

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, November 8, 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: Claudine Bibeau Parks, Steven Bosso, Danielle Castillo, Janice Chuakay, Erin Echols, Corey Kowalczyke, Carolina Martinez, Joshua McDermott, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente, Alexandra Schaeffer, Luwei Xie, Nicholas Ynami, Ken Yoshioka

Voting Members Absent: Kimberly Bruno, Ella Frazer, Elisabeth Merkel, Will Vitagliano

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

I. Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes October 11, 2023 – Domonique (5 min)

- Meeting called to order at 12:01 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 October 11, 2023 meeting.

Motion

- Meeting minutes from the October 11, 2023 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Domonique Crosby. Second motion was made by Danielle Castillo. Motion carried.

II. Updates from Executive Board – Domonique (5 min)

- The President reported on the Executive Board's monthly meeting with Staff Council liaison Diane Nelson. Diane provided the following updates to share with staff:
 - Reminder that the staff evaluation cycle for non-represented staff will start in January. The Clerk will also post the timeline on the Staff Council web page so that staff have multiple places to refer to.
 - The Health and Safety Committee is currently working on safety documents for the campus community, including a document that will let staff know how to report workplace safety issues. Greg Yee in Public Safety is working on that.
 - Staff are reminded that sexual harassment training is required. If you have been notified through Workday that your training is due, you must complete the training. Most were due 11/1. As with other trainings posted to Workday, the sexual harassment training is not only required, it is beneficial to the community. There can be job ramifications for not completing required trainings, so please make sure you are up-to-date.
- The Clerk reported that 318 staff responded to the recent Staff Council Staff Survey, an over 20% response rate. Immediate Past President Melissa Thompson mentioned at a previous Staff Council meeting that a 10% response rate is acceptable, so we achieved double that. The Executive Board will present a report on the survey results at the Staff Council meeting in December. This survey will help the Staff Council set priorities in alignment with what staff feel are the most pressing issues.
- The President added that the Executive Board will be writing a statement for Father Fitzgerald as well, including noting the top concerns revealed in the staff survey that we would like the Administration to address. The President thanked everyone who contributed to the survey.

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

- Before introducing the subcommittee updates, the Vice President stated it's been great visiting the subcommittee meetings this semester and seeing the positive work environment and learning more about what the subcommittees are working on.

Awards and Recognition – Ken Yoshioka (Chair)

- o No updates.
- o A Staff Council member wanted to recognize the work the Awards and Recognition Chair has been doing to assist staff in Arts & Sciences with technical matters: “He is a true co-worker and a great human being.” The member thanked the Chair for everything he’s done.

Communications - Nick Ynami (Chair)

- o The November newsletter was delayed. Either a retroactive one will be sent out, or the next newsletter will be in December.

Elections & Governance - Will Vitagliano (Chair)

- o A member of the subcommittee provided the update, as the Chair was not able to attend today’s meeting. The subcommittee is reviewing subcommittees across the university to see where there might be areas for more staff representation. The subcommittee also hopes to align these efforts with the results of the Staff Survey.

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

- o The subcommittee has reached out to Sabrina and Ifeoma from the ADEI office to meet to help coordinate efforts. This includes possibly updating ADEI’s website with all active affinity groups. The subcommittee is also looking into what other institutions are doing to help their affinity groups to see what we can learn from them.

Institutional Effectiveness and Safety - Claudine Bibeau Parks (Chair)

- o The subcommittee is looking into adjusting the subcommittee’s name as their survey revealed that 75% of respondents are confused about what “institutional effectiveness” means. They are brainstorming some possibilities.
- o The subcommittee continues its work with Greg Yee in Public Safety to strengthen the USF Safety Marshall program and inventory safety supplies. They are exploring the idea of a safety “scavenger hunt” with prizes to help staff locate the AEDs, accessible doors, test knowledge as to where to go for fire drills, and other related items.
- o The Lone Mountain doors that have been of concern still do not have accessibility, but that’s being worked on with the ADA team. Sometimes the buttons need to be pressed longer for other doors, so have patience with the accessibility buttons as well. Some may in fact be working, but it takes a minute.
- o The Chair noted the Vice President attended their last meeting and the IES subcommittee will begin working with the IDEA subcommittee on some of the strategic plan items that involve both subcommittees.
- o The next subcommittee meeting is November 16th.

