

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Voting Members Present:

Executive Board: Domonique Crosby (President), Jill Ballard (Vice President), Amy F. Joseph (Clerk and Meeting Recorder), Melissa Thompson (Immediate Past President)

Staff Council Members: Claudine Bibeau Parks, Steven Bosso, Danielle Castillo, Janice Chuakay, Erin Echols, Ella Frazer, Corey Kowalczyke, Elisabeth Merkel, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente, Will Vitagliano, Ken Yoshioka

Voting Members Absent: Kimberly Bruno, Carolina Martinez, Alexandra Schaeffer, Nicholas Ynami

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

I. Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes for 1/10/24 – Domonique (3 mins)

- Meeting called to order at 12:03 PM by the Staff Council President.
- Notice made that the meeting is recorded for note-taking purposes.
- Bylaws state meetings are open to all staff including the President's Cabinet and Leadership Team and there will be a Q&A/open discussion session during the meeting for all staff in attendance.
- Staff Council Member roll call conducted: 16 present, 4 absent, quorum reached.
- Approval of Staff Council Meeting Minutes for January 10, 2024 meeting.

Motion

- Meeting minutes from the January 10, 2024 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Domonique Crosby. Second motion was made by Will Vitagliano. Motion carried.

II. Updates from Executive Board – Domonique with Executive Board (25 mins)

- The President reported the Executive Board asked for funding from Father Fitzgerald for a Staff Council-sponsored happy hour and recruitment event, but was not able to receive funding. The Staff Council does not have its own budget, so we must ask Father Fitzgerald for any event/activity funding. We hope to have an event where folks can buy their own drinks/food toward the end of May. The Vice President added that the event could welcome new incoming Staff Council members after the election as a transition-oriented gathering. A staff member asked about the reasoning behind the refusal. The President reported that Father Fitzgerald said that there are no more discretionary funds that he could give to the event and that currently any discretionary funds are going to be used for any emergencies that come up for students.
- The President reported that the Executive Board will be sending their recommendations post-Staff Survey to Father Fitzgerald in March.
- The President reminded staff that the faculty-staff dining room has re-opened, which is exciting. It is important to use the dining room to keep it open. It's \$12.50 for one pass at the buffet. The dining room is open from 11 am to 2 am. Even if you are not purchasing food, staff are encouraged to use the space to eat and gather. The President noted that when she has visited it's been pretty full, which is promising.
- The Clerk announced the Executive Board will be sending three small bylaws changes to vote via email shortly. The Executive Board consulted with HR, per the procedures in the bylaws. The changes proposed are in red:

ARTICLE VI: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Executive Board Members

The Staff Council Executive Board shall consist of: President, Vice President, Clerk, Treasurer (if applicable), and Immediate Past President who shall be a non-voting ex-officio member. **The Staff Council shall strive to ensure that Unionized Staff hold at least one seat on the Executive Board.** In the event that the Staff Council is provided a budget, the position of Treasurer shall be added to the Executive Board following the election procedures outlined in this Article.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS

Section 6. Attendance at Meetings

Staff Council members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings unless written notice to be excused from a meeting is submitted to the Staff Council Executive Board members within 48 hours of the scheduled meeting. Any member who exceeds four (4) unexcused absences **or six (6) total absences** within a term (June 1 and May 31) will default their position. If the position is defaulted, then that member is not permitted to serve on the Staff Council the following year.

ARTICLE XI: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEES

Section 2. Subcommittees

F. Change “Institutional Effectiveness and and Safety Committee” to **Campus Accessibility and Safety Committee**

- The Clerk announced the Executive Board received a response to our inquiry about the Pay Equity Survey budgeted back in Fiscal Year 2023. General Counsel Donna Davis and Associate Vice President of Labor and Employee Relations David Philpott provided the answers to our questions in the following email, which was sent to us by Diane Nelson, the Staff Council HR liaison:

“Thank you for your questions. I was able to talk with Donna and David and get information in response to your questions about the Pay Equity Study. The Budget Assist request came from the General Counsel because Compensation (Comp) resides in the division of General Counsel. The study is a continuation of the work the university does, and Comp specifically, to ensure compliance with USF compensation philosophy, pay practices, pay policies and in accord with the law. As the study progresses any adjustments that need to be made will be made on an ongoing basis and shared with any individuals involved. At the conclusion of the study the university will share a summary of the process and remind the community of the USF compensation philosophy.

