UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Business Meeting
Minutes
April 13, 2022
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, Kynthia Droesch, Sherri Hall, Annie Bingman, Trisha Ritter, Jennifer Elliott, Courtney Gandy, Tina Bogac, Patrick Weeks, Elizabeth Hosket, Drew Miller, Tracey Boggs, Shelby Dawkins, Casey Henceroth, Jason Homan, Allison Jones, AnnaBell Kinsel, Margaret Nevrekar, Sloane Trusso, Ana Casado, and Brandon Gibbs.

Call to Order 8:31
Adoption of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Meetings’ Minutes  March 23, 2022

Executive Committee Reports
Chair:
• Laurel and Steven met with Dr. Jeff Risinger in-person last week.
  o Prior to the meeting, they submitted the official proposal to make Winter Recess permanent to Jeff. The proposal is currently working its way thru the President’s Cabinet. Our proposal includes WMC staff, where appropriate. The proposal must ultimately be voted on and approved by the Board of Trustees. Tina Bogac asked if the decision is made to include WMC staff, does that decision also have to be approved by the WMC board of trustees? Steven responded that the WMC board is a subgroup of the University’s Board, so this proposal wouldn’t require an official action of the WMC board.
  o Also discussed with Jeff the proposal to add mental health to the sick leave policy. This proposal does not require approval from the Board of Trustees.
• Steven and Laurel attended the annual James F. Patterson Land-Grant University Lecture yesterday. It was a great networking opportunity to interact with senior leaders and trustees.
• WMC Search Committee has identified finalists that are now being vetted by the President’s Office.

Chair Elect:
• No updates given due to time constraints.

Communications:
• No updates given due to time constraints.

Secretary/Treasurer:
• No updates given due to time constraints.

Subcommittee Reports
Inclusive Excellence (IE):
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**Governance:**
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**Outreach & Engagement (O&E):**
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**Staff Affairs (SA):**
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**Task Forces**
**Communications:**
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**OHR Liaison Report**
• No updates given due to time constraints.

**Items for Informational Purposes**
**USAC Executive Committee Elections** – 8:30-9:15 – Sherri Hall and Faith Kline
• Results
  o Chair-Elect: Deborah Pond
  o Secretary/Treasurer: Allison Jones

**New Member Slate Approval** – 9:15-9:30 – Laurel Van Dromme
• Laurel shared details on the entire process, including USAC members that helped with info sessions, applications evaluation, and interview process.
• General Applicant Pool
  o 15 applicants
  o We can accept 10 new members for the next cohort. Recommending 3 alternates.
  o IE Subcommittee will share demographic details in the future, along with that of current USAC membership.
• Group approved the new member slate for the 2022-2025 cohort with 24 yea votes.
• Laurel will now work with the Office of the President to present the slate and get approval letters sent to the accepted applicants.

**Campus Reactivation Survey Data and Recommendations** – 9:30-9:45 – Stacey Houser
• This conversation will happen at a later meeting.

**Bio Break** – 9:55-10:00

**Conversation with Dr. Shivers** – 10:00-10:30 – Dr. Melissa Shivers
• Began work at Ohio State at the very beginning of the pandemic.
• Reframed the student experience to take into account the staff experience which ultimately affects the student experience. Dr. Shivers aspires to create the “Iconic Ohio State Experience” for students AND staff.
• Equally important to focus on staff in Student Life as the students. These initiatives were started before the “Great Resignation.” COVID has allowed Student Life to adapt and change, leading to a more positive experience for staff.
Six or seven administrative vacancies when Dr. Shivers started. Was able to see it as an opportunity. Organizational chart is more circular with intersecting parts. Everyone plays key roles in all parts of the student experience. The structure was informed by data, including 26 listening sessions for staff or online and paper surveys. Reorganized around: Health and Well Being, Belonging and Inclusion, Administrative Excellence, Academic Partnership and Career Success, Residential Experience, and Student Engagement and Support.

Also needed to think bigger – updated the vision statement. New vision statement: “To be the premier student affairs division in the country; student- and staff-centered with cross-cutting experiential learning and a dedication to being inclusive and equity-minded. Staff played a huge part in shaping the vision statement.”

Also added a Belonging and Inclusion statement for staff which states: “As a premier student affairs division, The Ohio State University Office of Student Life values and fosters a campus culture that affirms the dignity of every student and staff member and their unique backgrounds, identities and experience. Our commitment is demonstrated through our honoring of Indigenous lands, creations of accessible, engaging and equity-minded experience, and the promotion of civic engagement in a global society. Our work is grounded in appreciation, support, connection and care, and we cultivate personal and professional skills that nurture a sense of belonging, grow empathy and compassion for others, and contribute to positive social change.”

Created a different tagline: Engage. Learn. Thrive.

Four culture commitments: Appreciation, Support, Connection, and Care. These are ways to ensure we are creating community in the Office of Student Life. The first time the team was asked about the culture commitments, a staff member stated that because of remote work, this was the first time the employee didn’t have to choose between work and family. We need to lead with remote-first work which will look different for all units. Steven asked how this idea is received with colleagues on President’s Cabinet. Dr. Shivers responded that she doesn’t know if it has shifted culture, but if Student Life can do remote work, anyone can! Student Life is one of the most forward-facing units on campus. Forward-facing staff were asked to determine what remote work looks like for them and then students were surveyed to see if they are still supported. Dr. Shivers has shared with the President’s Cabinet the benefits that Student Life staff have received and the good feedback. Staff are happy!

Scarlet & Great Gatherings – 1,100 fulltime staff in Student Life. It’s impossible to interact with all of them every day. The gatherings are all-team meetings that happen monthly or every other month for staff to hear from Dr. Shivers. It’s a time to build community and see how the unit is doing within the culture commitments.

Today’s Update is an email sent daily. It started during the pandemic as a way to give updates on the pandemic but has evolved as a communication tool. It was originally a boiled down version of the communications from the President’s Office. The update transitioned to 2-3 times per week and an every-Friday email called High Five Friday where staff receive recognition for good work.

All these communications and gatherings include Regional Campus S Student Life staff.

The Your Voice Matters climate survey was sent to all Student Life staff. The response rate was overwhelming. Over 89% respondents agreed that unit was inclusive, but over 20% have experienced harassment or discrimination.

New and upcoming staff programs:
Staff Mentoring Program – now accepting applications for mentors and mentees. This is a way for new staff to learn more about working in Student Life.

- Professional Development Planning
- Annual Belonging and Inclusion Summit – 260 attendees for the first-ever event.
- O-H! What a Year! Celebration Event at the start of Summer.
- Broad-based opportunities to serve and learn.

- Dr. Shivers suggested that the next time she and USAC get together in person, she will treat to a lunch or milkshake at Sloopy’s!!