"The NEW Staff Council.....From this year to the next" - Chrissie Bell

The 1993-94 Staff Council has been elected and new members are listed in this newsletter. So, what happens to Staff Council during the transition between the old and the new councils? According to the Council charter, the entire 30 member Staff Council is elected every year. Fourteen members of last year's Council were reelected ensuring continuity for 1993/4. The new Council elects all new officers and all new members to its standing and ad-hoc committees. At-large members of Staff Council standing and ad-hoc committees terms also end on May 31. If you are interested in continuing to serve or would like to be a new member of a committee, please send a note to our mailbox (Staff Council) or let your elected representative know. The two non-voting Presidential appointees to Staff Council serve until such time as President Dunn appoints new staff, as do those Department representatives serving on Staff Council standing committees. If you were recommended to the President's Office by Staff Council, to serve on a college committee, your term of service on that committee is determined by that committee and not by the election of the new Staff Council.

The newly elected members are invited to attend the last 1992/93 Staff Council meeting, in the Field House on Wednesday, May 19 at 2:00 p.m. There will be an opportunity for new members to ask any questions they have about how Staff Council business has been conducted throughout the year. In addition, current Staff Council committees will pull together a year-end report, detailing what has been accomplished during the last year, work that is on-going, and improvements that could be made, and suggesting goals for the new committee. At this meeting, volunteers will be called upon to set up the first 1993/94 Staff Council meeting in June and put together the nomination forms for the election of officers and Council committees.

Before the Council meets in June, nomination forms will be distributed to the 30 members in order for them to nominate a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and members of the Nominations and Elections Committee, Steering Committee, Finance and Budget Committee, Communications Committee, Personnel Policy Committee, and Staff Development Committee. At the July or August Staff Council meeting, a slate of nominations will be voted on to elect the officers and committee members.

Staff Council will be most successful if staff on campus keep in touch. Let us know what you want us to work on, send us your ideas and concerns.

And the Winner Is............

Name the Staff Newsletter Contest winner of "Branch for Two" at the Smith Club is Anne Pavesioden with the chosen name of "The Council Chronicle". Congratulations Anne! Thanks to everyone for their entries.

Your Newly Elected Council for 1993-94

CFO  Bill Sheehan - Controller's Office
      Karen Korza - Rental Office

DOC  Joan Ballas - Registrar's Office

DOP  Nancy Stolar - Dean of Faculty Office
      Lea Allen - Social Science Cluster
      Lynne Wilton - Graduate Office

ENR  Valerie Schumacher - Financial Aid Office
      Louise Wilton - Ada Comstock Office

PRE  Elizabeth Johnson - Affirmative Action Office
      Janet Durbin - College Relations Office
      Patricia Hayes - College Relations Office

Physical Plant, Gardens, Security
      Tom Russell - Physical Plant
      Mickey Finn - Physical Plant Boatman
      Scott Girard - Physical Plant Custodian
      Jeff Rankin - Gardens Department
      Tracey Waron - Gardens Department
      Bob Lawrence - Physical Plant Electrician
      Jay Leece - Physical Plant HVAC

RADS  Diane Basell - Dining Services
      Sylvia Gaur - Dining Services
      Michele LaRock - Dining Services
      Glenn Meikin - Dining Services
      Kevin Skelly - Dining Services
      Matt Russo - Dining Services

Campus School
      Kathy Yanell

Libraries
      Cindy Rucci
      Mary Lou Bouley

Health Services
      Marion Avram

Information Systems
      Jean Lilwell

A Special thanks to Charlene Moran, Karen Korza, Jay Lucey, Stacy Schmeidel and Mary Lou Wittig. Their commitment and energy have made this newsletter possible. -Joan Ballas

1992-93 STAFF COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP LIST

CFO:  ADM - Bill Sheehan - X2222
      ADS - Karen Korza - X2251

DOC:  ADM - Joan Ballas - X2333
      DOF - ADM - Lea Allen - X3110
      Linda Barren - X3000

Dining & Residence Services:
      SER - Janet Riel - X2300
      Sylvia Crafts - X2241
      Glenn Meikin - X2376
      Cyndy Pelletier - X2368
      Kevin Skelly - X2300
      Chair

DOF:  ADM - Chriselle Bell - X2500
      Vice Chair
      ADS - June Delano - X2381

ENR:  ADM - Chriselle Bell - X2500
      Vice Chair

PRE:  ADM - Louise Barden - X2151
      Gino Livolli - X7986
      Treasurer

ADS:  ADM - Charleen Moran - X2750
      Secretary

Physical Plant, Gardens, Security:
      ADS - Cathy Rouhler - X2400
      Mike Klein-Bernard - X2400
      Tracey Waron - X2748