Professional Development – Kimberly Bruno (Chair)

- o A member of the subcommittee provided the update, as the Chair was not able to attend today’s meeting. The subcommittee got a “yellow light” from HR to proceed with a new staff welcome letter from the Staff Council. Other items were discussed that will be summarized and brought to the Executive Board.

IV. Update on Other University Committee(s) (0 min)

University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC): Elisabeth Merkel

- There was no UBAC update as the member was unable to attend today's meeting.

V. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (30 min)

Topic: Fire Marshalls on Campus

- A Staff Council member asked the IES subcommittee chair if there has been a review of how many fire marshals we have on campus post-pandemic. The Chair confirmed IES is working with Greg Yee to see where there are gaps. Greg is compiling a list of current names. Disseminating that information and training new marshals is on the horizon. If a safety marshal is working at home, there will be a back-up system put in place as well.

Topic: Staff/Faculty/Central Accessibility Office

- The Clerk asked if any discussions had started about the possibility of a central accessibility office for staff/faculty, as recommended in the strategic plan and discussed at various Staff Council meetings. The IES Chair noted the subcommittee is happy to partner on this issue. The Clerk noted that the IDEA subcommittee is also involved.
- The Chair of Awards and Recognition circled back to this topic later, noting they were on the Strategic Planning Workgroup No. 5 that made this accessibility office suggestion. When this was being worked on, the working group had a conversation with the ADEI office, who felt that what USF had was sufficient, but it was more about raising awareness of what was available. The Chair stated that during that discussion the working group noted HR will provide accommodations, but there isn't anyone with assistive technology experience who supports and guides the process. Student Disability Services is separate, as it is not their role to help with staff. The working group felt this lack of staff/faculty support is why an assistive technology or accessibility office was necessary. Finding out from [SPAC](#) [Strategic Plan Advisory Council] the status of that recommendation would be helpful.
- The Chair noted the hard work Program Assistants have been doing to address assistive technology issues around events, which they have to address on their own.

Topic: Governance Meeting with Father Fitzgerald and Interim Provost Eileen Fung

- The Immediate Past President asked for an update on the shared governance meeting convened by Father Fitzgerald in October, which was attended by the Staff Council President and Vice President.
- The President provided an update, noting that the meeting included Provost Eileen Fung as well as members of the union for faculty. The shared governance portion of the discussion involved the administration asking what the groups present were looking for in terms of shared governance. For the Staff Council's part, we discussed having a voice as staff and to be represented in more spaces where our voices are recognized, which has not always been the case in the past. Even in the discussion, there was some lack of understanding around what staff do and how we contribute, particularly around student retention. There seemed to be a greater understanding as to how faculty contributed to student retention, but not as much around staff's important role. So there was some conversation around that issue.
- Father Fitzgerald would like to have a meeting once a semester about shared governance with the group that was assembled for this first meeting.
- The conversation then shifted to student enrollment and retention, and having Student Enrollment Management come to the next shared governance meeting to talk to the group. So the second half of the conversation moved away from shared governance to some extent and moved to student enrollment and retention.
- Overall, there isn't really a plan in place on what shared governance would look like yet, so that needs to be explored at follow-up meetings.
- The Staff Council President then provided an overview of the meeting the Staff Council President and Vice President had with Provost Eileen Fung, which took place the following day. The meeting was more focused on the ways the Provost could help us as staff and what the Staff Council might like to see come to fruition. We did raise the issue that the Staff Council does not have a budget, which the Provost didn't realize. The Executive Board is still working on a proposal to request a budget, as it has

been made clear by our talks with Staff Council liaison Diane Nelson that we don't have a budget. Provost Eileen Fung noted she was going to check in with Father Fitzgerald about the issue as well, to get clarity.

