoning) do not require any medical treatment besides rest (Demicheli et al. 2000, Mayo Clinic 2020). Many chronic illnesses and disabilities do not require a new trip to the hospital for treatment. During this Dengue outbreak, the hospital has even released public statements urging patients with minor illnesses not to overload them. The chances of both receiving and inflicting a second viral infection increase significantly when patients are placed together in confined areas without good ventilation (Eames 2009). This describes the Majuro hospital. In the case of influenza, this once again, is to no benefit for the patient (Demicheli et al. 2000).

We believe the current abuse policy outlined in 7.4.6 is sufficient if enforced. We are happy to consider alternative disciplinary measures if HR proposes them. We believe a blanket restrictive approach is not appropriate for a benefit such as sick leave without specific evidence of abuse. No such evidence was presented to us. If individual employees are abusing sick leave, and there is evidence of this, then those employees should be disciplined as described in section 7.4.6.

7.4.1 outlines the conditions under which sick leave can be used. Illness or accident is not included, this oversight should be corrected. The new language is taken from the sick leave conditions section of the HR manual for the Michigan Institute of Technology.

Works Cited

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