Appointed members
      Kathleen Casey - Human Resources
      Jonathan Loell - Budget Office
      Joan Martin - Human Resources
      Stacey Schmeidel - College Relations
Appointed or Elected—What's the Difference? by Stacey Schneidt

In addition to representatives elected by Smith College staff members, appointed members serve on the full Staff Council and on each Staff Council committee. These positions are provided for in the Staff Council charter, and membership often is equated with professional responsibility. For example, the charter mandates that a member of the Human Resources staff serve on the Staff Council Personnel Policy Committee. I was appointed to the Communications Committee because the Staff Council charter requires that one of this committee’s members must be appointed from the Office of College Relations.

When I was asked to write an article about Staff Council appointees for this issue of the Staff Council newsletter, I expected to outline the ways in which appointees’ functions on Staff Council are different from those of elected representatives. But in talking to various Staff Council appointees, and in reflecting back on my own experiences as such a member, I find that the real difference between appointees and elected representatives is that appointees don’t vote on Staff Council issues. Our non-voting status is mandated in the Staff Council charter, perhaps to make sure that voting results accurately reflect the opinions of elected representatives and their constituents. But in almost every other way, appointees function on Staff Council in the way elected representatives do. We attend meetings, participate fully in discussions and debates, and I think—share the elected representatives’ deep commitment to making Smith College a better place.

Many Staff Council appointees serve on committees that deal with their areas of professional expertise. Joan Maitis, a staff associate in the Benefits Group of Human Resources, says that as an appointee to the Staff Development Committee she was able to provide discussions and information on development policies at Smith and at other colleges. "Some of this was information that the committee might not have been aware of," she says. "Because I was at meetings where we discussed staff development, we didn’t have to reinvent the wheel." Budget director Jonathan Lovell brought budget experience to his discussions with Staff Council, the Steering Committee, and the Budget and Finance Committee. He believes that my experience in journalism and communications was useful in discussions about editorial judgment and the Staff Council newsletter.

But all Staff Council members—appointed and elected—bring professional expertise to the work that they do for Staff Council. As Lovell says, "When Staff Council talks about dining consolidation, I bring budget experience, but somebody else brings experience of having worked there. In the end, we listen to others’ experience, and wind up with a better sense of our differing perceptions, and a wider set of possible solutions to problems. We get a broader, community-wide picture of what’s going on at the college, based on the experiences of a wide range of people from a wide range of departments."

Employment director Kathleen Casey agrees. An appointee to the Staff Council, the Steering Committee and the Personnel Policy Committee, Casey feels that the breadth of representation of Staff Council "breaks down distinctions between different departments, and helps pull staff together as part of a larger group. Council members don’t go as representatives of individual departments," she says, "but as members of a larger group, as representatives to Staff Council, tackling college-wide issues."

This feeling of representing a larger group certainly applies to appointees as well as representatives. All appointees agree that their service reflected their own, personal interest in Staff Council, rather than a feeling of obligation to the college president or to their department head. Most appointees said they never reported back to the president in a formal way about Staff Council. Rather, they saw their service on Staff Council as a way of better understanding broad concerns about college issues that informed their work. Many appointees say that what work belongs to such a committee; if not, it might be best to contact the chair or members of the committee most likely to be concerned, and let them decide. Unresolved issues can always be addressed by the full Staff Council.

Answers to Your Questions

Question: According to Jan Keeke’s memo of March 12, 1993, the college’s solicitation policy states that no general solicitations for any purpose are permitted during working hours. My question is this: Why doesn’t this policy also pertain to the United Way Fund drive? We are solicited by mail messages, textlets, and campus mail for United Way. Also, it’s very common for Girl Scout cookies, Avon, or our children’s school candy to be sold in the office. Isn’t the college being inconsistent about this policy or enforcing it now only because a campaign for a union is underway?

Answer: As part of its role as a good community citizen, the college endorses the fundraising efforts of the United Way and the Service Organizations of Smith (SOS). Funds contributed by employees to the United Way and SOS are divided among a number of health and welfare organizations serving the needs of individuals and families within the Hampshire county. The College, like other local employers, supports the annual United Way campaign, and encourages employees to contribute, on a purely voluntary basis, to this important community-based effort. Fundraising by the United Way is specifically permitted under the college’s solicitation policy, and the solicitation policy is available in Human Resources and the Administrative Staff handbook.

