University Staff Advisory Committee

USAC Annual Retreat
Wednesday, August 11th, 2021
8:30am – 4:00pm
Location: Biomedical Research Tower, Room 115

Invited:

- All 2021-2022 USAC Members

In Attendance:
Steven Loborec, Debbie Pond, Emily Kelley, Laurel Van Dromme, Justin Lahmers, Drew Miller, Annie Bingman, Tina Bogac, Patrick Weeks, Casey Henceroth, Holly Davis, Jason Homan, Shelby Dawkins, Kynthia Droesch, Margaret Nevekar, Randall McKenzie, Allison Jones, Courtney Gandy, Danielle Jennings, Stacey Houser, Jennifer Elliott, Tracey Boggs, AnnaBell Kinsel, Amy Jo Baughman

Agenda Topics

- Breakfast / Arrival 8:30 – 9:00am All
- Welcome and Introductions 9:00 – 9:10am Steven Loborec
- Ice Breaker 9:10 – 10:00am
- OUTDOOR BREAK 10:00 – 10:30am
- REACH Training 10:30 – noon Matt Moore-Waitkus
- Lunch / Pictures noon – 1:00pm
- Treasure Hunt (outdoors) 1:00 – 2:00pm
- 2021-2022 USAC Priorities 2:00 – 2:30pm Poll Everywhere
  - What is the biggest issue or priority for staff advocacy this year?
  - Trends
    - Flexible work
    - Winter Recess
    - Career Roadmap
    - Mental Health
    - DEI Centralization
    - Pay equity
    - Staff appreciation
    - Return to campus
- Staff Ombudsperson
- Career advising
- Staff morale
- High turnover/retention
- Workday training and job aids
- Workday system functionality
- Professional development

  - Voted top priorities:
    1. Flex work arrangements
    2. Pay equity
    3. High turnover/Retention
    4. Career Roadmap
    5. Winter Recess
    6. DEI
    7. Return to campus
    8. Staff morale
    9. Merit pay
    10. Mental Health
    11. Staff Ombudsperson
    12. Staff Appreciation
    13. Workday system functionality
    14. Professional development
    15. Workday training/job aids
    16. Career Advising

  - How do we decide what to focus on?
    - Locus of control (for example: how much can we impact flex work?)
    - 80/20 rule
    - Low-hanging fruit
    - Consider some ideas together

  - Priority for USAC: Building relationships with new senior leaders

- Sub-Committee Breakouts 2:30 – 3:30pm
  - Considering our new top priorities, what work do we want to accomplish in our subcommittees? New things to start? Old things to stop doing?

- Sub-Committee Report-Out 3:30 – 3:55pm Sub-Committee Leads
  - Outreach & Engagement
    - Continue Leadership Conversation Series – maybe add a conversation with the new provost; this series gives staff an opportunity to engage with senior leaders
    - Continue outreach directly to regional and local SACs – focus this year on gathering feedback from SACs to share with USAC and senior leaders
    - Continue to refine wellness outreach and find meaningful ways to engage with staff – focus on mental health and expand work with BeKind program
    - Coordinate with other subcommittees on their priorities
    - 3 questions to ask every time we have engagement with staff to begin building a data set
o Governance
  ▪ Focused on internal USAC management
  ▪ New: Staff Senator Application Process – change election timing (from July to June); in-person interviews; more simple interview questions; scoring changes
  ▪ Assess external committees – are these all still relevant to have a USAC rep?
  ▪ Change rubric for SCDG
  ▪ USAC meetings: more discussion with senior leader instead of just report-outs
  ▪ More engagement with President’s Office as appointees of president

o Inclusive Excellence
  ▪ The top initiatives confirm what they want to work on this year
    ▪ Alignment – one localized place for staff to see DEI resources; a lot of silos across the organization
    ▪ Education – more easily accessible trainings for staff
    ▪ Liaise with other subcommittees to ensure all USAC activities have a DEI lens

o Staff Affairs
  ▪ Building relationship with new HR VP – many initiatives are HR related
  ▪ Winter Recess – is this still a viable proposal? Determine early to not waste time, if it is no longer viable.
  ▪ Pay equity/flex work/career roadmap – consistent evaluation of positions; consideration of remote work ability per position.
  ▪ Retention – exit interview survey

o Comments or questions from the group?
  ▪ Will there be a faculty and staff tailgate this year? Steven says no. HR not hosting the tailgate this year. Perception is that it is only ok to gather for the benefit of the university, but not to appreciate staff. Steven meeting with the president, provost, and HR VP to share perspectives.
  ▪ Hoping to have more collaboration with the President’s Office this year. Advocating to bring back the annual USAC lunch with the President.
  ▪ Steven is excited about the new HR SVP – Texas A&M had a staff committee like us. President Johnson came from a university where a group like us didn’t exist.
  ▪ The Winter Recess discussion at annual report meeting made it seem like the major hurdle to the initiative was financial. However, when Steven & Laurel met with Mike Papadakis, there doesn’t seem to be any financial concerns. Biggest issue will be what does the organization do for WMC and other essential staff. We are encouraging leaders to think about it like the holidays we already have. Not all WMC employees are essential workers. Winter Recess could be a potential quick win for new leaders trying to gain support. Juneteenth proves that we can pivot on short notice.
  ▪ Upcoming items for business meetings:
    ▪ Career Roadmap – new updated timeline to complete within this FY. Education component, presentation, and Q&A at our next meeting.
• Steven and Laurel are having bi-monthly meetings with PPCW regarding pay equity.
• Steven would like our business meetings focused more in line with our initiatives. Let Steven know if there are groups across campus that you would like to hear from.

• **Wrap-Up** 3:55 – 4:00pm  Steven Loborec

  OPTIONAL EVENT FOR THOSE WHO CAN MAKE IT

• **Happy Hour** 4:15 – 5:30pm  Everyone is invited!
  Location TBD – High Street