UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Business Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2020
Carmen Zoom
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

In Attendance:
Chrissy Sprouse, Steven Loborec, Shea Ryan, Steven Blalock, Randall McKenzie, Justin Lahmers, Faith Kline, Stacey Houser, Lauren Gannon-Evans, Tina Bogac, Holly Davis, Sherri Hall, Kynthia Droesch, Kate Blevins, Emily Kelley, Katie Watkins, Danielle Jennings, Ferdinand Avila-Medina, Jennifer Elliott, Courtney Gandy, Brittany Savko, Patrick Weeks, Elisabeth Hosket, Brittany Crall, Laurel Van Dromme.

Call to Order
Adoption of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Meetings’ Minutes October 28, 2020

Executive Committee Reports
Chair:
• The Diversity & Inclusion Conversation event next week (11.17.2020) requires registration in advance to receive the link. We will break out into smaller groups during this meeting to consider additional potential questions to ask live during the event, although the panelists have received previously submitted questions in advance.
• USAC’s All Staff email will hopefully go out before Thanksgiving. Chrissy seeks feedback from USAC members on the FAQ for sick leave by end of day today, and she’ll share that with Lynn Carter.

Chair Elect:
• No updates from the Parking Advisory Committee, which met recently. Parking on campus has not been challenging since March, and there are new parking garages opening near WMC.

Communications:

Secretary/Treasurer:

Subcommittee Reports
Inclusive Excellence (IE):
• Ferdinand welcomes suggestions or questions for equity conversation with Dr. Meshelemiah on December 9. They can be sent to Chrissy, and she will forward them to Dr. Meshelemiah.

Governance:
• Steven reported that they are beginning bylaws review, and planning for spring review of Staff Career Development Grants.
Outreach & Engagement (O&E):
- Lauren reported that they hosted their wellness webinar yesterday on “Preventing Burnout” with 87 registrants. Their next event is the Diversity & Inclusion panel discussion with 238 registered, as of today. The last programming for the calendar year will be in December on “Coping with Covid.”
- USAC colleagues have been helpful in reaching out to the Local and regional SACs this fall, and O&E hopes to repeat this outreach in the spring with a focus then on recruiting new USAC members.
- Chrissy stated that she hopes there may be a few more SACs established in the spring, in particular for Administration & Planning, and also Athletic Department.

Staff Affairs (SA):
- Stacey reported that the group’s work continues on a revised flexible work toolkit, and they are discussing communications needs with Shea.
- Tina reported on their working plans for a USAC staff recognition program called “Staff in the Spotlight,” whereby nominations will be asked for monthly from across the university as a way to introduce 2 outstanding staff to the university. This is not a formal award, like the university’s annual Distinguished Staff Awards. A draft document is being reviewed by SA Subcommittee, and will be shared with USAC soon. A communications plan is being discussed with Shea to launch university-wide in January.

Task Forces
Health & Wellness:
- OHR Liaison Report
  - Chrissy reported that during last Executive Committee meeting Brandon Gibbs reported that OHR may re-establish a taskforce on telework.

Items for Informational Purposes
EAP Updates by Sharon Saia (8:30 – 9 a.m.)
- Sharon shared her appreciation for USAC, which has strongly supported EAP across the university. The EAP office has been very creative to deliver its counseling programs online since the university shut down in March: now using telehealth platform Blue Jeans, which is secure and HIPAA-compliant; transitioned EAP workshops, trainings, etc., to Zoom or Teams platforms; launched Pause and Reset program for WMC healthcare providers and staff; initiated #buckeyebreak; provided multiple “Coping with Covid” webinars, including several sponsored by USAC. EAP has also partnered with Office of Diversity & Inclusion to address stress management before the election.
- Stats on utilization: very low by employees in March and April, but it quickly increased after that. EAP added Covid-19 as a “presenting problem,” which is a new reason to seek EAP supports; 93 individuals reported Covid-19 as primary concern, and 96 individuals reported it as secondary concern. Individual reports of Suicidal Ideation has also increased: 32 in 2020, as compared to 20 in 2010. The good news in all this is that Ohio State employees are asking for help. OSU EAP is increasingly doing more across the university to help prevent workplace suicide.
  - Pause and Reset program activities are listed at both OSU Health Plan and WMC: https://osuhealthplan.com/programs-and-services/eap/pause-and-reset. It's a 5-minute, personal support and stress management strategy based on
“RITS = Rest + Information + Transition + services, and it includes rest and brief relaxation activity.

