Meeting with Registrar – Tuesday, February 21, 2012
Attending: Ted Witryk, Kitty Momburg, Dotty Richardson

Discussion on “Continuing Education”
- Registrar suggested we rename the committee from Continuing Education to something else
- Continuing Education generally applies only to courses for non-credit or non-academic units
- My suggestion is we think about renaming to “Professional Development Committee”

Kalamazoo College – current policy
- Only students of staff/faculty may receive benefit for tuition reimbursement – does not apply for staff

Other places Registrar has worked
- Want staff to get Bachelors or advanced degrees
- Benefits are offered to staff because it benefits that college/university to have staff pursue Bachelors or advanced degree
- Many positions require or will require Bachelors or advanced degree to be considered for employment
- Reimbursement by grade or full-reimbursement if pertains to current job or benefits institution
- If degree is paid for by institution, staff member has to agree to continue working at institution for a specified period of time or repay the tuition back to institution upon leaving

Kalamazoo College issues
- Problem - No extended schedule – no evening classes offered or early morning courses that start prior to work day hours
- Problem - When would staff be allowed to take classes - bulk of courses fall in mid-morning to lunch period
- Problem – flex time would require a policy for entire campus so that both employee and supervisor agreeing to this would be covered under policy (no disciplinary results), i.e. a supervisor may agree to have a student take flex time for courses at another institution, but since there is no current policy at ‘K’, that supervisor may be subjected to disciplinary action for letting employee take flex time
- Problem – Kalamazoo College would not support advanced degrees, i.e. Masters, etc., since Kalamazoo College does not currently offer a Masters program
- Problem - Restrictions on number of courses offered during lunch hour (common hour)
- Inter-institutional courses currently offered among Western Michigan University (WMU), Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) and Davenport
  - Currently lists Davenport among inter-institutional but cannot verify where anyone has ever used Davenport
  - Currently inter-institutional courses offered only to students, not staff (would have to revamp the inter-institutional program to allow use by staff)
  - Students at WMU and KVCC are more likely to take courses at WMU than Kalamazoo College due to schedule offered at ‘K’ (Kalamazoo College courses end at 4:00pm)
• No tuition is exchanged– program is based on number of students between institutions exchanged (needs to be comparable between institutions)
• Students use course for full-time status only – staff would not be considered full-time
• Must take each other’s students – cap on how many can take courses - # needs to be agreed upon by each institution
• Less options at KVCC since it is a community college

Benefits of having staff members continue education at institution
• Benefit - Increases education of employees
• Benefit - Many schools who offer programs for staff will eventually not accept employees without degree
• Benefit - Virtually no cost to school
  • Staff would register after all others (students) are registered
  • Filling 1 empty seat costs college nothing

Costs to having staff members continue education at institution
• Problem - If allow staff to take spot away from student, then it costs college that amount of tuition
• Problem - If taking classes at college, staff would be required to apply for financial aid (whether needs aid or not), and the college would take that aid as a partial payment for reimbursement
• Problem - Staff would be pulled away from their jobs – scheduling work issue
• Problem - Some departments would allow and others would not allow flex time for staff to take courses
• Problem – Faculty may not be receptive to having staff members audit their classes – Registrar is concerned that faculty may view staff in their classes as a threat – in my case, since I work in the Offices of the President and Provost, may view my presence as trying to gather information to take back to my supervisors

Other
• There is a national tuition remission program – but ‘K’ does not currently belong
• Kalamazoo College could join the tuition remission program of the United States, but only a handful of Michigan higher education colleges/universities currently enrolled in the program, and those are not near ‘K’, so taking classes could be problematic
• ‘K’ may be offer staff take courses among other GLCA schools, but again, proximity would be problematic
• Not considered a viable option at this time

My suggestions for the committee:
• Review these notes from the meeting with the Registrar and reconvene to discuss what our options are going forward
• Rename this committee the “Professional Development Committee”
• Report back to Support Staff where we are in the process – request suggestions for continuing
• Meet with Community Council to explore the interest on campus for either a permanent ongoing Professional Development of Staff – need to have a more solidified plan in place prior to presenting
• Meet with Support Staff to discuss our findings to this point and re-evaluate options
• Meet with Arcus Center for Social Justice Learning to discuss funding options for the following:
  • Setting up a Professional Development program that ACSJL could fund – maybe a week-long training session that would provide employees opportunity to take courses
    ▪ e.g. Microsoft Access/Excel/Word, etc. – varying levels offered
    ▪ This type of program would reach many staff members and has a greater success rate of getting approved
  • Discuss option of having the ACSJL fund one (or 2) staff members to complete their Bachelors Degree
    ▪ Would have to meet a strict set of rules, i.e. grade level, no drop-adds, have a master plan of completion, etc.
• Discuss with ACSJL other funding options for Professional Development
• Do we want our focus to be narrow or broad for the campus – is it better to have some benefit even if it only affects a few individuals or should we be focusing on a program/benefit to meet needs of the most

As you can see – this is just a tip of the iceberg to get some issues clarified and by no means is the final say. Please review all this and let me know when we should get together to discuss. I think we have our work cut out for us!!

Thanks all.

Kitty