UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Business Meeting Minutes
December 9, 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, Holly Davis, Kynthia Droesch, Kate Blevins, Sherri Hall, Emily Kelley, Annie Bingman, Danielle Jennings, Ferdinand Avila-Medina, Sandy Otis, Jennifer Elliott, Courtney Gandy, Brittany Savko, Patrick Weeks, Jacob Hollar, Elizabeth Hosket, Brittany Crall, Drew Miller, and Laurel Van Dromme.

Call to Order
Adoption of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Meetings’ Minutes November 13, 2020

Executive Committee Reports
Chair:

Chair Elect:

Communications:

Secretary/Treasurer:

Subcommittee Reports
Inclusive Excellence (IE):
• Ferdinand Avila-Medina stated that the ERG summit has been helpful, and today’s book discussion will. He wishes us Feliz Navidad and shares his guitar playing: https://youtu.be/VqrqAYD4odI

Governance:
• Steven Blalock informed us that an update on Bylaws review will occur in January 2021.

Outreach & Engagement (O&E):
• Lauren Gannon-Evans mentioned that additional wellness resources for staff have been added to USAC’s webpage with Shea’s help.

Staff Affairs (SA):
• Brittany Savko is interested in learning if colleges or units have mentoring opportunities in place for their staff. Please email information to her by Monday December 14th end-of-day, and she will share it with Nina Brooks with OHR. Justin Lahmers and his research colleagues had been working on this topic with Lin Hillis. PPCW may also be a resource, as well as WMC, which looked at this topic a few years ago, according to Kate Blevins. She will look for their findings to share. Holly Davis is creating a mentorship program for the Young Professionals ERG; and there is a guide on Gateway to Learning
for mentorship: https://gatewaytolearning.osu.edu/professional-career-development/engage-with-mentor/.

- Sandy Otis mentioned that work continues on flex policy toolkit and winter recess.

**Task Forces**

**Health & Wellness:**

**OHR Liaison Report**

**Items for Informational Purposes**

*From Equity Talk to Equity Walk* – Book discussion moderated by Dr. Jacquelyn Meshelemiah, PhD, LSW, Associate Vice Provost and Director of Leadership Initiatives for Women of Color (8:30 – 9:30 a.m.)

- The book *From Equity Talk to Equity Walk* focuses on how we can influence student success in higher education, but it also affects all academic stakeholders. President Johnson held an interview the day after Breonna Taylor’s death and stated that she will “work together in making The Ohio State University anti-racist and more inclusive.” There is no place for neutrality. The book’s authors call on us to act or we are complicit, and President Johnson’s comments align with the book.

- What are USAC members’ gut reaction to President Johnson’s comments? At the department level, it is encouraging to hear her thoughts from the top administration at Ohio State. The role modeling for other leaders is important, and to see it across all Ohio State campuses.

- Establishing equity starts with us looking at ourselves and our own biases. Vocabulary has changed over the past 50 years, such that terms are more common now than were when the university Office of Diversity & Inclusion was created: equity, racial parity, white privilege, etc. We need to understand all of our students’ need and address them, and the “omnipresence of whiteness.”

- Where do we see racial inequities at Ohio State? USAC members see a lack of equity for racially minoritized men and women in higher organization leadership roles including the Board of Trustees and among physicians at Ohio State. A new category of general education courses determine in the past two years is Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World,” and we need to consider how we address that this grouping does not include students who are non-citizens and/or are undocumented. The staff population of a college does not have as much racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, while its faculty has been diversifying, so we need to work on the hiring process, so that our staff also better reflect our student population.

- Equity-Mindedness means that we need to assess our own racialized assumptions, our lack of knowledge on history of race and racism, and take responsibility for students’ success. Whiteness has driven what is considered to be excellence, and we need to reflect on where we are in the multiple stages of change:
  - Pre-contemplation,
  - Contemplation,
  - Preparation,
  - Action,
  - Maintenance, and
  - Evolution (and assessment again).

- What is the basis of white excellence here at Ohio State after its founding 150 years ago? Many new job positions are limited to traditional roles and expectations. We need
to be open to new or different ways of doing things compared to what we've seen until now. Why is it that white individuals often continue to remain silent in group discussions on topic of race, justice, privilege, etc.? There may be a fear of cancel culture, and a worry for offending people inadvertently. We should be able to engage in difficult conversations. We need to use I (first person) statements, and not attribute feelings or thoughts to others. And we need to offer grace to others and ourselves; and have patience to listen, so that we can help educate one another and share teachable moments. It’s important to share and build trust in relationships so that honest conversations can occur. We are seeing more openness and honesty in conversations with smaller groups, even among co-workers that don't know each other as well. The white male benchmark can be off-putting to some white men, who do want to share. Hearing from white males who are allies is very important. Land grant institutions were originally designed for white men, and much progress has been due to white men, and we can change things by all sharing our feelings and thoughts. Rather than being “called out” and criticized, one colleague suggests we "call-in," which frames conversation in a different, more positive way. Some people remain silent, because they think they're not part of the problem or it's not their problem to solve. The evolution of the language to anti-racist or white privilege has helped many to find the space to speak-up and get involved.

