

**Summary of Open Forums**  
**Hosted by the Classified Professional Staff Executive Committee**  
**August, 2017**

The Classified Professional Staff Executive Committee hosted two open forums during Opening Week in August 2017. The first forum was held on Thursday, August 17, and the second was held on Friday, August 18. Twenty-seven Classified Staff members attended Thursday's session and twenty-two people attended on Friday, (unduplicated count = 41). The intent of the forums was to introduce the Executive Committee Team, discuss Classified Staff Executive Committee's mission and goals, and identify key issues to focus on in the upcoming year. The forums also provided the opportunity for the membership to review various avenues of communication and to clarify the process for addressing concerns.

At both forums, Classified Staff members provided feedback on their most pressing questions and concerns. Many of the issues discussed point to the overall need for increased communication and Classified Staff involvement on campus and in committees. Many of the Classified Staff members present felt that they are often left out of the decision-making process, even though they are usually the group to be most directly affected by policy and procedural changes on campus.

Below is a summary of the issues discussed. The Classified Staff Executive Committee will work with our Administrative Liaison, Daryl Gehbauer, to address these concerns.

## Campus Climate:

<b>Concern:</b>	More readily available communication needed regarding the Compensation/Classification Study, the Task Force, and Library costs/budget. When no updates are offered, people get nervous.
<b>Suggestion:</b>	HR and others should be providing routine updates to the entire college community. We shouldn't have to repeatedly ask for information.
<b>Concern:</b>	Regarding budget deficit, we feel like we are walking on egg shells. Classified Staff have been left out of the budget discussions, yet they usually impact us the most.
<b>Concern:</b>	Increased anxiety due to recent position cuts/potential for more budget cuts. Concerns about lack of communication, lack of transparency, lack of trust more prevalent now than ever. (Change in performance evaluations and lack of information regarding the Compensation/Classification study compound the fear of additional cuts)
<b>Concern:</b>	Closed door mind set. Some feel a dilemma between taking ownership for their own jobs and leadership opportunities and not feeling comfortable or empowered to make decisions for fear of what could happen. "You want to take ownership and make decisions but you can't."
<b>Next Steps:</b>	Forward concerns/suggestion to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

## Budget:

<b>Question:</b>	How are we going to address the 8-10+% drop in enrollment?
<b>Question:</b>	With lower HS graduates, better economy, changes in remedial class offerings, restructuring of Math pathways, etc., why didn't we predict that we would be down 8-10%? Why did we only assume 1-2%?
<b>Question:</b>	Who are the key players in making these budget decisions/layoffs?
<b>Question:</b>	What role is expected of Classified Professional Staff in budget planning? Is the budget plan closed door?
<b>Question:</b>	Why wasn't the process that was followed during the most recent budget cuts shared with us?
<b>Question:</b>	Did the elimination of lower paid and part-time employees really make a big financial difference?
<b>Question:</b>	Were better buy-out and/or early retirement incentives a consideration for budget cuts?
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Administration should be providing routine updates to the entire college community, including the specific reasons and processes followed to come to very important conclusions.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

**Compensation Classification Study:**

<b>Question:</b>	How will HR/Administration address salary recommendations with our current budget situation?
<b>Question:</b>	Will compression be addressed?
<b>Question:</b>	Is it complete? Next steps? (NO communication has been sent out)
<b>Suggestion:</b>	HR should be providing routine updates to the entire college community.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Request that HR provide information. Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

**Request that College Examine Salary Compression**

<b>Concern:</b>	Letters are no longer sent each year to confirm our salaries/level/step. We would like to receive a historical account of our position steps and the ability to know how many years raises were frozen.
<b>Question:</b>	Can the College look at/verify how many years step increases have been frozen? (11 years?)
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Request that HR make a report available to employees, detailing the information that was previously available to us in annual letters (A five to ten-year history chart, including salary, level, step, etc.)
<b>Concern:</b>	Some staff currently make less than the starting salary for their grade. Some who have been here 10+ years barely make more than new staff at that same grade.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Request that HR provide information. Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

**Request for Professional Development Opportunities:**

<b>Concern:</b>	There were several requests for more professional development opportunities for staff. (refer to subsequent feedback form submission)
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Classified Staff Executive Committee work with Administration/HR to provide opportunities for professional development.

## Concerns about Performance Evaluations

<b>Concern:</b>	Those on the Committee charged with developing a performance evaluation vehicle were told there would be training provided for supervisors, along with a manual to guide them; this did not happen. The variation in how the evaluation was administered affected morale and prompted anxiety.
<b>Concern:</b>	The Committee was told there would be a survey to assess the new evaluation vehicle and garner feedback. This has not happened.
<b>Action:</b>	<i>(HR Secretary will follow up)</i>
<b>Concern:</b>	New ratings seem arbitrary and up for interpretation. Is HR checking for consistency?
<b>Action:</b>	<i>Yes – per HR Secretary</i>
<b>Suggestion:</b>	HR should be providing routine updates to the entire college community.
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Can we review our supervisors (180 review)? (This idea was discussed quite a bit in the committee, but committee was given a NO response.)
<b>Concern:</b>	Current state of budget and continued fear of additional position cuts is raising more concern about HR and Administration using evaluations for merit ratings or future additional personnel cuts.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Request that HR provide information. Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

## Shared Governance Task Force:

<b>Question:</b>	Will we have access to ALL recommendations given by Jim Reeves, or will they go to the administration only?
<b>Concern:</b>	We were told this would be wrapped up by the end of the month (August)?
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Administration and/or Consultant should be providing routine updates to the entire college community.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Request that HR provide information. Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

## Concerns about our Insurance

<b>Concern:</b>	Cigna doesn't pay doctors well; multiple staff members are getting feedback from doctors, pharmacists, etc. that Cigna is bad insurance.
<b>Concern:</b>	Decision on insurance was already made, and we were told what to do (led to a larger discussion that in general, large decisions are already made by the time we are asked for feedback and/or committees sometimes seem to be an information session vs a decision making group).
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Instead of the Insurance Review Committee, which was strictly informational, can we enlist an insurance task force to actually seek and/or compare bids?
<b>Question:</b>	Why do we use the same broker for all three bids? (Is this a conflict of interest?) (Refer to subsequent "feedback form" submission).
<b>Concern:</b>	We have reports that our campus clinic is more expensive than Walgreens Take Care Clinic and our own doctor's office. Our clinic charges the full cost of the visit, not just the copay.
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Work through MCCA to get all community colleges coverage as part of a consortium or collective bargaining.
<b>Next steps:</b>	Request that HR provide information. Forward questions to Administration Liaison...VP of Finance & Administration.

## Concerns about overuse of campus text messaging

<b>Concern:</b>	We are being bombarded with texts to the point where many are considering opting out! There is concern regarding alternative notifications for real emergencies if many do opt out.
<b>Concern:</b>	We were told text messaging is for emergencies and class cancellations only – and that is what we tell students.
<b>Concern:</b>	If we keep sending messages out for general information, then they won't be effective in the event of an actual emergency.
<b>Suggestion:</b>	Can we just send an email out for non-emergencies?

## Other/Misc.:

<b>Concern:</b>	Staff would have liked input in to the parking situation for the day of the eclipse. (Another example of closed communication/lack of request for feedback, etc.)
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