UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Business Meeting
Minutes
September 22, 2021
Microsoft Teams
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

In Attendance:
Steven Loborec, Laurel Van Dromme, Debbie Pond, Emily Kelley, Randall McKenzie, Justin Lahmers, Faith Kline, Stacey Houser, Holly Davis, Kynthia Droesch, Sherri Hall, Annie Bingman, Jennifer Elliott, Courtney Gandy, Tina Bogac, Elizabeth Hosket, Drew Miller, Shelby Dawkins, Casey Henceroth, Jason Homan, Allison Jones, Margaret Nevrekar, Pasha Sergeev, Sloane Trusso.

Call to Order
Adoption of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Meetings’ Minutes September 8, 2021

Vote to activate alternate USAC member

• Voting to activate #1 alternate to fill vacancy left by Danielle Jennings (second-year member) departure from the university. Alternate was identified during new member interviews in the spring. Also voting to activate #2 alternate, if #1 declines offer to join USAC.
• Vote carries to offer role to #1 alternate and proceed to #2 if #1 declines.
• Alternate automatically fills subcommittee role that Danielle was filling (IE).
• Downside of being an alternate is not being able to choose subcommittee and not getting to complete a full three-year term.
• Steven will contact #1 alternate and #2, as needed.
• If both decline, we will reconvene at next meeting and proceed based on bylaws.

Executive Committee Reports
Chair:

• Thank you, Justin, for organizing social event for new members at VC last night!
• Steven and Laurel had first in-person meeting with Jeff Risinger yesterday.
  o Jeff will be a strong advocate for staff and close partner with USAC. He had a staff council at Texas A&M, like USAC. Jeff has great expectations for our relationship. He was in close contact with our counterpart at A&M and expects the same for OSU.
  o Steven, Laurel, and Jeff were able to discuss most of the HR issues that USAC is tackling – Jeff was open to all the ideas presented and excited to work on them. He is a proponent of winter recess. He is interested in making WMC salaries available to university staff, if not the public, like university salaries.
  o Jeff is working to make things better and simpler for employees. He believes flexible work should be the default and employees should only have to submit an agreement if they don’t want flex work.
  o Jeff believes Career Roadmap doesn’t go farther enough and is more of a compensation model. Staff need a better understanding of how to move from one position to another – learn, grow, and develop.
Jeff is very interested in the rate of internal promotion at OSU. He is going to see what he can do regarding including mental health in sick leave policy. A lot of the issues we are addressing seem like internal changes that can be made and aren’t impacted by laws or regulations. Working with Jeff’s assistant to find a time to get him at a USAC business meeting. He is also open to a conversation or town hall event (maybe in December before Career Roadmap launch).

At Texas A&M, staff had weekly wellness release time of 90 minutes to use as they saw fit. No need to track time off for this.

Jeff received a report from an ad-hoc group from University Senate Steering Committee that looked at the mitigating rate for employees participating in Alternative Retirement Plans. For faculty and staff that participate in ARP, there is a percentage that goes into OPERS or STRS state plan to help with harm the ARP could cause to the state plan. Economics professors claimed there is no sound logic to the purpose or the amount of the mitigating rate. Group made some suggestions and proposals to change or eliminate the rate. Report went to faculty council and Jeff’s office but was heavily focused on faculty. Steven and Laurel made sure that Jeff knows this also affects staff. Drew Miller asked if there will be backpay if rate is reduced or eliminated? This has yet to be determined but was a recommendation of the group.

Steven and Laurel met with Provost Dr. Melissa Gilliam during her first week on campus.

- Shared the size and impact of staff at OSU. Both agree she seems like a staff advocate.
- Dr. Gilliam is really interested in the culture survey that may come out and in enhancing DEI initiatives.
- Steven and Laurel asked that staff be included in search committees for senior leader positions across the organization.
- Also suggested that messages from the Office of Academic Affairs mention staff. Directly speaking to the staff community will encourage engagement and support.

Steven and Laurel met with JR Blackburn and Sarah Bohman from the Office of the President.