The solicitation policy does not prohibit the sale of Girl Scout cookies, school candy raffle tickets, etc., in College offices provided such activity does not occur during work time. Although candy and cookies can be offered for sale to co-workers before and after work, at lunch, etc., employees are encouraged, wherever possible, to leave the items and order forms in staff lounges or coffee areas to avoid embarrassing co-workers who may find it financially difficult to contribute to frequent fundraising requests.

The college’s solicitation policy has been in effect since 1983. Supervisors and department heads are responsible for ensuring that it is applied consistently.

by Jan Keeke, Director of Human Resources

Steering Committee End of Year Report by Kevin Skelley

In the past year several issues have been addressed by the steering committee. Some have been incorporated into procedures for the committee or the council at large, while some have been left undecided. I will try to spell out some issues that have an effect on the business of the steering committee, and some issues which may still need to be resolved.

One of our recurring tasks is coordinating the work of the committee. We have taken the role of reviewing the nature of the tasks before the council, and delegating them out to the appropriate committee members. At the time it’s clear what work belongs to which committee; if not, it might be best to contact the chair or members of the committee most likely to be concerned, and let them decide. Unresolved issues can always be addressed by the full Staff Council.

For appointments to outside committees, the chair has usually been informed of the need for nominations, and then put on a committee. As has been discussed in the Steering Committee meeting, referred to the chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee for action, and when a person is found, their name is forwarded to the appropriate person. Staff Council committees are elected, assigned or appointed as described in the charter.
The Steering Committee meetings have been a useful place to work on the agendas for the Open Forums. After we have sketched out ideas, we discuss it again in the Staff Council meeting, to iron out details and assign tasks like posting flyers, etc. The agendas we’ve used for all of these meetings will be available for the new Staff council to use, or adapt to their own design.

The Steering Committee has been involved in the process of answering questions sent to us by the Staff. These are either answered by us, sent to the appropriate committee for their answer, or referred back to the appropriate department. In an hour a month is barely enough time to identify what areas we wanted to look at more closely, and that caused a little frustration. As the months went by, though, we began to see that perhaps our goal is to identify specific needs and make suggestions as to how to improve a situation, not always to make that improvement ourselves. As the Committee, we hope they continue to identify areas that need improvement and find a way to tap the wealth of knowledge that the staff members have. We feel strongly that open communication among all staff members is very important so that employees from all departments have an awareness of what their peers are doing. For instance, most service staff members are unaware of the classification system for administrative assist, staff, and we spent a couple meetings discussing the reclassification that occurred last year. This ability to speak honestly about how certain policies effect us personally is vital. We hope the next committee continues to work on reclassifications.

There has been discussion in the Steering Committee about what our role is. Is it to "steer"? The charter assigns us the task of ensuring that issues are brought to the right people for their consideration. However, we are doing more than this, at some point, some clarification of the Steering Committee’s role would be helpful.

The makeup of the committee has also been discussed. Do we have the right people? One of the suggestions is that we should have more of the committee chairs, for example the chair of the Communications Committee. Another concern is that the Secretary has too much work (taking minutes on two committees, and chairing a third), which may not be sustainable. At some point, some clarification of the Steering Committee’s role would be helpful.

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Some of this can be decided without affecting the charter, but some changes in our methods would likely require a change in the charter. Is that a good idea? The charter is an important document to the Staff Council. It should be a useful tool for accomplishing our objectives. It should be flexible enough to adapt to unforeseeable situations, but it should be specific enough to define our organization. We need to look at our ability to keep up with changes when they are necessary, but the charter should be stable, and protected from frivolous tampering.

Each new Staff Council will have to decide where they stand on these ideas. Each will to some degree be bound by the decisions of the previous group, while to some degree will change what has been done before. This transition will set the tone for transitions in the future. We will work together with the incoming Council member to make it smooth and effective.

Year End Report of Nomination/Elections Committee

I think the N/E committee of Staff Council has a lot of work ahead for next year. There needs to be a better way to obtain nominations for Campus wide committees rather than a phone call or Email message. We need to find a formal way of doing this. As mentioned in the last Staff Council meeting, the committee needs a handbook containing the complete minutes of all N/E committee meetings from this year. Also all forms used in nominations and elections, i.e., ballots, should be included to the wheel won’t have to be reinvented early next year. Our committee has worked hard to keep a full 30 person Staff Council in place with several resignations occurring. The Charter of the Staff Council should be looked at early this fall, as there are areas in the Charter pertaining to Council composition that should be addressed. The other members of this committee are: Joan Balas, Linda Barron, Sylvia Crafts, Mickey Finn, Marie L’Heureux and Cindy Rucci.

