



University Staff Advisory Council

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

[Zoom Link](#)

Miriam Blackmon, Ashley Blount, Amanda Boyd, Matt Dewald, Michael Dickerson, Elizabeth Donaldson, Dominique Evans, Kirby Ferguson, Stephanie Fillman, Meghan Harris, Ingrid Lassardo, Crista Lembeck, Erin Lowry, Yahneet Morton, Liz Prilliman, Mirinda McCants, Jess Oliver, Olivia Rosenblum, John Shines, Mary Wheaton, Justin Woodson, Mina Zatelli, Guests: Elizabeth Outka, and Lidia Radi.

1. Call to Order, Jess Oliver

2. Featured Speaker: Elizabeth Outka and Lidia Radi co-organizers of the Faculty & Staff Symposium

Purpose: Planned a one-day symposium called “Intersections” on Friday, September 18. The goal was to outline the event’s structure, formats, submission process, deadlines, and next steps while making sure the day invites broad participation and is sustainable for staff.

Event details and schedule: The symposium will be held Friday, September 18, with session blocks at 9:00–10:15 AM, 10:30–11:45 AM, and 1:30–2:45 PM, aiming for programming that roughly covers 9:00 AM–5:00 PM. The event will follow the familiar single-day format from past years. All previous programs have been online, and we’re coordinating so each office can join in.

Theme: “Intersections” captures how we live in a hyper-connected yet often disconnected world. We’re looking for submissions that treat intersections as moments of encounter, places where different perspectives, disciplines, communities, and ideas cross paths to spark dialogue and collaboration. Projects you do outside the university, like work involving the dining hall, campus safety, food systems, or other community-facing areas, are absolutely welcome.

Formats and submissions: They will accept four formats: panels, roundtables, poster sessions, and forums. Teams are encouraged to submit collaboratively, and proposals should include representation from multiple groups or constituents when possible. Each submission should include a short abstract that explains the idea, participants, format, and how it connects to the theme. If you’re unsure about fit or format, email your idea or fill out the proposal form for guidance. Final deadline to apply is June 8.

Logistics and future approach: Mini-symposia were great, but took a lot of work, so they are moving to a bigger symposium every other year as a more manageable model. They are also talking with the provost’s office to make sure offices can attend and participate.

Session chairs: They will put out a separate call soon for staff to chair sessions. Chairs will read a short abstract for each participant, introduce speakers (name and title), keep time, and run the Q&A. No special subject-matter expertise is needed; just help keep things moving.

Next steps: The organizing team will publish the call for proposals (with the form link and contact email) soon, so folks have time before the June 8 deadline. The call for session chairs will be released in the near future. They will also accept informal emails with ideas and offer advice to potential applicants.

Closing notes: We'll emphasize cross-constituent submissions and encourage proposals that connect campus operations and community partners. A few action items still need specific owners and deadlines, which should be assigned soon.

3. Chair's Report, Jess Oliver

Spiders in the Know is coming up on May 13, 8:30–11:00 AM in Camp Concert Hall. A new executive committee has been formed.

Next month's speaker will be Chris Henderson, who'll cover Title IX updates. A handout on disability accommodations for faculty, staff, and students will be available. Also note the corporate run is scheduled for June 4th.

4. Treasury Report and Approval of the Minutes, Mina Zatelli

YTD Budget:

Budget: \$5,878

Spent: \$2,839.82

Remaining Balance: \$3,038.18

5. Reports from Committees and Liaisons

- Cort Schneider had no update from the Faculty Senate.
- Miriam Blackmon reported for Planning & Priorities that there are ongoing concerns about salary lines for staff and faculty; the team is still working through financial decisions.
- Jess Oliver stated the Benefits Committee raised senior leadership issues related to prescription coverage with Anthem; their next meeting is April 28.
- Monica is no longer with the university, and we will need to fill that spot on the Campus Plan committee.
- John Shines reported that the Plant Involvement Team has been discussing departmental uniforms and is looking for a new vendor, especially for grounds staff.
- Amanda Boyd reported that the Food Service Involvement Team is dealing with staff restructuring.
- Erin Lowery encouraged everyone to send anything they'd like posted on social channels.
- Justin Woodson and Mina Zatelli had no specific items beyond their roles with Events & Engagement, but reminded staff that the Spiders in the Know event is next month.

- Yahneet confirmed that all nominations are in for the upcoming elections and that nomination emails will be sent to nominees; there were no nominations from Business Affairs and Facilities.

6. Web Submissions (Mirinda)

A few web submissions went up; the first is about the daily connector (RT) that runs from south of the river and will stop near Stoney Point Center. We still need to confirm the exact routing and will post updates when we have them.

The university is working on a fleet and transportation project to refresh vehicles and update the transit program. Details and timelines weren't finalized in the meeting, so we should ask for more info and a point person.

There isn't a hiring freeze, but budgets are tight for some roles. Hiring moves at different speeds, and jobs that have been empty for a while may need their descriptions updated or duties shuffled around — that usually means talking with division or school leadership. Timeline to note: submissions are due by the end of December, and decisions should be made by the end of April for a July 1 start.

Men's basketball funding and pay come from current and past philanthropy. Someone from Athletics or Development should confirm current funding levels or any planned changes.

Staff are welcome to join Canvas bootcamps through the Faculty Hub, and the university is looking into offering staff-only sessions. We should share the bootcamp schedule with staff and let people know if dedicated staff training becomes available.

With no further discussion, the open session ended at 1:33 pm.

5. Closed Session

Announcements:

11th annual Spiders in the Know, May 13, 8:30 am -11 am at Camp Concert Hall.