“Given the robust compensation expertise at USF and established policies and procedures, including the Board of Trustees Compensation Committee, we do not anticipate any major findings. This is an opportunity to audit what we do and ensure the university has an infrastructure that supports our goals to recruit and retain top talent and is compliant with internal policies and procedures and the law. The Comp team is working with a firm that specializes in pay equity studies. In response to requests for information from the firm, the Comp team is gathering all the data and the firm does the analysis, including not only comp ranges, but also job descriptions and legal standards and working with a firm that specializes in data analysis, job descriptions and legal standards. The budget assist request accounts for the cost of the study and funds to make required corrections, if any.

“The USF Strategic Plan 2027 priorities clearly commit to the importance of recruiting and retaining faculty and staff and building a community who supports our workforce through total compensation, engagement opportunities and professional development.

“Thank you for your offer to be involved in the study design or process. As explained above, it is data driven and involves experts in the field. This technical study is guided by particular legal definitions and by USF’s compensation philosophy: <https://myusf.usfca.edu/human-resources/compensation>.

“I look forward to the study proceeding and sharing the results as described above when the study is complete.”

- The Clerk reported a major update had been made to the [Action Items table](#) on the Staff Council website, and will continue to be updated after monthly meetings.
- The Clerk announced that the next Executive Committee meeting on February 21, 2024 will be a working meeting where subcommittee chairs can work on their State of the Staff reports, which are due to the President of the Staff Council on February 26, 2024. If a chair submits their subcommittee report by February 21st, they don’t have to attend the meeting.
- As requested by Staff Council HR liaison Diane Nelson, the Clerk encouraged staff members to fill out the feedback form on Provost Fung’s work as interim provost, as circulated by Father Fitzgerald to the community via email.
- The President provided an update on the latest shared governance meeting on February 7th with Father Fitzgerald and Provost Fung (faculty unions and the Staff Council Executive Board President and Vice President were in attendance; the President later noted that OPE does not currently have representation at this meeting, after a staff member provided that information).
- The President noted that shared governance was actually not discussed at the meeting. There was a presentation by April Crabtree about student enrollment trends and Strategic Enrollment Management’s plans going forward. Current spring and projected fall enrollment numbers were reported on. USF transfer student enrollments for spring are down, which SEM predicted. Graduate student enrollment applications are up, which is exciting. The undergraduate enrollment numbers are still a little shaky.
- The Vice President noted that these meetings don’t currently seem to be about shared governance structures and processes; the form of the meeting is still being determined. The Vice President noted the conversation in the February meeting was very interesting, but she hopes the meetings will eventually combine both these types of conversations and more discussion of shared governance itself to help determine what it might look like and how the bodies can come together to do some kind of governing.
- The Immediate Past President asked in the chat, “Does leadership consider this meeting to be shared governance? Is this perhaps why they aren’t discussing a shared governance structure. Is the meeting intended to serve that purpose?”
- The President responded that she believes Leadership does consider this meeting to be shared governance, but there wasn’t a chance to talk about all aspects of the University together. Rather, the focus was on what it takes to recruit students. The Provost often brings up that we can talk about any aspect of the institution at these meetings, and mentioned the possibility of facilities folks coming in to present information. But right now the group is not making decisions, long-term or otherwise. This seems to be the beginning stages and more about providing information. Currently there doesn’t seem to be a push to discuss true shared governance, akin to what WSCUC recommended. In this last meeting there was an option to have another meeting this semester if there is something we want to talk about, so that’s a possibility.
- The Immediate Past President noted in the chat: “The WSCUC Commission Action Letter can be found here https://myusf.usfca.edu/provost/vice-provost/wscuc/current_reaccreditation_process. You can also read USFs

Interim report that was submitted to WSCUC on November 1st: https://myusf.usfca.edu/provost/vice-provost/wscuc/current_reaccreditation_process.”

