**Staff Senate Priority Issues Brainstorming for Periodic Review Report**

January 5, 2010

College-Wide Issues & Concerns:

* Revenue Generation – The staff are eager to contribute to and support the development of viable efforts to enhance TCNJ’s fund raising efforts, especially creative initiatives that generate new revenue streams.
* Governance Structure Review – Staff are focused on ensuring equitable and appropriate representation of staff, students and faculty as part of the 2010 governance review process. It has been noted that some councils are not functioning at all and others are marginally operational. Also, some committees and councils have inadequate or no staff representation.
* Building Community (Internal and External) – TCNJ should develop a stronger sense of community among all stakeholders, including more collaboration with the local community. We support the on-going efforts to create a “town center” that may serve to foster positive interaction with our neighbors.
* Enrollment Management – A campus-wide examination of enrollment management issues is needed, as the Enrollment Planning Council has not functioned effectively. Issues such as student access to academic programs should be carefully reviewed, recognizing the need to ensure appropriate standards for admission and match available educational resources (faculty and facilities) to ensure quality instruction.
* President’s Diversity Initiative – Update on goals and progress. What is the status of fostering an inclusive campus community? What are the most important and challenging diversity issues facing TCNJ?
* Green Campus – The staff support initiatives, policies and procedures that facilitate positive action to realize the goal of an ecologically friendly and energy efficient campus.
* Facilities – Maintenance of internal areas of buildings needs significant improvement. Appearance of interior spaces does not consistently reflect the beautiful grounds and overall external presentation of the campus. Campus signage is also identified as an area ripe for improvement, particularly for visitors to the campus. Campus maps are not readily available and visible.

Learning and Teaching Issues:

* Promote Staff as Educators – The staff believes the institution needs to more fully embrace the role of staff as educators working in partnership with the faculty. More recognition should be given to our impact students and the campus community in our roles as “practitioner / scholars” and mentors, adding value to students’ overall experience at TCNJ. We see the need for more clearly defined goals for student learning and development in both curricular and co-curricular contexts.
* Student Development / Advising – The college needs to adopt a more comprehensive approach to career and academic advising and mentoring to assist students in developing a viable and fulfilling “life plan.”
* Interdisciplinary Majors – We support more opportunities for students to self-design or participate in a wider selection of academic options. For example, opportunities to create self-designed majors should be more widely promoted and the process should be more facile for students.
* Articulation Agreements – TCNJ should investigate expanding collaborations with other higher education institutions, i.e. graduate programs that align with our mission and offer new revenue opportunities.
* Transfer and Undesignated Students – More specific attention needs to be given to the special needs of this “at risk” student population. Staff perceives that too many transfer students believe they are treated as “second class” students.
* Students at Risk – Improve attention to needs of special populations, particularly non-traditional students.
* Alcohol Concerns – Staff see the need for continued efforts to follow the recommendations of the Alcohol Task Force, especially to promote more non-alcoholic social activities for students. Concerns have been raised by some over the student selection of performers such as Tucker Max, who is known for promoting alcohol abuse and other behaviors considered by many to be antithetical to the college’s goals for a healthy campus.

Human Resource Issues:

* Professional Development / Staff Orientation & Training – The staff perceive a strong need for improvement in the areas of job orientation for new employees and professional development for all staff and faculty. More intentional efforts are needed to promote effective mentoring for staff. Employer relations services should be enhanced, especially employee assistance programs addressing mental health, wellness, etc. Staff training needs should be identified with input in order for HR to offer specific, relevant, and timely training. HR should offer proactive training for managers to improve team performance. More support is needed for specific populations, such as professional development issues that primarily affect women, especially those needing to take family leave for infant care. Communication about internal advancement opportunities for staff should be more intentional and frequent.
* Staffing Update – Staff are interested to learn what has been the impact on the elimination of 46 staff positions in 2005. Which positions, if any, have been restored? Which have been restructured or re-assigned to different units? What new positions have been created? How have these staffing changes affected the quality and efficiency of services to the campus community?
* Recognition and Morale - The staff see a need to promote positive working relationships among staff through collaborative efforts between HR and Staff Senate. Greater acknowledgement of successful efforts to address community concerns should be implemented, beyond the Helen Shaw Staff excellence Award. For example, Campus Police should be recognized publically for their effective response to Task Force recommendations. More intentional efforts are needed to improve and sustain staff and faculty morale, courtesy, friendliness. Familiar and new traditions should be expanded to promote pride and connectedness for all constituencies.
* Customer Service – Needs improvement across campus. Clear expectations should be developed with input from across campus. Intentional efforts are needed to empower units with related goals to work together more effectively. Focus on internal customer service – eliminate silos and create virtuous partnerships to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The TCNJ web site should be redesigned to more effectively communicate services offered by departments. For example, organizational charts and pictures of staff should be readily available for on-line visitors. Departments should be encouraged to offer “open house” events for community members to visit and learn from one another. Communication about availability of services and resources. Organizational titles and descriptions do not always communicate role and services accurately.
* Transportation – Some concern was expressed that bus transportation to the Trenton train station does not run often enough, or perhaps the schedule is not effectively posted or communicated. This concern seems to be more important for unit staff that commute from Trenton via public transportation.

Staff Senate Campus Issues Final 1-4-10.doc

NS/1/5/10