



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

**Overview**

The 2016-17 University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) focused on communication efforts and the University Strategic Plan. There was also a concerted effort to research and improve functions of USAC, including how the Council supports staff groups and how we can better serve the institution through the web submission process. The Council also wanted to be more visible on campus and communicate more consistently with staff, so there was specific attention given to timely reporting and communication of Council actions.

**Major Areas of Focus**

**Support of University Initiatives**

- Submitted nominations for the Provost Search Committee, the Quality Enhancement Plan, the Chaplain Search Committee, and the Benefits Committee
- Participated in Dean's 360 formulation with Faculty Senate
- Participated in University Communications focus groups regarding staff communication initiatives

Strategic Plan

USAC was involved in the vetting of the draft goals and initiatives of the Strategic Plan through an open forum and Council discussion. The Executive Committee also conducted a listening tour with former USAC chairs and gathered their feedback before submitting a letter to the President and Steering Committee (see Addendum 2). The President, Jan French, and Lori Schuyler brought the draft of the plan to Council in February and it was discussed in depth. In April, the Council drafted and passed a resolution in support of the plan (see Addendum 3).

**Outreach**

Open Forums

At the request of the President's Office, USAC co-hosted two open forum sessions for staff. In September, in response to the sexual misconduct crisis, USAC introduced the President and his key members of the administration to answer questions from staff. The event, held in the Alice Haynes Room of the Tyler Haynes Commons, was very well attended with the room almost at capacity.

In November, USAC co-hosted a forum in the format of a round-table discussions regarding the Strategic Plan. Over 40 staff members attended and discussed the draft goals and initiatives with members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

Gelato Days

Paul Brockwell, 2015-16 chair, conceived of the free Gelato Day and assisted with the first one in July 2016. Staff were asked to fill out a quick survey regarding their understanding of USAC and in turn were given a coupon for a free serving of gelato from Passport Café. Staff were

very excited about the event at the International Center Courtyard and 192 surveys were collected.

In May, USAC hosted a second Gelato Day, again at the International Center, as a way to promote the elections. That event was attended by 146 staff.

#### Updated the New Parent card

In conjunction with Human Resources (HR), former USAC members created a welcome card for new parents. The concept was to give staff parents a silver dollar to place in the piggy banks that HR provided. The cards were outdated and HR had run out of the dollar coins. The updated cards were redesigned to better represent USAC. They have dollar coins attached with a message from Council welcoming the latest new Spider. HR hands them out to new parents and USAC pays for the coins and printing of the cards.

#### Initiated a welcome process for new staff

In late November 2016, HR notified the chair that there would no longer be a slot available for a USAC presentation at New Employee Orientation (NEO). In discussion, Council was split in their opinion on whether or not NEO was the most effective way for USAC to welcome new staff. A plan was proposed in which USAC members would personally welcome staff to their divisions. The plan was in its test phase throughout this year and next year's Council is encouraged to continue efforts in welcoming staff to campus while taking advantage of those meetings to educate new staff about USAC and its purpose.

#### Volunteer Efforts

Involvement in University programs continues to be a key way to reach out to campus staff. A table was manned by USAC staff at the fall Open Enrollment Benefits Fair and at the spring Wellness Fair. Staff responded well to giveaways and a drawing for basketball tickets at the fall fair. The Wellness Fair was an opportunity to encourage staff to become involved in USAC either through nominations or voting.

The Center for Civic Engagement again requested USAC's assistance during the holidays. USAC members made donations of toiletries and helped with sorting and boxing for delivery to area high schools.

#### Spiders in the Know

This informative program, held in May each year, is sponsored by the President's Office and organized by HR and the Events office. USAC is invited to participate and this year the Council had more of a presence. The chair was asked to give the introduction and staff were again asked to run microphones during the Q&A session.

### **Improved USAC functions**

#### Orientation

Many previous and current USAC members have said that it takes a while to get up to speed on USAC's purpose and operations. In an attempt to give new members a head start, a pre-term orientation was offered in June 2016. The chair and immediate past chair presented on USAC's makeup, the University administration and their roles, as well as the standard operations of USAC each month and throughout the year.

#### Marketing materials

USAC purchased two different giveaways for outreach efforts. In addition to the USAC postcards (provided at NEO) and USAC pens, USAC also now has a small amount of reusable shopping bags and lip balm.

In addition, the Communications Committee also purchased a banner-up to draw attention to USAC's presence at events. The Communications Committee felt that it was important for staff to be able to visually recognize their representative and so a tabletop display that features the headshots and basic information on each Council member was created.

#### Updates to bylaws

This year Council attempted to codify fiscal responsibilities by updating the bylaws to reflect the fiscal process and placing those duties on the Secretary, necessitating a title change for the position. Council also adjusted the newly formed (2015-16) Volunteer and Engagement Committee to be the Volunteer and Engagement Coordinator position, after it was found that a committee was not needed.