- A Staff Council member expressed disappointment in the shared governance meeting, and stated that based on what was described, this isn't shared governance, it's just an information meeting. It feels like Leadership is just checking a box. Unless this changes, people are going to remain unhappy. Decisions are made that staff and faculty don't have any say in. Informing us about what they are doing is not shared governance.
- The Clerk noted in the chat that Strategic Plan Working Group #6 made recommendations on shared governance structures, which she hopes will be followed up on. The Vice President agreed and hopes we can propose this discussion in a future meeting.
- Another staff member from the Shared Governance working group noted that definitions of shared governance will vary widely among the administration, the faculty, and the staff. The majority of the working group's discussions were around defining what we mean by shared governance. Do we mean sharing information? Do we mean advisory bodies? Or do we literally mean sharing governance? The staff member encouraged people to [read the recommendations](#) the working group produced at the end of the process. They also noted WSCUC's explicit directive to USF to make sure that stakeholders are consulted before decisions are made. This is inherently connected with the shared governance recommendations.
- The President commented that the Executive Board will address some of these issues in the recommendation letter being drafted this March post-Staff Survey and concurred that what took place in the latest meeting did not involve participating in shared governance. We could possibly call for a meeting to focus on the topic of shared governance in the future.

III. Update on the Staff Council Subcommittees – Jill (17 mins)

Awards and Recognition – Ken Yoshioka (Chair)

- The Chair reported the subcommittee will try to get their State of the Staff report in to the Executive Board before the Executive Committee meeting.
- As discussed in previous meetings, and inspired by the [interest form](#) circulated in the Staff Council February newsletter, the chair spoke with a staff member who would be interested in working with Awards and Recognition. They had interesting ideas. The Staff Council is still determining what this would look like, and the Vice President noted we should have more information for staff in a couple of weeks.

Communications - Ella Frazer (Chair)

- The February newsletter went out on Monday. Many thanks to Claudine Bibeau-Parks and Greg Yee for getting information about staff trainings in.
- The Chair will be sending some information to the subcommittee chairs to see if they have any updates for the spring newsletter, or even get something in the queue for fall.

Elections & Governance - Carolina Martinez (Chair)

- The Chair was not present, so subcommittee member Will Vitagliano provided an update. The subcommittee met, along with the Clerk, to orient themselves to the elections process. They are pulling together information for the nominations email and will work with the Ecommunications team on that.
- The Clerk mentioned the Chair had brought up some good recruiting ideas, such as tabling at Market Café, the Staff Council president doing a short video to encourage nominations, and the Executive Board will create a brief write-up on the commitment details for the Staff Council website.

Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability – Corey Kowalczyke (Chair)

- The Chair had to step out early, so subcommittee member Danielle Castillo reported back. The subcommittee is working on curating edits for the [affinity groups](#) on the ADEI webpage. This includes ensuring events are present on the web page and getting that information in to the next Staff Council newsletter so staff are aware of the information.
- The subcommittee is also working on its State of the Staff report for the Executive Board.
- Subcommittee member Erin Echols added that the subcommittee reached out to the [Asian and Asian American Staff/Faculty Council](#), which is being rejuvenated. The AAASFC hope to host two events this spring for staff and faculty, and will also provide the subcommittee with recruitment information, which we hope to include in the Staff Council newsletter.