Year End Report of Budget & Finance Committee

We all know that this year was a "honeymoon" year, and getting our footing was a main objective. I feel we have done very well and the second will only get better. The Budget & Finance Committee had a difficult time at the beginning sorting out what needed to be reviewed and how to go about doing it, but we had a very good working group. The suggestions I have are as follows: 1) To continue to follow the Dorm Consolidations. Have a representative on the college Committee that is reviewing medical benefits, plans and costs. 2) Have a representative on the College Committee that is reviewing medical benefits, plans and costs. 3) A representative should sit on any College Committee that pertains to money, if allowed. Two general thoughts are that there should be more overall communication amongst the committees of Staff Council and a list of all the College committees should be generated to make Staff Council aware of what is out there, so they can ask to be on the committees. I am not sure how that can be accomplished, but communication is the key!!!

Year End Report of the Personnel Policy Committee

by Sylvia Crafts, Chair
The Staff Council Personnel Policy Committee met about once a month over the last year. The committee found many areas of interest, and we spent a lot of time discussing how best to channel that interest. We quickly discovered that an hour a month is barely enough time to identify what areas we wanted to look at more closely, and that caused a little frustration. As the months went by, though, we began to see that perhaps our goal is to identify specific needs and make suggestions as to how to improve a situation, not always to make that improvement ourselves. As the Committee, we hope they continue to identify areas that need improvement and find a way to tap the wealth of knowledge that the staff members have. We feel strongly that open communication among all staff members is very important so that employees from all departments have an awareness of what their peers are doing. For instance, most service staff members are unaware of the classification system for administrative assist, staff, and we spent a couple meetings discussing the reclassification that occurred last year. This ability to speak honestly about how certain policies effect us personally is vital. We hope the next committee continues to work on reclassifications.

We have had two projects this year. The first project was the assistance information booklet, listing all the pertinent information for staff members, and a "yellow pages" index in the campus directory, envisioned as a very brief "Who do I call about....?" listing. The library tours that are starting this month would be very useful as an on-going event, perhaps the time staff members sign up for classes. One suggestion for improvement might be to work in small groups on a specific project. It is quite difficult to schedule working meetings at a good time for five or six people. If two groups of three meet to work on a part of the main project, it might move faster. This past year our committee members were Kathleen Casey (appointed from Human Resources), Sylvia Crafts (Chair), Marie L’Heureux, Mary Ann Phoenix (at-large member), Jeff Zankin, Cindy Routhier, and Kathy Yarnell. Thanks to everyone for a most informative and exciting experience. The benefits of working on this committee will go on long after the actual work is finished. Submitted by Sylvia Crafts.

Year End Report of the Communications Committee

by Karen Korda & Charlene Moran, Co-chairs
You are seeing first hand one of the biggest accomplishments of the Communications Committee. We are pleased and proud to have been able to put together two newsletters this past year. We look forward to more issues; we believe that the Council Chronicle will be an important part of keeping staff informed about Staff Council activities. This has been a busy first year, and our hope is that an Editorial Board will be appointed to publish the newsletter, thereby freeing up the Committee to concentrate more on the issues of "communicating on campus", communicating between departments, between Staff Council members and their constituents, etc.

We’ve learned much this first year, mostly how hard it is to get trallings to the right group of folks. We think we’ve ironed out the bugs in the system and have learned a lot about our needs to the Human Resources folks. Next year should go more smoothly. If any of you are interested in being part of the Editorial Board for the newsletter next year, please send a note indicating your interest to the Staff Council Mailbox, Central Service.
**STAFF COUNCIL COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM**  
1993-94

Name ___________________________ Ext. ______

Department/Group __________________________

Please Check One:  
- Service Staff
- Administrative Support Staff
- Administrative Staff

I would like to serve on the following Committee:  
Staff Council Committee/At-large Committee ________________

If you are Nominating someone other than yourself please get nominee’s consent.

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**How to submit a question to STAFF COUNCIL:** by Karen Korza

* Mail directly to Staff Council - Central Services
* All Questions must be signed.
* Keep questions as short as possible, no personal attacks, no offensive language. We want it to be your voice and print it exactly as you present it.
* All questions will be answered in the upcoming issue of the Staff Council newsletter.

* Questions will be received by the Communication Committee to be recorded, name masked by request. A copy will be sent to the Steering Comm. and a copy to the proper committee or department head, for your answer in the newsletter.

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**STAFF COUNCIL RESPONSE FORM**

Please address the following:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

I would like to see Staff Council

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date ____________

Please do not publish my name.