



# University Staff Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 10, 2024  
Tyler Hanes Commons, Room 310

In attendance: Wendy Sheppard, Carole Yeatts, Kirstin Stacia, Miriam Blackmon, Meghan Gill, Monica Booker, Kolby Ferguson, Ashley Blunt, Mary Wheaton, Elizabeth Donaldson, Zatelli, Julia Trachtenberg, Derek Miller, Holly Blevins, Matt Dewald, Emily Phaup, Olivia Wilkinson, Veronica Clinton, Laura Withrow, Jacqueline Carrell, Amanda Boyd, Jess Oliver, Haley Herrmann, Darrel Tyler, Erin Lowery, Justin Woodson, Lisa Matthews, Laura Thompson, Heidi Thompson, Stephanie Fillman, Kayla Solsbak, Shannon Jones, Robin Walinski

## 1. Call to Order – 1:02

Welcome from Carol – Carole reminded attendees that the meeting minutes are published on the USAC website. Kolby Ferguson moved to approve last month's meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ashley Booker. The meeting minutes were approved by a majority vote.

## 2. Featured Speakers:

- Kris Henderson, Director of Compliance and Title IX Coordinator for UR with Jasleen Singh, Senior Paralegal for University Counsel
- Kris gave compliance updates. She has been in Compliance for 7 years. There has been a department name change, a new link, but the same focus; Title IX and Non-Discrimination – see website page – defines discrimination and harassment, protected status and retaliation – even if not a formal charge of discrimination – report it because it may result in a corrective action – report it!
- How to report incidents was covered; Title IX and Title VI were covered – the helpline is a good tool for reporting – only Kris hears it if reported via the helpline; [Khender3@richmond.edu](mailto:Khender3@richmond.edu); harassment, even if not directed at you should be reported; question from Ashley Blount – if full timelines are not known, should you still report it? Yes – report what you can and then they can have a conversation; the anonymous report often happens; Kris can partner with HR or the Dean of a school to investigate any reports; partner with other departments within the University – HR doesn't have an anonymous helpline, but Compliance does; report as much as possible – cannot always follow-up and give the outcome, but can follow-up and let you know something is being addressed if a name is given.

- 1:13 Rebecca Fender, Managing Director of Investor Relations of Spider Management – she will give a high level overview of Spider Management; talk about the endowment; “what you do is why we exist”; she has worked throughout her career in asset management; the best practices out there are put into use at Spider Management; in 2001 Spider Management was founded as the name for the investment office of UR; 2008 Launched a private fund to offer investment services to other non-profits; Opened up Spider Management to investment services to other non-profits to show commitment to community; Revenues – from website; the endowment provides 40% of UR revenue; UR is in a good financial position due to the strong performance of the endowment; lists other Representative Partners – often have UR grads at the other partners – two pools of assets – UR money and the private fund which includes other non-profit partners – this allows the other partners to get the same gross rate of return; the fees from the other non-profits support the Spider Management Office operating expenses; 23 people at Spider Management – Primary goal is to get great returns – over the long term returns have been driven by alternative investments. Spider has great access to these because it focuses on serving the non-profit sector.
  - Objective of the endowment – annual total return  $\geq$  spending + inflation; similar approach as other universities such as Yale; long-term objective; equity bias in the portfolio; focus on diversification; able to weather any downturn; active management and focus on capital preservation. The long-term returns for the University have exceeded several different benchmarks; a lot of volatility in the market; but the key point, Spider Management protects the endowment during the downturns and helps the assets grow over time.
3. Announcements – 1:27
- Spider Bites lunch on Tuesday, December 17 at 12:00 – 1:00 pm at Heilman Dining Center, south meeting room. Register at <https://sl.richmond.edu/wv>. – full at this time
  - Ashley Blount will be hosting the January Spider Bites breakfast.
  - Next USAC meeting on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 1:00 p.m. in Tyler Haynes Commons, Room 305. The featured speaker will be Upen Malani, Executive Director of Dining Services.
  - February 11, 2025, USAC meeting at 1 p.m. in Weinstein Center for Recreation, Classroom 202. The featured speaker will be Melissa Falk, Associate Vice President and Dean of Admission.
  - Once per semester, USAC will hold a breakfast with a senior Exec. for about 30 staff members. The next one will be at the Wilton Center with Monica Smith, Vice President of Inclusion and Belonging.
4. Reports from Committees and Liaisons – 1:29
- Benefits – no report from Jess Oliver -no updates;

