

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Voting Members Present:

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

Staff Council Members: Claudine Bibeau Parks, Steven Bosso, Danielle Castillo, Erin Echols, Ella Frazer, Corey Kowalczyke, Carolina Martinez, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente, Alexandra Schaeffer, Will Vitagliano, Luwei Xie, Nicholas Ynami

Voting Members Absent: Kimberly Bruno, Janice Chuakay, Joshua McDermott, Elisabeth Merkel, Melissa Thompson, Ken Yoshioka

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

I. Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes (7/12/23)– Domonique (5 min)

- 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, 6 absent, quorum reached.
- Approval of Staff Council meeting minutes for July 12, 2023 meeting.

Motion

- Meeting minutes from the July 12, 2023 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 (10 min)

- The President provided an update about attending the Board of Trustees meetings in the coming year. The President of Staff Council is invited to serve as a constituency representative at the Board of Trustees meetings. The President attended the first training, where certain rules were explained, including that the Staff Council President cannot send a proxy if she is unable to attend a Board of Trustees meeting. The President is invited to all social activities that the Board of Trustees hold, including the lunches and dinners typically held during the meetings. During Board meetings, the President will be able to ask questions and participate fully in everything except the executive session meetings. The President will report back to the Staff Council about each Board of Trustee meeting and provide access to any presentations given, as allowed.
- At the March 2024 Board of Trustees meeting, the President will be expected to give a State of the University of San Francisco Staff Report. More information about what that requires/the format will be forthcoming. The President stated that faculty give a State of the Faculty report annually as well, which involves a survey about how the faculty are feeling. The Executive Board will have to explore what's possible for us to accomplish after receiving more information. The President will get to review some past examples of faculty reports.
- The Clerk reported that the Executive Committee approved sending out a full survey to staff to help the Staff Council learn what staff's needs and priorities are, among other things. Part of today's open discussion will be devoted to exploring what a staff survey might include. The Immediate Past President works for the USF office that handles surveys, so the other members of the Executive Board will be meeting with her in the future to plan out the survey.
- The Vice President reported that the Executive Board will continue to document subcommittee processes, including providing guidelines on how subcommittees can work on their priorities/action items. Today's subcommittee check-ins will be the chairs reporting on the top priorities they submitted to the Executive Board last week. These priorities will continue to be discussed in the next Executive Committee meeting, as well as how subcommittees can work together, if needed.

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

Awards and Recognition – Alexandra Schaeffer (standing in for Chair Ken Yoshioka)

- Chair Ken Yoshioka submitted the subcommittee's priorities to the Executive Board the previous week, but was not present to review the priorities with Staff Council at today's meeting.
- The subcommittee submitted four priorities to the Executive Board, around which there are some questions.
- The Vice President said it was fine to wait to refine the priorities; the Executive Board will follow up with the subcommittee.

Communications - Nicholas Ynami (Chair)

- The subcommittee's two priority action items are: 1) Continuing to carry out the subcommittee's charge to produce a monthly newsletter; 2) Continuing its charge to maintain and improve the Staff Council website.

Elections & Governance - Will Vitagliano (Chair)

- The subcommittee's two priority action items are: 1) Continuing to carry out the subcommittee's charge to run elections and update the bylaws, as needed; 2) Doing a deeper dive into shared governance opportunities for staff across the campus community

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

- The subcommittee's two priority action items are: 1) Focusing on what equity and inclusion support looks like to staff and what staff need, which includes following up with active and inactive affinity groups on campus; 2) Continuing to address mental health resources for staff.
- The chair congratulated those Staff Council members who worked on the proposal to increase staff mental health counseling sessions from 8 to 10, particularly the previous year's IDEA subcommittee. The University recently announced that this recommendation, which was submitted by last year's Staff Council, was approved.

Institutional Effectiveness and Safety - Claudine Bibeau Parks (Chair)

- The subcommittee's two priority action items are: 1) Continuing to work on/follow up on the previous subcommittee's One Card recommendation, to which there has been no response; 2) Researching remote work policies and expectations during an emergency closure
- Another priority area for the subcommittee are future safety updates and trainings. The subcommittee has recently had some great conversations with one of the Public Safety directors, Greg Yee, about future safety trainings. The subcommittee also helped Greg connect with the PA Council in the College of Arts and Sciences to discuss trainings for PAs who serve as building safety marshals.
- A previous action item from last year involved both the IES and IDEA subcommittees following up on the functionality of an accessible entrance on the first floor of Lone Mountain. There is another location in K-Hall in a similar situation, where the accessible entrance isn't functional yet. The IES subcommittee plans to follow up with Facilities on these issues and will report back to the Staff Council.
- Subcommittee member Steve Bosso will start attending USF Health and Safety Committee meetings, starting in September.