Institutional Effectiveness and Safety - Claudine Bibeau Parks (Chair)

- Subcommittee member Steven Bosso reported back on attending the monthly USF Health and Safety Committee meeting. First, USF has deployed NARCAN nasal spray along with trainings on its usage. Public Safety is reviewing USF shelter plans in the event of an earthquake or another large disaster, particularly when you have commuter students and faculty/staff who can't go home. They are working on staging having enough food and water and reunification areas, such as Koret or USF's athletic fields/gym spaces. Twenty more AEDs ([Automated External Defibrillators](#)) and fresh first aid kits have been deployed throughout campus. If a department/office wants training on the AEDs or first aid, they can contact Greg Yee in Public Safety. Also see the aforementioned link about the PulsePoint app, which connects people to AEDs around the City and beyond. Next, goUSF is providing a webinar titled "The Struggle is Real: Strategies for Time Management" a week from today (2/21 at 11 am). Register [here](#). Finally, USF is adopting the CDC's new COVID-19 recommendation, which basically drops the 5-day isolation guidelines. So if someone has mild symptoms like a low fever, they can still come to campus if they want.
- The Chair confirmed they hope to change the name of the subcommittee to Campus Accessibility and Safety, and hopes to work on pushing forward the idea of having an accessibility office for staff/faculty on campus, including reaching out to partners.

Professional Development – Mark Papadopoulos (Chair)

- The Chair reported that the subcommittee met at the end of last month and discussed the roles and responsibilities of the chair and the reporting lines. The subcommittee completed work on a welcome letter from the Staff Council for new staff and turned it over to the Executive Board to ask what next steps will be. The subcommittee asked OMC about creating a letterhead for Staff Council as well.
- The subcommittee also discussed if all members will continue on into the next term or if new people should be introduced to build off what's been done to date. Also discussed how to increase Staff Council visibility.
- The subcommittee is also working on its State-of-the-Staff report for the Executive Board.

IV. Update on Other University Committee(s) (7 mins)

University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC): Elisabeth Merkel

- UBAC has not met this year, as the January meeting was postponed in light of the February Town Hall with the President and Provost. There is a meeting next week. Staff can send any questions they have for the next UBAC meeting to Elisabeth at evmerkel@usfca.edu.
- UBAC does need to run an election this year, so Elisabeth will be connecting with Staff Council about how to move that process forward.
- The Clerk asked if it's been explicitly written into the [UBAC bylaws](#) that the Staff Council has to run UBAC's elections. Elisabeth confirmed this has been written in and explained since the faculty union runs their own election for UBAC, Staff Council is the corresponding staff body.

- A staff member commented that at the Town Hall on the budget, it was noted UBAC would have the ability to comment on the cut plans that are submitted by the Deans and VPs of each area, which would take place in late February. The staff member is familiar with this process, and recommends we make sure that whatever is shared with the Budget Advisory committee in terms of cuts be shared out to Staff Council in a transparent way. The staff also noted that at the Town Hall it was mentioned that base cuts will be made for the coming budget, but the staff member has heard now that only half the cuts to be allocated will be base; the other half will once again be one-time cuts. If this is accurate, it is important to make sure this is communicated to staff, particularly since there has been some notable anxiety about what has been communicated in terms of impending cuts and how that will affect staff roles.
- Elisabeth confirmed that she would share anything heard in the next UBAC meeting. She also reminded staff the [UBAC minutes are posted online](#), although December's notes are not up yet and January's meeting was canceled.

V. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (0 min)

None raised.

VI. Announcements (0 min)

- None

VII. Meeting Adjourned at 12:55 PM by Domonique Crosby, Staff Council President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 13, 2024

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- Meeting minutes from the January 10, 2024 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Domonique Crosby. Second motion was made by Will Vitagliano. Motion carried.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- The Executive Board will follow up on the topic of future shared governance meetings with Administration.
- The Executive Board will work with the subcommittees to finalize parameters for staff volunteers participating in subcommittee work
- Elections and Governance will work on sending out nomination email and work with the Executive Board on various recruitment ideas, such as tabling
- Elisabeth Merkel will report back to Staff Council about pending budget cuts at the next monthly meeting.