- Level-setting meeting. JR and Sarah expressed that their office has an interest in getting back to business as usual. What are our expectations and desires to engage with the president? Annual lunch, holiday party, annual report-out, etc.
- Investiture week – Staff Wellness Event. Tuesday, November 16th at 8:30. Hopefully, RPAC but location is TBD. We will be partnering with OCWO, BWI, and YP4H. Staff can participate in wellness activities, like meditation, stretching and light activity. Giveaways like food, exercise bands, smoothies. Steven and Laurel asked Jeff Risinger to message that this is paid time, no need to take leave. Jay Kasey and A&P will be providing buses across campus to shuttle people to RPAC. The goal is to make this easy and fun for staff to attend. There will be a virtual option for remote workers and regional campuses (Zoom webinar format). USAC will have a table as an event sponsor.
- Winter Recess discussion – Question from Sherri Hall: Will winter recess apply to WMC as well as university? Steven’s proposal is to treat winter
recess like other university holidays – those that are “essential” but don’t work holidays would also get off winter recess. But acknowledge that there are people at WMC and University that will have to work during the recess. The goal is to come up with a compensatory mechanism to reward those staff. How do we get to yes without a one-size fits all solution? Winter Recess would be the days between Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve that we don’t already have off. Three- or four-day period, depending on the year.

- Two university policies open for feedback. Please review and submit feedback. This is the best way to affect changes in policies.

**Chair Elect:**
- Laurel and Stacey Houser met with Jay Kasey and Amy Burgess from Administration & Planning
  - Jay mentioned that the organization can make things work for Winter Recess because of what we learned from the pandemic and energy use. A&P has over 1,000 employees of all types. Nothing Jay has heard about winter recess couldn’t be handled in A&P. Good sign for it to work for the rest of the organization.
  - Move from exit interviews with diversity staff to retention interviews.
- Steven sent an invite to join the Hit the Road challenge and join the USAC team, if interested.

**Communications:**
- Staff Affairs will be highlighted in the November newsletter. Picture and blurb about subcommittee work and past accomplishments.

**Secretary/Treasurer:**
- Polos – waiting for an estimate from Proforma.
- Are there swag items that we should purchase for the investiture wellness event? Send Emily any ideas! Ideas from the meeting chat:
  - Pens
  - Hand sanitizer
  - Reusable color-changing straws
  - Cutting boards
  - Exercise bands
  - Sunscreen pens

**Subcommittee Reports**

**Inclusive Excellence (IE):**
- Putting together an internal document to ensure work done by USAC is as equitable as possible and included in all we do. I&E subcommittee members will be reaching out to the other subcommittees to update and ask for help.

**Governance:**
- Ohio Union Council committee opening - please apply if interested!
  - Four meetings per year
  - Deadline to submit is today but will extend if no applicants.
    - [https://ohiounion.osu.edu/about_us/ohio_union_council/](https://ohiounion.osu.edu/about_us/ohio_union_council/)
- Senate Diversity committee opening – voting to begin soon.
  - [https://senate.osu.edu/diversity-committee](https://senate.osu.edu/diversity-committee)
Outreach & Engagement (O&E):
- Continuing meetings with local and regional SACs. The Career Roadmap team approached USAC about holding a Career Roadmap conversation event, probably in December. Should this be in addition to, or in the place of, the regular HR conversation event typically held in the fall?

Staff Affairs (SA):
- Tina Bogac met with Kim Lambert from OHR Recruiting to talk about staff turnover, retention, and morale. Kim will be a good partner and is super excited that USAC is prioritizing this. Kim is meeting with Jeff Risinger on Friday. Kim echoed that Jeff is staff-centric and that he is a big proponent of having staff work remotely.
- Kim is also reaching out to the HR analytics department to have them gather data on turnover and retention by position, unit, demographics, etc. Kim expressed that in the past the exit interviews being conducted were not useful. Data wasn’t being collected in a central repository. Tina suggested we could create an exit interview template. Kim will investigate Workday to see if there is an exit interview template in the system. Kim and Tina also discussed 30-60-90-day retention interviews for new employees.

Task Forces

OHR Liaison Report

Items for Informational Purposes

Biology & Stretch Break – Debbie Pond (9:40-9:50)

Items for Group Discussion

Adjournment 10:08 a.m.