



2013-2014
ANNUAL
REPORT



University Staff
Advisory Council



The University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) provides a forum for issues, concerns, interests, enhancements and information that may apply to the staff of the University of Richmond. The Council shares information, discusses issues and ideas, and serves as a liaison between staff and the administration.

University Staff Advisory Council 2013-2014 Annual Report

In 2013-14, the work of the Council focused on improving communication and increasing visibility of USAC.

Enhancing Communication

In an effort to enhance communication, each Council member was assigned a constituent group. Council members committed to represent staff from his or her constituent group, to relay information and seek feedback on a regular basis.

Training was provided to Council members to heighten their awareness of how they communicate with their constituents across campus. The following trainings were provided to Council members:

- *What is the USAC brand and how does it relate to communication with your constituents?* Facilitator: Joe Boehman, Dean, Richmond College. August 2013.
- *Communication Styles & Having Difficult Conversations.* Facilitator: Aubrey Pettaway, Human Resources. October 2013.

Increasing Visibility on Campus

Council members made it a priority to make USAC more visible across campus. In an effort to increase visibility, Council members tabled at Busch Gardens Ticket Pick-Up, the Employee Benefits Fair and Spider Fest. Council members also attended their constituent's departmental meetings to connect with staff and inform them of USAC and its role on campus.

The Council also utilized social media to promote USAC and campus events, highlight benefits and recognize staff. Over 160 staff members currently like the USAC Facebook page. This was an increase from 2012-13 (127 likes).

In an effort to reach more staff in the facilities department, a USAC bulletin board was created to highlight events. The board contained pictures of the USAC representatives, meeting minutes, upcoming events, and a comment/web submission box. The board was well received by staff who work in the area. I would encourage the 2014-15 Council to consider using USAC boards in other hard to reach areas such as Dining Services.

University Faculty Council (UFC) reached out to USAC to assist with the evaluation of academic deans. The Council provided insight on how to get more staff members involved in the evaluation process that would ensure confidentiality of responses and give a more global picture of the issues staff working in academic departments were facing.

USAC was asked to have staff representation on the following University committees:

- Planning & Priorities
- Provost Search Committee
- Presidential Search Committee

Building Community Across Campus

This past year, USAC welcomed several guests to our monthly meetings. We welcomed the following staff:

- **David Hale, Vice President, Business & Finance** – Introduction, September 2013
- **Keith Gill, Athletic Director** – Athletic Strategic Plan, November 2013
- **Steve Bisese, VP Student Development & Pete LeViness, CAPS Director** – Threat Assessment Team, November 2013
- **Lisa Miles, Common Ground** – MLK Day Celebration, December 2013
- **Megan Zanella-Litke** – Green Office Program, December 2013
- **Andrew Goodman, Campus Rabbi** – Hillel & Spider Step Up! Event at Virginia Holocaust Museum, February 2014
- **Brittany Schaal, Emergency Management & Chief Dave McCoy** – Inclement Weather Policy, February 2014
- **Carl Sorenson, VP Human Resources** – Flexible Workplace Policy, February 2014

In March, the Council held their monthly meeting at UR Downtown. Council members toured the UR Downtown facility and learned about the programs and services offered.

The Council held three open forums during the 2013-14 term. The forum topics were selected from the June 2013 open forum and focused on the top three areas of interest among staff.

Forum Topic	Presider	# Staff Reached
Endowment	David Hale	47
Campus Master	David Hale & Andrew McBride	52
Budget Process	David Hale & Mark Detterick	50

Affinity Groups

Affinity Groups are one of the main venues to engage staff across campus. Due to the importance of the affinity groups to USAC, the Executive Board proposed a bylaws change to include the Affinity Group Chair to the Executive Board. In July 2013, the bylaws were amended to include the change. An updated version of the bylaws can be found on the USAC webpage.