- #BuckeyeBreak is a 30-minute virtual hangout for employees with peers and members of EAP team on Fridays at 3 p.m.
- Tess is a mental health chat bot, which provides emotional support, evidence-based education, and coping skills via text, which can be set to check in with employees as frequently as they want. Ohio State’s retention rate for employees who continue to work with Tess is significantly higher than other text supports for mental health.
- Employee Emergency Fund Application: from May - November 2020, 23 completed applications have been submitted, 17 have been granted and 6 declined. Employees qualify if they have been employed by Ohio State more than 1 year, and have experienced a short-term financial emergency, for which a grant (no more than $1,000) will put them back into financial balance. There have been few related to Covid-19, surprisingly. Most common reasons include: death in the family, natural disaster (including Covid-19, house fire, flood, etc.), medical reason, or other.
- People most often report using EAP services because they’ve utilized EAP services previously, or from an HR employee, a family member, a co-worker, a supervisor, etc.

- A question was asked about any trends in employees’ needs for which USAC can possibly help bring attention to the matter? Sharon replied that stress is higher now, and EAP has talked with managers and supervisors about this and explained that EAP offers mental health training: 1 - for managers and supervisors, and 2 - for employees; in addition to the many programs described above. She noted that Ohio State’s many units are very unique (in their needs) across the university.

- Sharon described a community’s typical emotional response to a disaster—such as Covid-19, compounded by multiple racial injustice events and the election—follows the following curve:
  1. Pre-disaster warning (preparation, when it applies): mid-level emotions,
  2. Impact: emotions mid-low,
  3. Heroic: emotions mid-high,
  4. Honeymoon: highest emotions over a short period,
  5. Disillusionment: lowest emotions over a long period, and
  6. Reconstruction: emotions rising over a long period.

**Enterprise Project Updates by Janis Wolens (9 – 9:30 a.m.)**

- Janis reported that employees’ payslips will visually change beginning January 3, 2021. A fact sheet is being created and will be posted on the Business and Finance My Paycheck site (date to be determined). Questions should be directed to HR Connection. University-wide communications will follow.
- In particular for staff and all employees, payslips will more clearly state different kinds of pay including: calculation of overtime pay, which will be different for some groups of staff due to new policy implementation; comp time earned must be used within 365 days, or it will automatically be paid out; employee’s state of residence tax; distinct pay sources, if an employee holds more than one position; holiday pay; and YP4H flex spending account contributions will now show as a negative deduction before taxes, etc.
• Senior leadership, deans, and unit fiscal officers were informed in October and early November. All employees will be notified on November 18 via OnCampus Today with additional communications in December and January.

• Most university employees’ time will be recorded and reported in Workday. Athletics, Administration and Planning and Student Life will continue to use an external time clock for some employees; WMC employees will continue using Kronos; and eTimesheet will be live through January 2, and then Workday starts January 3. Both employees and managers will be able to edit time earned for employees. The automatic meal break will be removed. Vacation and sick-time will now be accrued and reported in Workday bi-monthly for all employees, regardless of frequency of pay.

• Chrissy added that an employee’s over-allotted number of vacation hours will be based on the employee’s anniversary date, rather than tied to the end of the pay period.

Items for Group Discussion
Potential questions for the upcoming Diversity and Inclusion Conversation Event:

• What are we/units doing right now across the university to change the look of the organizational charts across Ohio State? Do we have best practices that the university can highlight? What can individual employees do to make our teams more inclusive? Should there be annual goals related to diversity and inclusion within units and across all units? How is the university’s work in diversity and inclusion being included in the university’s new onboarding?

• How are we measuring what we’re doing to know if we are making progress? In what ways is Ohio State working with the larger community on these issues?

• What are the university’s priorities in regards to Diversity and Inclusion initiatives? What kind of tangible progress has been made to date? Can you give a general action plan to know what to expect?

• How do you benchmark success in this work? How does operating in a pandemic with remote technologies help or hinder this work?

Ohio State’s new Common Start Date programming:
Kate reported on the first university common start date (11.9.2020) and the new university-wide onboarding. Kate participated in the staff panel discussion. WMC will hold its first common start date on December 7. A toolkit may be developed for units to enhance their own orientation. She will send the slide deck for the university-wide event. That presentation does feature a lot on how diversity and inclusion is included in university’s values.

Adjournment