

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, August 20, 2025**Ex Officio Members Present:**

Executive Board: Jessica Li (President), Sam Bethel (Vice President)

Staff Council Members: Ainsley Mosha, Chris Witte, D. Perez-Sornia, Daniel Tayakin, Gustavo Cabezas, Hannah Ogden, Ifeoma Nzerem, Jessica Li, Jordan Demos, Kellie Samson, Kimberly Bruno, Lisa Mayorga, Roxanne Lucas, Sam Bethel, Sara Rinaldi, Selin Ozguzer, Steph Heim, Tina Ricafrente, Tyler Weber, Vincent Hom

Voting Members Absent: Emily Gove, Madeline Meininger

Non-Voting Members Absent: Andrew Palos, Corey Kowalczyke

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes – President (3 min)

- The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM by the Staff Council President.
- Notice was 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: 19 present, 5 absent, quorum reached.
- Approval of Staff Council Meeting Minutes for the 7/9 meeting was approved by Google Form with a majority vote of 14 members.

Motion

- No motion was carried since the 7/9 meeting minutes were approved prior to the 8/20 meeting.

Updates from Executive Board – Jessica Li, President, Sam Bethel, Vice President (10 min)

- **HR Updates:**
 - Open Enrollment for 2026 benefits will take place in late October–early November.
 - Anti-Harassment Training due November 3, 2025, for those up for renewal. If you are up for renewal, the staff member should have received notification on August 5, 2025.
 - **Campus & Community Initiatives:**
 - Discussion about hosting a campus event on staff/student rights regarding ICE presence. Focus to be on student, staff rights. Donna Davis, General Counsel, and Bill Ong Hing, Professor & Director of the Immigration and Deportation Defense Clinic named as possible partners. The Campus Accessibility and Safety subcommittee may serve as the lead for this project.
 - **Council Operations & Projects**
 - [Project Board \(Notion\)](#): Launched as a centralized hub for Council projects, improving transparency and continuity between incoming/outgoing members. Subcommittee chairs have begun populating projects. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback on the project board to the Staff Council.
 - **Staffing Updates:**
 - Andrew Palos is on paternity leave until late October. Corey Kowalczyke will serve as interim clerk, while continuing as Communications Officer.
 - Ainsley Mosha has officially joined Staff Council. Jessica provided her appreciation for contributing to the staff council before Ainsley became an official member.
 - **Leadership Engagement**
 - Staff Council scheduled to meet with President Aceves in September (30-minute session). Council is encouraged to submit feedback for discussion through the feedback form located on the Staff Council website or to consult with a Staff Council representative.
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Update on the Staff Council Subcommittees – Sam Bethel (18 min)

- **Awards and Recognition – Vincent Hom, Chair**
 - Exploring departmental recognition initiatives; goal to highlight ongoing recognition efforts across campus.
 - Discussion about resuming Service & Merit Awards (potentially without banquet if budget is constrained). Staff feedback encouraged.
- **Communications - Selin Oguzer (Chair)**
 - August newsletter published August 12; received positive feedback. The president read and noted the content.
 - September newsletter in progress; content deadline August 29. Future newsletters will spotlight subcommittees individually.
- **Elections & Governance - Daniel Tayakin (Chair)**
 - Working on shifting the election timeline earlier in the spring (likely February) to allow smoother onboarding. Will require a bylaws amendment vote.
- **Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability – D. Perez-Sornia (Chair)**
 - Reviewing proposal for recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day. Feedback incorporated from Indigenous Engagement & Native Student Success Working Group.
 - Drafting proposal to make HR sick leave policies more inclusive (in progress; plan to present to HR at next meeting with HR representative).
 - Collaboration with the Campus Accessibility & Safety Subcommittee on ICE presence training event.
- **Campus Accessibility and Safety - Chris Witte (Chair)**
 - Planning ICE rights/response speaker event in collaboration with IDEA.
 - Exploring the creation of an Office of Disability Services for staff (currently in research and consultation phase).
- **Professional Development – Kimberly Bruno (Chair)**
 - Finalizing Google Form for professional development interests; additional questions added by new members. Will be reviewed with HR before distribution.
 - Subcommittee next meets August 27.

Update on Other University Committee(s) (< 1 min)

- University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC): Elisabeth Merkel
 - UBAC has not met yet this year. Acknowledged Staff Council support in filling open seats.

I. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (10 min)

- Staff expressed desire for a stronger shared governance and consultative role with the President and leadership (not only reporting).
- Members raised concerns about staff contributions being undervalued, urging that Staff Council advocate for recognition and resources without self-sacrifice and neglect.
- Suggestions included:
 - Inviting President Aceves to attend a Staff Council meeting.
 - Reinvigorating existing university committees (e.g., UBAC), with endorsement of the president, to fulfill consultative purposes. Staff shared that UBAC currently has no meetings scheduled, and a staff member shared that when they participated in UBAC, meetings were infrequent, resulting in the committee being informed of decisions instead of being a consultative body.

- Using “shared governance” language when framing expectations with new leadership.

II. Announcements (7 min)

- The staff/Faculty lounge is open, and the cost is \$14 (including tax).
- Encouraged event, in the context of the planned ICE training, Judges and Politics: Navigating the Intersection of Law, Power, and Ethics, on Thursday, September 18, 2025.
- Cultural Centers is hosting a Women’s Welcome mixer.
- International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) keeps its website updated with immigration updates.
- 94-96% of PsyD students are staying with the program as they phase out.
- The Federal Updates Taskforce is meeting soon and will be updating myUSF.

III. Meeting Adjourned at 12:51 PM by Staff Council President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 12:00 pm

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

➤ n/a

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

➤ n/a