



# Cornell University Employee Assembly

## MINUTES Employee Assembly Meeting December 17, 2014 12:15 -1:30pm 401 Physical Science Building

### **I. Call to Order**

G. Mezey called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

*Present:* N. Bell, L. Croll Howell, M. de Roos, B. Esty, T. Grove, H. Hall, S. Jenks, E. Lee, G. Mezey, J. Rogan, B. Schaffner, M. Stefanski Seymour

*Absent:* J. Ballerstein, D. Brooks, B. Cristelli, C. Ferguson, L. Morris, BJ Siasoco, P. Thompson

*Also Present:* N. Doolittle, G. Giambattista, C. Lender, L. Mitrani, A. O'Donnell

### **II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda**

There were no late additions to the agenda.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes EA from December 3, 2014 were unanimously approved.

### **IV. Business of the Day**

#### **A. Discuss proposed revisions to the Flexibility in the Workplace Policy at Cornell-- Michelle Artibee - Program Manager, Career/Life and Communication Strategies**

G. Mezey introduced Michelle Artibee, from Career Life and Communication Strategies. M. Artibee briefly explained her group is a two-person unit that helps employees with issues regarding daily out of work life – issues such as elder care and childcare. One of the main focuses of the group is arranging workplace flexibility. She explained the goal of the program is to ensure full potential is met but also to realize when you come to work you do not stop being a parent, mother, etc. M. Artibee then handed out the new policy that is going to be proposed. The existing Work Flex Policy was established in 1998 and has not been revised since then. The major changes to the policy include a more defined set of responsibilities for employees, supervisor, and HR. One of the new portions is the addition of having supervisors consulting HR when they decide to deny the Work Flex proposal brought forth by an employee. M. Artibee explained this new addition was put forth in order to open communication and see if there are different solutions that might be available to employees.

M. Artibee also informed the EA that she offers one on one consultations for employees and supervisors to help troubleshoot problems, outline proposals, as well as consider technical issue of Work Flex. Currently at Cornell, there is an ongoing study with fifty-five employees who are working remotely. She said so far the results look quite good which will benefit other departments who are considering offering more flexible work schedules. M. Artibee asked that any comments, concerns, questions, or ideas on spreading the word as well as on the policy changes should be sent to her via email at [mla64@cornell.edu](mailto:mla64@cornell.edu). The floor was then opened for discussion.

M. Stenfanski Seymour asked how this policy works with union employees. M. Artibee explained union members are not covered with this policy because union members have contracts. However, she would like to work with union contract and policy personnel in the future to consider adding this program. J. Rogan asked what training or education is there for supervisors who have been at Cornell for a while and therefore have not received the Work Flex information and might not be as familiar with the program. M. Artibee said there are online workshops but her unit is also attempting to partner with the colleges and unit specifically targeting mid-level managers.

E. Lee asked if this policy will cover or fall under FlexTime for wellness. M. Artibee said wellness is not specifically addressed in the policy changes, which was a strategic move so as to remove personal opinions from supervisor's decisions to allow or deny Flex Work. She also informed the EA the wellness guidelines are currently under review at this time.

#### **B. Linda Croll Howell - Presentation on Minority Staff Turnover**

L. Croll Howell gave a presentation on Minority and Staff Turnover. Due to the sensitivity of the information the data from the presentation will not be publicly released at this time. However, based of the information provided there are a number of new as well as continuing initiatives to address the issue. Some of these initiatives include redefining Workday termination reasons to be more descriptive, a revised work exit survey, the opportunity to request a secure, confidential exit interview, etc.

L. Croll Howell suggested this topic be included in the agenda for the spring semester. G. Giambattista added that other assemblies, such as the SA, have a specific position for a minority representative which is something the EA might wish to look into.

#### **V. Report from the Chair**

G. Mezey had nothing to report but opened the floor for any new or interest from the EA members.

B. Schaffner said there is local organization that will be holding a twelve-week class called "Family to Family." This is a free class geared toward assisting people who have family members with mental health issues.

N. Doolittle said in the new year she will be forming a board for *The PawPrint* and will be looking for people from the EA to be on it.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. Green Office Program**

G. Mezey said that he and C. Ferguson are working on a resolution about promoting the Green Office Program. In the resolution, they are hoping to put in specific goals for a certain percentage of EA members to reach Green Office status. There was some discussion on what the specifics of this percentage and time to reach the goal would entail. G. Mezey thanked the members for their input and informed them the resolution will be presented in the Spring.

### **Assembly Structure Request for Information**

G. Mezey said the executive staff is still working on compiling the information on employee distribution and representation and this will also be a topic addressed in more detail in the spring.

## **VII. New Business**

L. Croll Howell said the UA is re-examining divestment and a new way to approach the subject was brought up to her by B. Esty. This new strategy would not be direct divestment but rather remaining with the companies and instead sending them a letter of requests to follow for the university to remain an investor. There will be more to come on this issue.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 1:34 p.m.