UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Business Meeting
Minutes
April 27, 2022
Hybrid Meeting - Microsoft
Teams & University Square North
Conference Rm 4010
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

In Attendance:
Laurel Van Dromme, Debbie Pond, Emily Kelley, Randall McKenzie, Justin Lahmers, Stacey Houser, Kynthia Droesch, Sherri Hall, Trisha Ritter, Jennifer Elliott, Courtney Gandy, Tina Bogac, Elizabeth Hosket, Drew Miller, Tracey Boggs, Shelby Dawkins, Casey Henceroth, Allison Jones, Margaret Nevrekar, Sloane Trusso, Ana Casado, and Brandon Gibbs.

Call to Order 8:34
Adoption of the Agenda
Approval of the Previous Meetings’ Minutes  April 13, 2022

Executive Committee Reports
Chair:
- No chair updates due to Steven’s absence.

Chair Elect:
- JR Blackburn will be attending the USAC May 11 mtg, with Jeff Risinger on that day. And we also already have him confirmed to attend a portion of our USAC new Member Orientation on June 22. Laurel is working with his assistant Lynette Arner on booking him regularly for next year’s USAC business meetings.

Communications:
- No updates due to time constraints.

Secretary/Treasurer:
- No updates due to time constraints.

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

Governance:
- Information session for staff senator elections will be held today, April 27 at noon to learn about representing staff on the University Senate. Please join us to hear more about what a staff senator does, what it means to represent staff on the University Senate and details about the USAC review and election process. Register here: https://osu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0ldumpqDkjHTxip1hQqtsv1urnFHj0DHd8G

Outreach & Engagement (O&E):
- No updates due to time constraints.
Staff Affairs (SA):
- No updates due to time constraints.

Task Forces
Communications:
- No updates due to time constraints.

OHR Liaison Report
- No updates due to time constraints.

Items for Informational Purposes

Bullying & Harassment Discussion – Alex Thomas, Staff Senator (8:30-9:50)
- Alex is a member of the University Senate’s ad-hoc committee on Bullying and Harassment.
- University Senate believes this is an issue that needs to be investigated and addressed. Faculty, staff, and student senators and committee members are in broad agreement that we lack clear mechanisms at OSU for dealing with issues of harassment and bullying outside of protected class situations, i.e., “garden variety” harassment and bullying that have nothing to do with gender, sexual orientation, race, veteran status, etc., but rather arise in the course of routine interactions and that may or may not be colored by rank differentials. Protected class issues go through the Office of Institutional Equity.
- The committee is bringing representatives together from staff, students, and faculty to identify what issues are affecting our community.
- The committee has four charges:
  o Examine the issue of non-protected class harassment and bullying among faculty, staff and students at Ohio State and how incidents are currently reported and addressed.
  o Benchmark anti-bullying policies or procedures at other universities.
  o Draft a procedure to address harassment and bullying that may or may not be rule-based, policy-based, or a Code of Conduct.
  o Recommend actions in a consensus report to Steering before the last meeting of AY22.
- Meeting at least every other week. Finding thru exploration process.
- Committee is divided into 2 work groups.
  o Policy Group conducted a review of existing OSU policies for faculty and staff, as well as policies at peer institutions.
  o Listening Session Group – Conducted listening sessions across a broad variety of constituencies at OSU, including:
    ▪ Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs
    ▪ Faculty Advisory Council
    ▪ Human Resources Policy Committee
    ▪ Medical Residents
  o Also met with a number of campus partners, including:
    ▪ Office of Institutional Equity
    ▪ Anti-Hazing Policy Group
    ▪ Council of Deans
- Current suggestions that have been proposed (Note – these are tentative, not final):
  o Leverage current resources
  o Create a website
  o Enhance roles and responsibilities language to rule 3335-5-01
Create a policy
- Add learning opportunities re: the learning environment (perhaps through the Drake Institute)
- Assess adding language about civility to POA and APT documents
- Create trainings for managers and supervisors re: managing difficult conversations and addressing incivility or bullying.