- Language is moving from “Deficit-minded” terms: such as disadvantaged, poor, at risk, non-white, unprepared, diversity, etc., to “Equity-minded” terms: such as underserved, impoverished, Black/African American, Latinx, and stating a particular race, ethnicity, or country of origin such as “Japanese American” and “Chinese American,” rather than aggregating students into large groups.

- We need to use data to advance equity by de-aggregating it, because different student populations face different challenges posed by the varying structures, policies, and biases of our university, colleges, faculty, advisors, etc. We need to reach out to different networks than we have historically done so in order to expand applicant pools, and encourage people to apply based on their potential. We need to enhance recruitment so that racialized minorities should be encouraged to apply even if they don’t meet all criteria. We need real intention to broaden our horizons and identify what obstacles we can remove to help impact change in the race, ethnicity and gender of applicants.

CampusParc, Traffic & Transportation Updates – Beth Snoke, Sarah Blouch, Matt Burgdorf, & Kimberly Moss (9:30 – 10:15 a.m.)

- Want to create a seamless, accessible, sustainable, effective, and safe plan for transportation around the university. There are 7 recommendations to the 3 initiatives, although not prioritized:
  1. Create demand-responsive zones and variable parking pricing. There are 36,000 spaces on campus and at peak there are approx. 7,000 available, whose location is less desirable, especially north of Columbus campus. A goal is to optimize the parking we have. Adjusting prices can affect location choice, but it will take data collection and time for analysis to make recommendations and decisions on variable pricing. This will put the price back in the power of the driver, rather than current system which is very limited and tied to the kind of position one holds.
  2. Designate funding to support transportation alternatives, be that by buses, scooters, etc.
3. Leverage COTA service to reduce parking demand and congestion. New proposed routes will enhance transportation times, link popular destinations, create shared mass transit stops, and reduce # of mass transit stops.

4. Streamline CABS service to reduce reliance on cars. This may include a ride-sharing company for smaller vehicles than buses and allows for expansion of service times and service areas.

5. Plan for long-term, robust transit network. This will provide more safety for scooters and pedestrian.

6. Build bicycle/shared mobility network for all ages and abilities. The Buckeye Bike Hub, located at the Northwest corner of the RPAC, helps repairs students’ and employees’ bikes, and has a small store. Some streets may be considered for closure to vehicles during peak hours to protect safety of pedestrians and scooters.

7. Expand campus walking core. This includes designating particular pick-up and drop-off zones for ride sharing vehicles.

• What are USAC members’ thoughts on 3 key initiatives?
  1. Seamless campus transportation and parking experience;
  2. Transit initiatives; and
  3. Walk/Bike/Shared mobility infrastructure initiatives.

• The pervasiveness of telework has reduced parking congestion recently, while safe, physical distancing has also reduced the # of bus riders from 60-65 riders to just 19. No changes to parking fees will occur within the next year. For infrequent visitors, the purchase of a daily pass is most economical at this time.

Staff Senator Updates (10:15 - 10:30 a.m.) – Tom Gessells (OSU Health Plan), Lisa Mayhugh (COE), Courtney Sanders (OCIO), Alex Thomas (COE), and Wil Turner (AD & Advancement).

- Tom reported that University Senate meetings continued through the past summer, which is unusual, because of the pandemic. A series of conversations on racial justice has also occurred with a focus on teaching, and more.

- Alex Thomas mentioned that discussions and decisions on pass/non-pass course grades has occurred for both Spring and Fall Semesters 2020 due to the pandemic. A different approach may be proposed and determined for Spring Semester 2021.

- Tom added that Senate Structure will be examined this year. There are 19 committees, and 6 have no staff representation. Tom is involved in the ad hoc review committee. A consideration is whether we want staff representation on all committees, or do we want to choose to be strategic in asking for more staff representation? Another consideration is whether committees should change, including adding new ones or terminating ineffectual ones? The committee’s goal is to have recommendations before April 2021, and any structural changes will go to the University Board of Trustees for consideration thereafter. The Staff Senators welcome any feedback on how things are or are not working now.

Items for Group Discussion

Adjournment 10:32 a.m.