

# University of San Francisco Staff Council

## 2023-24 Annual Report

Submitted by  
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### **Purpose**

The Staff Council will build community, identify concerns, and advocate for the needs, vision, and well-being of all USF Staff in service of the mission and vision of USF.

### **Mission Statement**

The Staff Council is committed to serving the interests and concerns of all staff members by contributing their voices into campus conversations on non-collective bargaining issues.

We will act as a conduit to engage and support our fellow staff members and the surrounding community, empowering excellence through growth and learning opportunities, staff recognition, workshops, trainings and events, and collaborative partnerships that promote and enhance our experience at USF.

As inclusive representatives we will actively participate in shared governance to facilitate positive and collegial communication in support of the University's Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.

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## Vision Statement

The Vision of the Staff Council is to be an inclusive and transparent voice for all staff members at USF and to be a deliberative body offering appropriate recommendations to the University President and Cabinet that address staff concerns while providing enriching and informative experiences for staff to better contribute towards the University's Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan.

## Council Activities

### Determining Priorities and Action Items

Staff feedback and concerns were recorded by the Executive Board in a Google sheet stored in the Staff Council Google Drive and assigned action items to the appropriate subcommittees. Priorities were often determined in Executive Committee meetings or by the Executive Board when concerns were raised by constituents. Subcommittees then researched current information and practices, identified gaps, determined needs, and made recommendations on behalf of staff to applicable university administrative parties via the Staff Council Executive Board.

All actions taken by the Staff Council were communicated to staff via Staff Council meetings and recorded on a new [Action Items table](#), posted on the Staff Council website.

### Communications with Leadership

#### Staff Survey, Survey Report, and Recommendations

In October 2023, the Staff Council sent out a Staff Survey, which surveyed USF staff to determine employee priorities and concerns. The full report can be found [here](#). The Staff Council survey was sent to 1,357 University of San Francisco staff members, of which 322 completed the survey, an approximately 23% response rate. USF staff are concerned about a myriad of issues, of which staff compensation, the future of the university/financial

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health, and staff morale arose as the top three pressing concerns. These were followed closely by student retention and support and administration transparency. The Executive Board followed up the survey and report with a [recommendations memo](#), which was sent to the President's Cabinet on April 1, 2024.

### **State of the Staff Report**

Upon Father Fitzgerald's request, the President of the Staff Council submitted a [State of the Staff report](#) to the Board of Trustees in early March 2024 and presented the results at the March Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Staff Council Social and Request for Budget**

In January 2024, the Executive Board submitted a proposal to Father Fitzgerald to fund a Staff Council-sponsored Happy Hour for staff, as both a Staff Council member recruitment tool and a morale booster. The funding request and inquiries about the Staff Council securing a budget in the future were denied due to lack of funds. The Staff Council instead held a "Bring Your Own Sip" end-of-the-year social, in the faculty/staff lounge on May 21, 2024, where staff could purchase items from Market Cafe and celebrate the end of term and socialize with Staff Council members.

### **Monthly Meetings with Diane Nelson**

The Executive Board established monthly check-in meetings with Staff Council liaison Diane Nelson. These meetings covered a wide variety of topics, including policy updates and the status of outstanding issues raised by the Staff Council. The meetings were productive for all parties, and allowed the Executive Board to provide regular updates to staff about open action items at the monthly Staff Council meeting.

### **Hosting Service and Merit Awards**

The Staff Council was provided an opportunity to take over organization of the USF Staff Service and Merit Awards ceremony, including coordinating all awards, ceremony details,

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and budget. After careful consideration and consultation with the greater Staff Council, the Executive Board declined to host the event, given members' limited time and resources. The Awards and Recognition subcommittee assisted Human Resources with aspects of the ceremony before and during the event.

## **Amendments to Bylaws**

The Staff Council made three amendments to the bylaws. All three were voted on and approved by the Staff Council on March 6, 2024. The first amendment to Article VI, Section 1 requires the Staff Council to strive to ensure represented staff have a seat on the Executive Board. The second amendment to Article X, Section 6 states Staff Council members default their position if they exceed six total absences in a term (June 1 to May 31). The third amendment to Article XI, Section 2 changed the Institutional Effectiveness and Safety subcommittee name to Campus Accessibility and Safety.

## **Shared Governance Activities**

### **Shared Governance Meetings**

In alignment with WSCUC's recommended action item for USF to "[d]evelop a formal deliberative body, independent of the Faculty Association Policy Boards, to establish shared governance that will improve lines of communication and ensure participatory decision-making (CFRs 2.4, 3.10, 4.5, 4.6;)", as a key stakeholder, the Staff Council prioritized the goal of developing a working shared governance body internally and with USF Administration. The Staff Council Participated in three meetings with Fr. Fitzgerald, Provost Fung, and faculty unions. In this context and within the spring 2024 Staff Council letter to the USF President's Cabinet, the Staff Council continued to ask for clear shared governance structures to allow for increased consultative decision-making and administrative transparency.

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## Meeting with Provost

At her invitation, the Staff Council Executive Board met with Provost Fung in October 2023 to discuss a range of topics including shared governance structures, SPAC recommendations, and Staff Council's plans for the 2023-24 term. As a broad purpose, this meeting addressed the Staff Council's interconnected role in the university, and its organizational needs and opportunities as the body evolved through its second term. This meeting was the first of other meetings to come.