- **Listening session with USAC members:**
  - What is the scope of the problem of non-protected class bullying and harassment as you understand it in your role? What is the experience you have had or seen at OSU?
    - Debbie responded that we have heard about employees being told not to deny Career Roadmap – feel pressure to accept.
    - Shelby Dawkins added the talking down to or degrading the work of individuals within the hospital that fill those entry level jobs that keep the hospital functioning.
    - Tina Bogac mentioned that many graduate students in labs don’t follow safety protocols because they feel pressure from PIs to get things done quickly. The graduate students feel like the PIs control their destiny and if they do not do things their way, the graduate students won’t get their PhD.
    - Laurel asked if this could also apply to research staff who are under certain PIs?
    - Brandon Gibbs stated that the Employee & Labor Relations team hears from staff about feeling bullied and harassed. The difficulty is that bullying & harassment can be subjective. Brandon is hopeful that this committee and ELR can figure out how to better define the terms around bullying and harassment to better help staff understand what they are experiencing.
    - Alex agreed that it is subjective. That has been one of the interesting challenges to define what or what it not bullying. We have all worked with people who are just not pleasant to work with, but it’s not bullying. Every issue is serious, but where are the cases that are impeding the employee from doing the work they are hired to do?
    - Justin Lahmers responded that we should stop rewarding personnel that don’t reflect the shared values at the university. He believes that there is a lot of promotion of employees that don’t share the university’s values.
    - Tina Bogac commented that one way to build that in is to do more 360 evaluations. Shelby Dawkins commented that there are not enough units doing 360 reviews. That would create a more complete review of an employee’s work. The review should be a random selection of colleagues.
  - How are these issues currently reported and addressed? How and to whom are they reported and addressed? When an issue occurs what are the next steps?
    - Shelby Dawkins stated that within the hospital, it is up to the Supervisor or Manager to handle it as they see fit. Brandon added that Shelby is correct, and you would go to your direct supervisor, assuming the harassment is not coming from your supervisor. The supervisor then sets up a conversation between the employees or communicates with the other person’s manager. Employees can also go directly to HR, especially if the person doing the bullying is their manager. The more specific the employee can be, the better when addressing the bully.
    - Ana Casado added that the process is broken. If you make a report to HR, HR turns around and tells the person your complaint is about and now you face retaliation that is very difficult to prove. In my case, a previous supervisor was horribly abusive to many of their direct reports.
and reporting only made it worse. She added that 17 people left because of this manager, and one of them was a tenured professor.

- Elizabeth Hosket commented that there is a misconduct training we are required to complete providing the resources needed to avoid the peer pressure of direct leadership. She knows of someone who was sexually harassed and HR was wonderful about making arrangements to protect this person during the investigation process and reassigning the person after proper protocols were taken.

- Brandon responded that if it is the manager been accused, HR is supposed to talk to the manager’s manager. ELR is often going to manager’s manager to address the issue.

- Ana Casado added that she understands the harasser has to be notified but the method needs to be changed. And in the meantime, how is the employee protected?

- Elizabeth Hosket added that she thinks bullying is more difficult than harassment due to the defining margins of what is bullying and what is harassment. That does lead to different actions from HR.

- Tina Bogac commented that people who are being harassed want it to stop and the only way to stop it is to address it, which can make it worse. Reporting in Administration & Planning often happens anonymously, which is very hard to follow-up with. Then the person feels unheard. The only way to fix it is to address it. Tina suggested OSU highlight what ELR does vs HR. Laurel Van Dromme added that it would be helpful to have a communications campaign with sample reports that could be made public. Laurel agrees we need to highlight more of what ELR does.

- Courtney Gandy commented that she has had personal experience with harassment and has attempted to make a report, but it is not as easy as it sounds. She has had colleagues who have gone to ELR and are told that it is not a protected class, so nothing can be done. It is an embarrassing situation and confidentiality is not necessarily guaranteed. There is concern about reporting affecting your career and having to leave the university. Courtney is a huge advocate for an impartial reporting line. She believes a lot of people are not reporting, but instead just leaving their positions or the institution. She has had a lot of colleagues leave the institution because of this.

- Laurel commented that these difficult situations can affect mental and physical health and well-being.

- Deb Pond stated that ELR is great but general HR service partners in the units are often adversarial.

- Brandon Gibbs commented that if executed, the reporting process should work. If there is retaliation, there will be consequences. Somewhere in the process, something is missing. Where in the cycle are things falling apart? Is there a lack of support in HR or the supervisor of the supervisor? HR leadership needs to commit to making it work. ELR is happy to plug into the situation to make sure the process is working.

