

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, July 12, 2023

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: Steven Bosso, Danielle Castillo, Kimberly Bruno, Janice Chuakay, Erin Echols, Corey Kowalczyke, Carolina Martinez, Elisabeth Merkel, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente, Alexandra Schaeffer, Will Vitagliano, Nicholas Ynami, Ken Yoshioka

Voting Members Absent: Claudine Bibeau Parks, Ella Frazer, Joshua McDermott, Luwei Xie

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

I. Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes 6/14/23 – 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: 18 present, 4 absent, quorum reached.
- Approval of Staff Council Meeting Minutes for June 14, 2023 meeting.

Motion

- Meeting minutes from the June 14, 2023 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Will Vitagliano. Second motion was made by Elisabeth Merkel. Motion carried.

II. Updates from Executive Board – Domonique (2 mins)

- The [updated bylaws](#) have been posted to the Staff Council website.
- The first meeting of the Executive Committee is taking place on Wednesday, July 19, 2023, at 12 pm. The meeting takes place every third Wednesday of the month from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. The Executive Committee is made up of the Executive Board and the chairs of each subcommittee. The meetings are an opportunity to discuss the direction of the Staff Council, its priorities, future agenda items, and discuss the work of the subcommittees. Note that if a chair cannot make a particular meeting, they may send a proxy.

III. Update on the Staff Council Subcommittees – Jill (15 mins)

- The Vice President acknowledged subcommittees may not have extensive updates yet as subcommittees are still organizing and setting their meeting sequence.
- The Executive Board sent the subcommittees their mission/purpose statements last week. Mission/purpose statements can be revised or expanded by each subcommittee, and the Executive Board can help the subcommittees make such decisions as they go forward. The Executive Board will be sending another document soon that provides some guidelines on how subcommittees can approach their work.
- If subcommittees have questions about revising purpose statements or have additional questions about the work done by the previous year's subcommittee, they are encouraged to contact the Vice President, who is happy to assist, in partnership with the Executive Board as a whole.
- The Vice President will be reaching out to each subcommittee around the first of September to schedule a time to attend a meeting during the fall. The Vice President wants to give each subcommittee time to settle in before scheduling that meeting.

Awards and Recognition – Ken Yoshioka (Chair)

- The subcommittee has met and begun discussions of their work. They are looking into which divisions and colleges have their own awards in addition to the regular HR Service and Merit awards. They have reached out to some departments/divisions already, such as the School of Ed and Development, to learn more about their awards and recognition activities.
- The subcommittee is also reviewing their purpose statement and discussing any revisions/additions that can further clarify what they do.
- An Awards and Recognition member noted that a subcommittee in her school (SONHP) has been working on awards and recognition issues and provided her with a document about their findings. She will be sharing that document at the next Awards and Recognition subcommittee meeting. The SONHP subcommittee did a survey of their staff and faculty, so there is quite a bit of information to review.
- A staff member from Development asked the Awards and Recognition Chair if they were looking for information about more informal methods of recognizing staff as well. They mentioned that while Development does not have a formal award ceremony, they do have regular informal practices to acknowledge staff. The Chair confirmed the subcommittee welcomes information about all forms of recognition and that informal practices are great for the Awards and Recognition subcommittee to track too. Highlighting staff excellence is so enriching and encouraging in all its forms, and it also helps staff retention.

Communications - Nicholas Ynami (Chair)

- The subcommittee had their first meeting yesterday and were joined by Staff Council Clerk Amy Joseph, who sat on the Communications subcommittee last year. Due to vacation schedules, Communications was unable to get the July newsletter out, but it will start going out again as of August.

Elections & Governance - Will Vitagliano (Chair)

- The subcommittee has determined they will meet once a month on Thursday from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. Their first meeting will be after the Executive Committee meeting on July 19, 2023.

Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability - Danielle Castillo (Chair)

- The subcommittee was able to meet, with one member on vacation. They reviewed what was accomplished last year and brainstormed ideas about what the subcommittee might do this year. The subcommittee particularly wants to focus on staff support and what that looks like. What does it mean to actually support each other, in addition to the regular celebrations, awards, and recognitions?

Institutional Effectiveness and Safety - Claudine Bibeau Parks (Chair)

- Steven Bosso provided the subcommittee update as Chair Claudine Bibeau Parks was absent.
- The subcommittee hasn't had a chance to meet yet, but they are working on a regular meeting rotation and will hold their first meeting in the next two weeks.
- The Vice President, who previously sat on this subcommittee, noted that she will be following up with them to transfer over some materials. There has also been a change in the subcommittee membership, as subcommittee member Tim Swift has stepped down from the Staff Council.

Professional Development - Tina Ricafrente (Chair)

- The subcommittee held their first meeting this week and will determine a regular schedule going forward. The subcommittee reached out to the chair of the previous year's subcommittee to invite them to attend the first meeting, but unfortunately they were unable to make it. However, the chair emailed the current chair with some helpful information to assist the subcommittee as they move forward.

- The subcommittee discussed what the previous subcommittee accomplished and some ideas about what they would like to work on in the future. They reviewed the purpose statement for the subcommittee and discussed what professional development means to them. They have begun brainstorming about the subcommittee's work, and discussed ways to collect information, including working with the Communications subcommittee and exploring how information is disseminated about professional development.