Professional Development - Tina Ricafrente (Chair)

- The subcommittee's two priority action items are: 1) Onboarding support, particularly creating a Staff Council welcome letter for new employees; 2) Researching bringing back staff sabbaticals

IV. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (20 min)

Topics: Staff Survey and Shared Governance

- The Executive Board opened the discussion about the staff survey, which will be disseminated in October. Staff Council members and other staff in attendance are encouraged to share any ideas regarding the survey's purpose, possible questions, areas of focus, the structure of the survey, or anything else.
- Several Staff Council members emphasized that the survey's length should be carefully considered. Staff have significant workloads and will likely not want to take a survey that's extensively long.
- It is important to include at least one open-ended essay box where staff can provide any additional comments, suggestions, or feedback they want the Staff Council to know about/address.
- What do we want to get out of the staff survey? Previous discussions about the survey's purpose have focused on finding out what staff's priorities are—what would staff like the Staff Council to work on? What do staff want/need? Which issues are most important to them? The survey could help us clarify what's most pressing for staff, and what can wait. Subcommittees have also expressed interest in receiving guidance on their priorities/action items.
- The Clerk suggested a general question about shared governance could be included. The Clerk sat on the shared governance strategic planning workgroup last year and that workgroup worked on a report to submit to Leadership about what shared governance might look like at USF. The Vice President suggested we could ask the staff what they think the Staff Council's role is/should be in shared governance.
- The IDEA subcommittee is interested in asking staff what support looks like for them, as it means different things to different people. The subcommittee would like to better understand where staff feel they have support, and where they want more. Additionally, the subcommittee would like to know if there are any affinity groups that staff are part of that need additional support.
- A Staff Council member mentioned staff might have questions about what changes are actually possible, given the hierarchies in place. The Staff Council has discussions and makes recommendations, but then the information has to be funneled through HR up to the President's office. Which staff priorities are actually achievable? How can Staff Council show there is movement on action items?
- The Vice President responded that this comes back to self governance and what role the Staff Council plays in it. What is our relationship to the powers that be? The Clerk added that follow up and communication from Leadership about action items takes a long time, and sometimes there is no response at all. Shared governance is very much about communication; the Staff Council can do significant work, but it only goes as far as our own door if there is no response.
- The President added that the Executive Board has frequently discussed these issues. How can we work with Leadership to actually bring some things to fruition? How can we accomplish standing meetings with key people? The President pointed out there is a difference between the Staff Council presenting something and being told "no" and the Staff Council presenting something and being told nothing. We can work with "no." The President's previous institution had successful shared governance. Sometimes staff weren't happy with certain decisions, but shared governance still existed and thrived. The President would like to see Staff Council get to a similar place, where we are representing staff, putting things forward, and having conversations with people who are listening and interested. The right to be heard is a big issue for us as staff members, and we need to know we are being taken into consideration. The survey can help us find out what staff's thoughts and feelings are and provide the Council with reasons for why we choose to pursue certain actions/priorities.
- The Vice President stated that the survey will also help bring staff attention to the Staff Council and our work to support staff. If staff recognizes us as a part of their voice in the community, then they will expect the administration to respond in a timely manner to our initiatives. A survey question might address staff's expectations regarding administrative responses to Staff Council.
- A member of the Professional Development subcommittee would like the survey to have a mix of general questions and some specific topics suggested by the subcommittees. For example, a question might be included about the types of professional development staff are aware of/interested in. The member added that the Staff Council can establish and create our own identity on campus, and the survey could explore how staff see that identity.
- The Vice President suggested an overarching question about how staff might present issues to the different subcommittees. That might be a process question for the Staff Council: how can the subcommittees get staff feedback more regularly?
- A staff member expressed appreciation to Staff Council members for all the time, effort, and leadership they have devoted to the Council's work.

V. Announcements (5 min)

- The President announced that the Office of Student Life is still looking for volunteers for Move-In Day this coming weekend.

VI. Meeting Adjourned at 12:53 PM by Domonique Crosby, Staff Council President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- Meeting minutes from the July 12, 2023 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 Immediate Past President and the rest of the Executive Board will meet to discuss planning steps for the fall staff survey
- The Executive Board will follow up with the Awards and Recognition subcommittee to answer questions/discuss their priorities