

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 1, 2024

TO: The Trustees of the University of San Francisco

FROM: Domonique Crosby, President of The Staff Council
Jill Ballard, Vice President of The Staff Council
Amy Joseph, Clerk of The Staff Council

RE: FY24 Report on State of USF Staff

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Executive Summary

Formally instituted in 2022, the Staff Council aims 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. As stated in our Mission, “[Staff Council] will act as a conduit to engage and support our fellow staff members and the surrounding community...[including] actively participat[ing] in shared governance to facilitate positive and collegial communication in support of the University’s Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.”

The Staff Council holds monthly meetings which are open to all staff, provides a monthly newsletter, and produces written reports and recommendations to bring forth staff concerns and suggestions. The President of the Staff Council attends the plenary sessions of the Board of Trustees meetings as a standing, non-voting guest, and the Executive Board attends regular meetings on shared governance with Leadership at least once per semester. The Staff Council members serve on one of the six subcommittees in which the work of the Staff Council is carried out.

This report will give Board of Trustees members an understanding of the needs of USF staff and the work being carried out by the Staff Council. This report will outline data gathered from a survey sent to USF during the Fall semester as well as Staff Council’s goals and priorities. Staff Council’s goals and priorities stem both from the data collected and continuous suggestions from USF staff in real time. This report outlines how the Staff Council will work to advance the priorities which arose from the survey.

Staff Council Survey and Staff Priorities

In October 2023, the Staff Council instituted the inaugural 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 health, and staff morale arose as the top three pressing concerns. These were followed closely by student retention and support and administration transparency. These concerns should be taken as a top priority for the USF administration and the Staff Council in order to address staff concerns and improve staff effectiveness and morale on campus.

As written in the Staff Council’s mission statement, the Staff Council will “participate in shared governance to facilitate positive and collegial communication in support of the

University's Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.” Given this focus, survey respondents shared their thoughts on the role of the Staff Council in shared governance on campus. Most particularly, staff would like the Staff Council to be in direct communication with the President and administration, involved in participatory decision-making, and collaborate meaningfully with faculty and staff.

Staff Council Accomplishments (to date)

- Development of operational processes for Staff Council including regular meetings with liaison, Diane Nelson, Associate Vice President for Human Resources.
- Participated in meetings with Fr. Fitzgerald, Provost Fung, and faculty unions to increase shared governance on campus
- Increased transparency of Staff Council's work through a table visible to all on the Staff Council website
- Worked with various campus departments to update accessibility videos for USF staff
- Worked with the Director of Campus Resilience, Greg Yee, to provide Building Marshal training to increase staff preparedness in the event of an emergency
- Drafted a “Welcome Letter” for new staff members to introduce them to the Staff Council
- Created a submission form to collect staff recognition to be listed on the Staff Council website
- Submitted a recommendation to Human Resources to increase mental health benefit resulting in an increase of therapy sessions per issue from eight to 10.
- Initiated a pilot program to increase participation of staff-at-large in Staff Council subcommittee meetings to increase transparency and engagement.

Staff Council Goals Related to Staff Priorities

Priority 1: Staff Compensation

While the Staff Council is aware of the University's current budget status, it does not eliminate the need to discuss the impact staff compensation has on those employed by the University. Staff continue to point to the lack of increase in compensation despite an increase in cost of living and while their workload continues to increase. To address this priority, the Staff Council will engage in the following:

- Continue to raise staff concerns around compensation and related issues and draft a letter to Fr. Fitzgerald that further expresses USF staff concerns and needs moving forward.



- The Staff Council has expressed interest in understanding the results from the Pay Equity Study the University plans to undergo.
- Continue to appoint and/or elect USF staff members to serve on the University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC) to participate in discussions, advocate for staff needs, and share information about budget gaps and opportunities.

Priority 2: The Future of the University/Financial Health

As mentioned above, USF Staff are also concerned about the future of the University and our financial health. Staff discuss this concern in the monthly Staff Council meetings with particular attention to the potential for layoffs. Staff also discuss the impact the Institution's financial health can have on current and prospective students, as well as university programs and support overall. To address this priority, the Staff Council will engage in the following:

- Continued participation in shared governance meetings to share the USF staff perspective and ideas to address the current budgetary constraints.
- Continued partnership with faculty and administration to ensure student retention through the many channels of service staff provide.
- Continued commitment to supporting quality student learning experiences across the board.

Priority 3: Staff Morale

Staff morale often feels like the quickest fix, but it requires a delicate balance of ensuring USF staff are happy now and advocating for changes that will have a positive impact on staff morale. Tending to staff morale is not simply about hosting happy hours, but rather ensuring all staff feel supported in their positions, are able to show up to work authentically, have community on campus, and can live out the USF mission. To address this priority, the Staff Council will engage in the following:

- Participation in the University's annual Service and Merit Awards, continue to provide Human Resources feedback for improvement, and ideas on awards to be given at the event and throughout the academic year
- In order to better serve unionized staff, the Staff Council is working on bylaws changes to increase equity for represented staff on the Staff Council Executive Board.
- Host a May self-pay social event to foster community amongst staff and facilitate the Staff Council leadership transition

Participation in Shared Governance

While this wasn't one of the top priorities for USF staff, participating in shared governance is one of the core purposes of the Staff Council. In addition, administrative

transparency is in the top five priorities for staff thus garnering the Staff Council's attention. Ensuring that USF staff are considered in every decision made by the administration is of the utmost importance. Staff play a vital role at the University thus it is important to be sure they are considered in decisions and further that staff are included in decision-making. To address this priority, the Staff Council will engage in the following:

- Continued participation in shared governance meetings to share the USF staff perspective and ideas to address the current budgetary constraints.
- Advocate for the Staff Council Executive Board to have meetings with Fr. Fitzgerald in order to discuss staff concerns.
- Advocate for the Staff Council constituency representative to the Board of Trustees to serve on a committee similar to other constituency representatives.

2023 - 2024 Staff Council Members

Domonique Crosby, Staff Council President
Jill Ballard, Staff Council Vice President
Amy F. Joseph, Staff Council Clerk
Melissa Thompson, Staff Council Immediate Past President
Claudine Bibeau Parks
Steven Bosso
Kimberly Bruno
Danielle Castillo
Janice Chuakay
Erin Echols
Ella Aviananda Frazer
Corey Kowalczyke
Carolina Martinez
Joshua McDermott
Elisabeth Merkel
Mark Papadopoulos
Tina Ricafrente
Alexandra Schaeffer
Will Vitagliano
Nicholas Ynami
Ken Yoshioka