- Tina Bogac asked what are the expectations when someone files a complaint? Where did it miss the mark?

- Courtney Gandy responded that at the base level she wanted to be heard and that did not happen. It felt like she was met with hostility from HR and was being placated. She was not being treated as a professional with a concern. Courtney had proposed 360 reviews at the regional campus where she formerly worked, and it was met with laughs
and thoughts that staff would be unreasonable in their reviews of their managers.

- Alex Thomas added that even outside of OSU, going to HR isn’t painted as a positive experience.
- Kynthia Droesch commented that Career Roadmap has hurt the reputation of HR. It has become harder to know who to talk to about issues. Jeff Risinger seems like someone that would listen, but we don’t see a trickle down to the units.
- Ana Casado added that it might also be that the HR business partners are so overworked that they don’t have time to care.
- Laurel Van Dromme commented that we can present these comments to Jeff before the next business meeting he attends. She added that it will take time for the culture to trickle down from Jeff.
- Brandon Gibbs added that what is needed is specific information. Nothing can be fixed without understanding the specific experiences and details – dates, times, etc. Jeff needs the specifics to address the leaders and issues. Generalizations are fine, but do not expect change without specific examples. Be specific about what the problems are! This applies to the harassment & bullying discussion as well. These situations can’t be addressed without specific detail.
- Elizabeth Hosket asked if there is a template of what specifics would ideally be needed? She also asked if Brandon could send a list of confidential event reporting contacts.
- Brandon Gibbs submitted this link to the Office of University Compliance and Integrity to the chat: https://compliance.osu.edu/concern-reporting.html EthicsPoint line is the anonymous reporting line. There are better chance of redress if specific info is submitted. There is a retaliation policy and there will be consequences for retaliation.
- Deb Pond added that anonymous reporting can be highlighted in the next USAC newsletter.
- Laurel Van Dromme asked USAC members to share this link with their networks. We will add this to the agenda for the Staff Leaders Retreat for further distribution.
- Alex stated that USAC members are welcome to email him directly with any further comments about this topic: thomas.2994@osu.edu

Bio Break (9:50-9:55)

USAC Advocacy – Full Committee (9:55-10:30)

- Background for the discussion: The Governance Subcommittee has been talking over the past couple months about how best to engage all USAC members in advocacy, not just meetings that the Chair & Chair-Elect have with senior leaders.
- What does staff advocacy mean to you?
  - Justin Lahmers responded that it is making leaders aware of specific issues and how they impact staff.
  - Kynthia Droesch added that it is making leaders aware that staff is as valuable as students and faculty.
  - Jen Elliott commented that it is understanding what is important to staff.
  - Allison Jones stated that she sees advocacy as being a voice for people who don’t have a voice. Even if USAC can’t hold people accountable, we can shine a light on things that are happening.
  - Laurel Van Dromme mentioned that there is an annual scorecard for USAC initiatives. Laurel and Jen Elliott have updated it to make a simplified version that allows us to better track issues, big and small.
• Where can staff have the most impact? Where can USAC have the most impact for staff?
  o Tina Bogac commented that we can encourage staff to speak up and participate in the process. Be a part of new processes happening in your department. Staff are the people that will be doing the work – don’t wait to be asked for feedback. Volunteer to participate in the creation of the process. Deb Pond agreed with Tina and shared the example of starting the College of Medicine Staff Advisory Committee.
  o Laurel Van Dromme cited the example regarding emergency weather decisions. Laurel will be following up with Bob Anderson et al to follow up on our conversation. If other USAC members would like to be involved, please contact Laurel. Laurel intends to ask if the suggestions made at the meeting have been followed up on. Hold the leaders accountable for what they said they would do.

• What will help us evolve to achieve greater advocacy across all USAC members?
  o Deb Pond commented that it is leadership buy-in. Jeff Risinger is saying we are thought partners with him. We need other leaders to know we can be that for them as well.
  o Elizabeth Hosket commented that there is certain leadership with which we seem to have a greater connection. Examples/Outcomes: Winter Break, Jeff R., etc. Yet, there seems to be a great disconnect in many other arenas.