- The discussion with Provost Eileen Fung talked about some ways, big and small, that staff don't feel valued. For example, while a minor issue, the staff and faculty calendar newsletter that comes out has a section that features faculty events but there isn't a staff section. This is one way that it appears that staff aren't as important as other groups on campus.
- The Provost wanted some more details about how Staff Council works and how we are organized, so we reviewed that as well. Some other issues discussed included how to ensure more OPE involvement/inclusion, so that that OPE staff feel more represented. Unlike last year, none of the Executive Board are in the union. How might we address that going forward?
- The Vice President contributed that she and the Staff Council President emphasized the active roles staff play in student retention, that we are partners with faculty and others, and that it's important that this partnership be better understood.
- The President noted that the Staff Council recognizes how important student retention is, but hopes to have more focused conversations about shared governance in future meetings.

Topic: [SPAC Recommendations](#)

- The Vice President circled back to SPAC working recommendations and noted that the Staff Council survey will be cross-referenced with these recommendations to help us prioritize action items, see where there's commonality, and leverage that information.
- The President confirmed the Executive Board is hoping to meet with one or more key SPAC members to check in about the recommendations.

Topic: USF Employee Perks

- Staff asked about increasing local employee perks in the meeting chat. The Immediate Past President noted USF has a [Perks at Work](#) program. The President added as an example that USF has a partnership with Grubhub, where if you sign up you're your USF email, you don't have to pay the delivery fees. The President stated the Executive Board can bring up adding more local perks with Diane Nelson in our monthly meeting.
- Staff Council members circled back to this topic and noted some perks like staff being able to purchase Microsoft Office for personal use for \$27 or opportunities to rent University-owned housing that were available in the past.
- The Clerk suggested we might have a "Did You Know?" section in the monthly Staff Council newsletter that mentions a few perks staff might not be aware of.

Topic: Elimination of the Vice Provost of Equity, Inclusion, and Faculty Position

- A Staff Council member raised the issue of Vice Provost Sheila Smith-McCoy's position being eliminated, but that they didn't receive an email about it. Discussion revealed some staff, depending on the mailing lists they are part of, did receive the Provost's email message about it on October 20th, but many did not. The Staff Council member noted this touches on issues of transparency, and also wondered what the impact of eliminating this position might have on USF's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts as a whole.
- Other staff also expressed concern about the elimination of the position, how they valued Vice Provost McCoy's work, how this impacts our diversity/inclusion work, and if communication can be improved and be more inclusive.

Topic: Written Statement in Support of Palestine Available to Sign On

- A staff member announced that a statement in support of Palestine was written by some USF professors and is available for staff to sign on in support, if desired. Interested staff, and any other USF community member, may sign on [here](#).
- A Staff Council member in the meeting chat noted that the Performing Arts and Social Justice Department is hosting a meeting about this topic on Monday, which is organized by the Performing Arts Student Council. The letter and other issues will be discussed.
- Another Staff Council member noted in chat that the International Studies Department and their partners in Politics might be hosting another 'teach in' about this topic and will keep the Staff Council posted.

VI. Announcements (5 min)

- Staff member Sarah Emery is part of a group of faculty and staff organizing the annual Thanksgiving food drive campaign. USF wants to provide meals for 150 families in the Western Addition and Tenderloin neighborhoods. The campaign will run until November 18th. You can donate [here](#).

VII. Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 PM by Domonique Crosby, Staff Council President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 13, 2023. Click on this link to join (registration no longer required):

<https://usfca.zoom.us/j/87396988358>

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- Meeting minutes from the October 11, 2023 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Domonique Crosby. Second motion was made by Danielle Castillo. Motion carried.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- The Clerk will post the non-represented staff evaluation timeline on the Staff Council web page; this information was also circulated by HR directly to employees.
- The Executive Board will write a report on the Staff Survey results and send that to Father Fitzgerald (cc'ing Diane Nelson). They will then present the results to the USF community at the December Staff Council meeting as well as post the report on the Staff Council website.
- The Executive Board will be following up with key SPAC member(s) about working group recommendations.