- P&P, Miriam Blackmon – have not met again;
- Campus Plan, Monica Booker – meeting next week;
- Volunteer Committee, Carole on-behalf of Justin Woodson - Spider Dash is on Saturday, February 22. Volunteers are needed for packet pickup in the Well-Being Center on February 21 from 12:00 – 6:00 p.m., and the day of the race starting at 7:00 a.m. More information will be sent out by Justin Woodson, closer to the date.
- Elections – Matt Dewald – There is an open seat in Dining Services – several nominations have been received. The elections will open before winter break and for a week after the break;
- Communications; Mary Wheaton – Representative profiles were posted – will add a new one when the new dining rep is elected. The Facebook and Instagram posts are a way to distribute more information to staff who are not in front of computers daily. USAC members are asked to follow-and like the posts because that would help build traffic. The Facebook and Instagram posts are in line with our goals for USAC to be a conduit of communication;
- Ex-Officio Member Derek Miller announced that Jan. 20-23<sup>rd</sup> UR will celebrate MLK. There will be several events: service project on campus; YT Walker archive; Jan. 23 – march and gathering. Check the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement website for the activities.
- Treasury report – the current balance is \$5271.12

#### 5. Web Submissions – 1:49

Question – Lack of lighting behind HDC – new lighting was installed and bulbs were replaced; Facilities and Emergency Management will continue to assess; URPD has put 4 lights around the shed – please reach out if this does not fix the issue – URPD has requested that a web submission not be used for a safety issue – please contact them directly so that it can be addressed promptly.

Leave Policy Questions – comparison of non-PTO benefits to peer institutions; number of years of experience is not taken into account; the offer and the benefits including PTO are discussed in hiring; recent benchmarking of PTO with peer institutions results said that the benefits are comparable – new memo went out for two floating/optional holiday; with the opting out of health insurance, staff are awarded five more days of vacation; this is in the effort to contain benefits costs for everyone – two floating holidays need to be taken by the end of the calendar year; not fiscal year – this was an answer to question about different religious holidays.

PTO – leave policy – one type PTO v. different vacation and sick-day; in a recent benchmark survey, all but one peer institution uses the same leave policy as UR; a one-type of PTO program would blur the lines between sick and leave; having PTO and sick separate encourages employees to take the downtime needed;

Health Care – allow employees to opt-out; employees can choose \$500 v. vacation days – may need to be reviewed again; the HSA participants are given \$1000;

CPR course – why is UR charging for this? Some feel the course should be free like Stop the Bleed; \$35 charge covers the cost for certification from institutions such as Red Cross – non-certification courses are offered by URPD for free- Wendy is a CPR instructor – usually costs \$65-\$100+ which goes to the Red Cross, not the University.

Two additional questions –

- USAC will be following up on these – consider using more languages on the order machines, etc. – voice recognition is also an option
- Health Insurance stipend for PT workers over 1000 hours – to be addressed by HR

6. 2:07 – Call for other announcements. Shout out to the Communications Committee for “knocking it out of the park” for their posts.

7. 2:08 Closed Session/Committee Meetings



# University Staff Advisory Council

## **Goals 2024-25**

- 1) Strengthen and foster a cohesive and inclusive staff community on campus
  - a) Establish a USAC events committee to promote a sense of community across campus staff. Launch new initiatives to bring together staff from across departments, including informal breakfast/lunch gatherings and organized campus tour for staff led by staff.
  - b) Offer hybrid USAC meetings for general staff but encourage USAC members to attend in person.
- 2) Enhance visibility of USAC to be seen as a conduit of information, voice for all staff, and leader in community efforts
  - a) Increase accessibility of web submission feature on USAC website and increase awareness to staff of available web sub option to ask questions and raise concerns.
  - b) Strengthen visibility and role of USAC for staff advocacy, retention, transparency, compensation, and appreciation.
  - c) Raise profile of USAC board and committee members collectively and individually so all staff feel heard and represented. Invite all staff to join USAC committees.
  - d) Continue connections with Faculty Senate and find more ways for faculty and staff to interact.
- 3) Solidify processes and institutional knowledge within USAC
  - a) Define committee structure within USAC and create goals and expectations.
  - b) Review current USAC Board structure and compare with current campus employment to ensure fair and accurate representation.
  - c) Pull together procedures guides for future board members.
  - d) Connect with past USAC board members and invite their input and participation in USAC activities and initiatives.
- 4) Continue USAC awareness through existing systems and processes
  - a) Continue USAC role in the onboarding process by sending USAC profile and swag to new staff members.
  - b) Continue regular and timely communication with staff via all-campus communications and presence at major campus events. Continue to make sure information is shared with staff in a variety of modes including printed flyers and signage for those who do not regularly access email.

- c) Continue to invite University representatives to present at monthly meetings and quarterly breakfast including senior management, compliance, campus safety, HR, DEIB, and student development.