• What are the gaps that USAC has regarding advocacy?
  o Kynthia Droesch answered that it is awareness – staff even knowing what USAC is. Awareness with staff and with senior leaders.
  o Elizabeth Hosket agreed that our biggest obstacle is getting the word out. COVID has caused difficulty in hosting in-person opportunities, but we should set a goal for 2022-2023 for more monthly visual opportunities.
  o Courtney Gandy added that we can better engage with staff about what the issues are and better show that we doing something about the issues.
  o Laurel Van Dromme added that if we do a monthly review of USAC projects and initiatives, we should share it on the website and social media to show that we are being responsive. If we do a staff survey, we need to show the results.
  o Tina Bogac added that we could be a clearinghouse of good stuff that is happening across the organization. How are other units sharing success? Tina and Stacey Houser are reaching back out to Dr. Shivers to see how Student Life is recognizing staff and will share that info with the rest of the organization.
  o Deb Pond commented that maybe we could make a video of ways to better engage staff and highlight what good things are happening in other units.
  o Kynthia Droesch commented that she liked the idea of adding a financial incentive to the Staff Spotlight award. Jeff Risinger seemed to like the idea. Laurel will follow-up with Jeff about the idea.

• What could you do better to advocate for staff personally?
  o Elizabeth Hosket commented that she would devote 1-2 hours of in-person or online advocacy per week.

• What are the obstacles that are keeping us from doing what we want/need?
  o The group agreed that the website is a current obstacle, but the new platform will help. The structure of the current platform is not conducive to advocacy and engagement.

• What can USAC influence?
  o Deb Pond commented that we can market other opportunities across campus that are open to all staff.
  o Elizabeth Hosket believes we can influence fairness, wellness, leave, and employee satisfaction.
  o The group suggested we make the USAC newsletter easier to join. Can we make the newsletter automatically go to all staff and not have to be opt-in?
Casey Henchoth as if USAC could be introduced to new employees at new staff orientation. Emily Kelley responded that there is a USAC video welcoming staff and explaining USAC’s role that is shown to new employees. However, the video needs to be updated and Laurel is going to do that soon. Emily had been volunteering as a current employee panelist for the orientation but is no longer able to participate because of a scheduling conflict. If USAC members would like to be in the pool of panelists, email Veronica Herrera.83 and Steven Mentz.3.

Tracey Boggs commented that on her former team she used give USAC updates in her team meetings. She has changed roles and there are no USAC representatives on her new team so she will continue sharing updates with her new team as well.

The group asked about employees moving from A&P to CCS due to Career Roadmap and if this would affect their parking options for this year. Laurel shared information from Pam Doseck, who now oversees Benefits & Compensation.

- There will be no impact for the 2022-2023 academic year (new permits go into effect on 8/1/22 and Career Roadmap changes will not occur until 11/2022 – so no job family changes will be “recognized” by CampusParc until the purchase process takes place for the 2023 – 2024 year)
- Those who have moved to CCS will lose “A” permit eligibility, but anyone may apply for an upgrade/downgrade, if needed (CampusParc controls total availability of passes)
- Employees are encouraged to seek additional information directly from CampusParc https://osu.campusparc.com/get-a-permit/upgrade-downgrade-program/ or contact them with questions

How do we expand engagement?

- Deb Pond suggested partnering with other groups and co-sponsoring events. For example, working with ODI.
- Tina Bogac added that units have townhall meetings – could a USAC representative present at one of these meetings? Present a high-level overview of USAC and what we are working on.
- Elizabeth Hosket suggested pop-up stations at the Union, in the Oval, at the library, by onsite restaurants at lunchtime, etc.
- Deb Pond added that there is a Buckeye Path to Wellness walk on the Oval on May 4th from 11:00-1:00. Could USAC potentially have a table set up to engage with staff and hand out swag. Reach out to Laurel if you would like to participate.
- Laurel Van Dromme added that there is interest in engaging USAC alumni more. Kynthia Droesch added that there could be a survey to 3rd year members asking how they would like to be involved with USAC in the future. Laurel added that she will be having meetings with 1st and 2nd year members, but she should have meetings with the 3rd year members as well to ask how they would like to continue engaging with USAC.
- Tina Bogac asked if there could be an annual retreat with current and alumni members to share what USAC is working on? Emily Kelley commented that maybe alumni could come for just the last part of the retreat.
- Deb Pond asked if alumni members could be peer mentors to current members?

Items for Group Discussion

Adjournment 10:30 a.m.