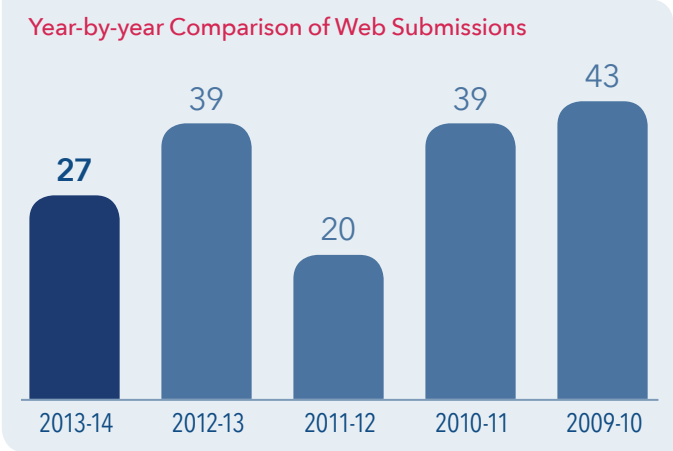
As part of USAC's efforts to connect staff across campus, five affinity groups have been setup around areas that staff identified in a 2011 survey. The USAC affinity groups are: Elder Care; Parenting; LGBTQ; URInvolved and Health & Wellness. Each affinity group sponsors programs, meetings and events throughout the year, as well as have active listserv where anyone can share information or resources. Each affinity group is led by a current USAC member as well as a non-USAC staff member from across campus. In 2013-14, Affinity Groups reached 871 staff members.

Affinity Group	# Program	# Participants
Elder Care	16	168
Parenting	11	199
LGBTQ	10	270
URInvolved	10	219
Health & Wellness	5	15

In the 2014-15 academic year, the University will be expanding its Employee Wellness Program. As a result of the expansion, the Health & Wellness Affinity group has been dissolved. The Council felt that having two venues for employee wellness would result in duplication of programming and competition for participation. Staff members who engaged with the Health & Wellness affinity group will be transferred to the Employee Wellness group based out of Recreation & Wellness. Funding previously used for the Health & Wellness affinity group will be made available to remaining affinity groups.

Web Submissions

As part of the Council’s role as a liaison to University Administration, Council members receive, review, and respond to web submissions from University staff members. USAC received a total of 26 web submissions in the 2013-14 academic year that it researched and responded to concerns directly from staff members as well as through anonymous submissions.



In terms of web submission trends, the majority of web submissions were anonymously submitted, and of the 26 web submissions, 54% of submissions were questions or issues that needed to be answered by Human Resources. Web submissions by theme or category:

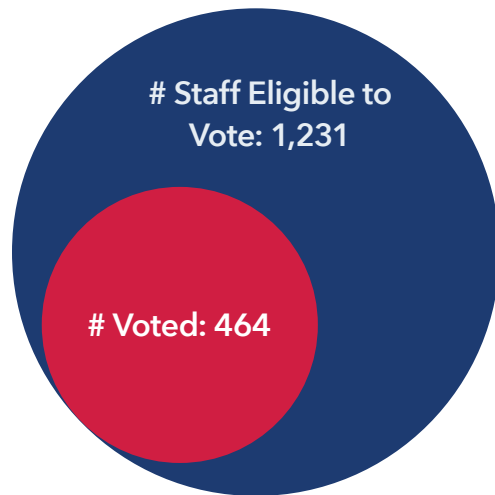
Human Resources	# Related Submissions
Policies and Practices	2
Benefits	6
HR Website	2
Professional Development	3
Retiree Benefits	1

USAC	# Related Submissions
Affinity Groups	1
USAC Website	2
USAC Programming	1
Elections	1

Other	# Submissions
Weather (university closing or not closing during inclement weather)	1
Facilities Concern (grounds - geese)	2
Compliments	2
Catering Policies	1
Sustainability	1
Child Care	1

Elections

New Member elections took place between during the month of May (May 5-29). The election cycle was extended to allow for greater outreach to departments with historically low voter turnout. In order to reach those with lowest voting numbers, the Election Committee reached out to departments to determine a time when their staff members could vote. Email blasts were sent out each week to those staff members that had not yet voted. Spiderbytes, dflyers and Facebook posts were also used to encourage voting. The Election Committee also had a table at Spider Fest to encourage voting and allow staff to vote on one of the available iPad.



Looking to the Future...

This is an exciting time to be working at the University of Richmond. USAC has an open line of communication with University administration which allows staff concerns to be addressed in a timely manner. As staff, we are fortunate to have this venue.

As President Ayers gets ready to complete his final year at the University, I would like to thank him and his staff for their continued support of USAC and its mission. His vision has helped us to achieve our goals and encouraged the Council to explore both the professional and personal connections staff have at the University.

I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to serve as Chair of USAC. I am humbled and honored to have been chosen by my colleagues to take on this role. I also wanted to take the opportunity to thank my executive board and all the USAC members who served this term. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with you and I appreciate all you do on a daily basis to make the University of Richmond a great place to work.

I look forward to all the great work USAC will do in the upcoming years.

Respectfully,

Tracy Cassalia, MS, CHES
Chair, USAC 2013-14
Manager, Health Education & Wellness
Recreation & Wellness Department