IV. Update on Other University Committee(s) (5 mins)

University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC): Elisabeth Merkel

- UBAC recently welcomed the two recently elected members, Sarah Blackburn and Angela Martinez, to the team.
- An update was provided about Phase 2 of the budget balancing requirement of 39.6 million. Fortunately, the University was able to avoid having to enact a second round of cuts, which was initially estimated at 13 million.
- The University was able to locate funds from a variety of sources to avoid the cuts. The biggest savings areas and additional revenues included: elevated interest income from the University's operating cash; debt service for the Masonic East building and other facilities costs, including delaying the new building's opening date; and drawing 2% (versus 1.5%) from the University's operating reserves. Finally, much credit is due to USF's Development team, who were able to grow funded financial aid resources for undergraduates, thereby reducing the unfunded variety.
- UBAC will next convene no later than September. They will also be hosting an educational workshop featuring the Vice Provost of Student Financial Aid, who will speak about the different ways the University might think about financial aid to increase student retention and improve budgeting.

V. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (22 mins)

Topic: Staff Council 2022-2023 Annual Report

- The Executive Board acknowledged Immediate Past President Melissa Thompson's superb work in authoring the Staff Council Annual Report for 2022-2023, which can be found on the Staff Council shared drive and on the Staff Council [website](#). The report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the previous year's Staff Council and its subcommittees. It was submitted to Diane Nelson and Father Fitzgerald at the end of June. There has not been a response by Leadership to the report yet, but all Staff Council members are encouraged to read it.

Topic: Increasing Staff Attendance at the Monthly Staff Council Meetings

- The Vice President asked the Staff Council if they had any suggestions on increasing staff attendance at our monthly meetings. Meetings are typically advertised in the monthly newsletter and in the summary of staff events sent out every week by Ecommunications during the regular school year (this email does not go out in the summer), but are there other ways to get the word out?
- Staff Council members discussed how the monthly Staff Council meetings are marketed to staff. One member noted that when the Staff Council was launched last year, some staff thought they would be part of the Staff Council formal decision-making process, so there was some confusion about their role. Primarily staff observe the official work of the Staff Council in the monthly meeting and help keep us accountable. They also have an opportunity during the open discussion period to raise issues, ask questions, and suggest future priorities.
- A Staff Council member agreed that the Council should think about different ways to advertise both the meetings and the work Staff Council is doing. We should emphasize to staff that they can bring anything to us and that there is an open discussion portion of the agenda where they can participate (as well as the other ways they can communicate with us, e.g., via the [webform](#) on the Staff Council website or staffcouncil@usfca.edu).
- A staff member suggested it might be a draw to feature a different subcommittee's work/topic area at meetings. Staff members who are particularly interested in that area/topic might be particularly motivated to come to meetings with that focus. Staff can encourage their colleagues they know are interested in the topic or working on similar issues to attend the Staff Council meeting.

- A Staff Council member liked the idea of featuring special topics, as well as finding new ways to advertise the current projects/issues the Staff Council is working on. For example, this member was drawn to attend their first meeting when they read in the Staff Council newsletter that the Council was working on issues around obtaining physical One Cards, a special interest of theirs. Additionally, if there are focused topics at times, the Council could do special outreach to specific groups who might be really interested in hearing about/contributing to conversations around that topic. So we can think about marketing to smaller groups on campus as well as the staff at large to boost engagement.
- Members concurred that guest speakers, such as when we hosted Associate Vice Provost for Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Sabrina Kwist last semester, and special topics could be a draw. The Executive Board is working on inviting HR to come speak, as that is an action item that carried over from last year.
- The Vice President added that the Staff Council might consider holding an additional event outside of our regular meetings. Not a town hall necessarily, but along the lines of a guest speaker, with more time to devote to the topic and Q&A.
- Other Staff Council members mentioned other types of events, such as a happy hour along the lines of what ADEI was kind enough to organize with Staff Council as a co-sponsor last semester. Perhaps Staff Council could do more co-sponsorships in the future or explore other ways to support/organize events.
- A Staff Council member suggested we have room for announcements and event shout-outs during the meeting as well, to help boost staff activities on campus and build community. Staff Council could also consider hosting a “welcome back” event at the beginning of each school year.

Topic: Survey Staff to Help Determine Staff Council Priorities

- A Staff Council member asked about sending a survey or polling staff about issues they would like the Staff Council to address, suggestions for events, etc.
- The President confirmed the Executive Board has been discussing a possible survey and will be bringing the topic to the Executive Committee next week.

VI. Meeting Adjourned at 12:50 PM by Domonique Crosby, Staff Council President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, MONTH DAY, 2023

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- Meeting minutes from the June 14, 2023 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Will Vitagliano. Second motion was made by Elisabeth Merkel. Motion carried

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- Executive Board will send subcommittees a process/guidelines document about how to approach their work before the Executive Committee meeting on 7/19/23.
- The Vice President will schedule a visit to each subcommittee around the first of September.
- The Vice President will contact the Institutional Effectiveness and Safety subcommittee to pass off some materials from last year’s subcommittee work.
- The Executive Board will discuss highlighting special topics or a particular subcommittee’s work at monthly meetings with the Executive Committee
- The Staff Council will explore hosting/co-sponsoring events outside of the regular monthly meeting
- The Executive Board is reaching out to HR about attending as a guest at a Staff Council meeting this fall