## Staff Council Processes and Procedures

### Action Items Tracking

The Staff Council made some revisions to the internal Action Items Google sheet established by the previous Staff Council, including creating a separate section for ongoing issues, future action items, and prioritizing the latter by "High," "Medium," or "Low." The Staff Council also created a public [Action Items table](#) to record the statuses of ongoing items and record past items.

### Subcommittee Processes and Guidelines

In this second term, the role of the Staff Council subcommittees continues to be defined. The Staff Council created the [Staff Council Subcommittee Information and Processes](#) document, which provides an updated outline of subcommittee expectations for meeting frequency, the role and selection of the subcommittee chair, recordkeeping and reporting responsibilities, and steps to follow in addressing assigned action items. It is recognized that the Staff Council Communications and Elections and Governance subcommittees have distinct roles in their direct service to the Staff Council body.

### Staff and Subcommittees

In the interest of expanding staff participation in Staff Council activities, as a pilot, the Staff Council circulated a survey allowing staff-at-large to express interest in contributing to any

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of the six subcommittees. This information will be used in the 2024-25 term to include more voices in the Staff Council.

## **Subcommittee Activities**

Please note that while all subcommittees started with three members each, per the bylaws, some changes in Staff Council membership over the course of the year reduced some of the numbers.

## **Awards and Recognition**

### Subcommittee Members

Janice Chuakay, Alexandra Schaeffer, Ken Yoshioka

### Accomplishments

- Completed list of how many divisions and schools have a structure to recognize staff and their accomplishments in the form of staff awards. List saved to Staff Council shared drive for future subcommittee updates.
- Made connections with staff-at-large interested in contributing to Awards and Recognition subcommittee tasks in future.
- Partnered with Human Resources for the annual Service and Merit Awards event.

## **Campus Accessibility and Safety**

### Subcommittee Members

Claudine Bibeau Parks, Steven Bosso, Ella Frazer

### Accomplishments

- Submitted bylaws amendment to change subcommittee name from Institutional Effectiveness and Safety to Campus Accessibility and Safety, which was approved by the Staff Council in Spring 2024

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- Began researching staff needs and establishing priorities on campus-wide accessibility and universal access support
  - Worked closely with Director of Campus Resilience Greg Yee on various projects, including ensuring campus ADA access doors are functional, campus safety trainings, communicating Automated External Defibrillators (AED) locations, and exploring Workday safety training modules
  - Participated in USF's Health and Safety Committee meetings and communicated action items to staff at Staff Council meetings
  - Partnered with Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability subcommittee to brainstorm about staff accessibility needs/support

## Communications

### Subcommittee Members

Ella Frazer, Melissa Thompson, Nicholas Ynami

### Accomplishments

- Established framework to guide transparent staff communications as one part of a larger system aimed at providing staff with space to be recognized for their accomplishments, encouraged to continue innovating within their workspace and pursuing their interests in support of student learning, and to feel a sense of connection to colleagues and the institution.
- Partnered with Educational Technology Services (ETS) staff to quadruple the number of Staff Council Members trained on EMMA in Fall 2023.
- Invested in relationships with staff colleagues in ETS, Office of Marketing Communications (OMC), and the other Staff Council subgroups to respond quickly/efficiently when problems arise, share time-sensitive information, and create content.

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- Produced monthly Staff Council newsletters and developed a system to collect potential content from a wide range of contributors in an effort to increase sense of community and belonging, launched in Spring 2024.
  - Initiated Community Spotlight in newsletter to inform and connect staff to groups and resources on campus.

## **Elections and Governance**

### Subcommittee Members

Carolina Martinez, William Vitagliano

### Accomplishments

- Began research on shared governance opportunities on campus in Fall 2023
- Conducted Staff Council elections for 2024-25 term
- Coordinated UBAC appointment process for 2024-25 term
- Conducted Executive Board elections for 2024-25 term

## **Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability (IDEA)**

### Subcommittee Members

Danielle Castillo, Erin Echols, Corey Kowalczyke

### Accomplishments

- Held meetings to strategize areas of shared work with ADEI office
- Worked with ADEI office to learn their current information and efforts to support existing employee resource groups (previously called affinity groups)
- Reached out to active employee resource groups for current contact information
- Collected, finalized, and provided revised edits of employee resource groups to the ADEI office



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- Provide Communications Subcommittee highlights for active employee resource groups for more exposure, starting with the Latiné/x Community Building Committee
  - Partnered with Campus Accessibility and Safety subcommittee to brainstorm about staff accessibility needs/support
  - Began to explore what a culture of wellness looks like for USF staff

## Professional Development

### Subcommittee Members

Kimberly Bruno, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente

### Accomplishments

- Partnered with OMC to create new Staff Council logo and letterhead
- Created welcome letter to introduce the Staff Council to new staff, with letters being disseminated monthly starting in April 2024
- Brainstormed no-cost activities and other methods to boost staff morale and build community
- Began exploring a Staff-Council-led USF campus tour to new employees to help with their on-boarding process and engage them with other campus members
- Conducted preliminary research on reviving staff sabbaticals and comparing general trends of staff sabbaticals with like higher education institutions (may be tabled for 2024-25, given University budget). Future plans include utilizing and promoting free Work Day seminars from the HR website for all employees if sabbaticals are not possible.
- Discussed ways to help promote Staff Council and create a culture that helps retention within the USF Community members.