#### Timely Reporting

This year the Council successfully enacted a reporting timeline for the publication of the agenda and minutes. The following schedule was followed:

1. Agenda published on the USAC website and promoted via SpiderByte one week prior to the USAC monthly meeting.
2. Minutes are taken by the Secretary/Treasurer and shared with the Chair within 24 hours.
3. The chair reviews and send out minutes, along with web submission responses, via the listserv, using a Box link and asking for changes back to the listserv by Friday at 12 noon.
4. Changes are made to the file in Box and, hearing no objections, the minutes are published to the website no later than E.O.B. the following Monday.
5. A SpiderByte is sent out one week after the meeting with a link to the meeting minutes and web submissions.
6. A "round-up" is written by the chair of the Communications Committee for USAC members to send to their constituents announcing the minutes and additional information which may be of interest to the campus community.

#### Affinity Groups

Following the recommendations of the 2015-16 Council, this year USAC, HR, and URWell Employee attempted to enact a different model for supporting affinity groups. The only active group, Caregiving, participated. In May, a proposal was presented to support staff groups that form on campus outside of USAC's purview. In June, the proposal was accepted and the future Council will further explore how to build and manage a program of support. See Affinity Groups chair report for more information.

#### **Meetings**

In an early meeting with Lori Schuyler and Dave Hale, the Executive Committee discussed USAC's goals and approach for the year. In these discussions, we determined that a consistent goal of USAC should be to educate staff about the workings of the University and that staff who serve should roll off more informed about the institution. Those who attend meetings could also have this benefit, if they chose to take advantage of it. We therefore strove to have at least one guest speaker at each meeting.

### Guest Speakers

- Patrice Rankine, Dean, School of Arts & Sciences, September 2016
- Philip Gravely and Catherine Amos, University Communications, September 2016
- Keith McIntosh, Vice President of Information Services, October 2016
- Laura Dietrick, Human Resources, October 2016
- Denise Dwight Smith, Assistant Vice President for Alumni and Career Services, November 2016
- Mia Reinoso Genoni, Dean of Westhampton College and Associate Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences, January 2017
- Leslie Stevenson and Sunni Brown, Quality Enhancement Plan Steering Committee, January 2017
- Ronald Crutcher and Jan French, Strategic Plan, February 2017
- WebstUR and Jennifer O'Donnell, Manager of Biology Laboratories, Spider Day, March 2017
- Lori Schuyler and Jan French, Strategic Plan, April 2017
- John Barry, Vice President of Communications, May 2017
- Dave Hale, Vice President for Business & Finance, May 2017

The format of USAC meetings remained very similar to years past with the exception of building time back into the end of meetings on occasion. It was Matt Barany's suggestion that, if a meeting looked as if it would end early, that we give that time back and allow committees to meet before adjourning. This took place at least three times over the course of the year and committees found it helpful.

Each committee chair was given a charge for the year. Each charge was notably ambitious but committee chairs reported that they appreciated the direction it gave to their work.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Affinity Groups Committee**

*Submitted by Heather Sadowski*

In my role as chair of the USAC Affinity Groups for 2016-17, the largest accomplishment was creating the proposal for the support of staff groups and moving away from the model of existing Affinity Groups. This proposal was discussed and voted upon in the May and June meetings. The vote was passed and discussions will take place for logistics of this support in the 2017-18 USAC year. Other day-to-day operations of the Affinity Group Chair included management of the listservs for the following USAC Affinity Groups: Caregiving, LGBTQ, Parenting, and UR Involved.

With the new model, USAC would maintain a list of groups and contacts on the website, promote group events and programs open to all staff, and provide a small amount of funding through an application/reimbursement process. Next steps would be to eliminate the position of Affinity Groups chair, set an application review process, and earmark an amount in the budget for this initiative.

The Caregiving group will continue to receive USAC support until the new model is fully established.

#### **Elections and Nominations Committee**

*Submitted by Beth Ann Howard*

The Elections and Nominations committee provided the administration with staff candidates for the Quality Enhancement Planning process, the Chaplain search committee, the President’s Advisory Committee, and the Provost search committee. The committee also coordinated elections for each division, resulting in 12 new representatives joining the council on July 1, 2017. The committee had a voting booth at USAC’s Gelato Day and at Spring Fest, where they distributed stickers to staff who had voted online or in person. Although there is more work to do to improve voter turnout amongst some divisions, the committee came up with several suggestions to make next year’s efforts more inclusive and meaningful, such as amending the voting timeline to accommodate summer schedules in Dining and Facilities and ensuring better representation of divisions on the Elections committee itself.

<b>Seat-specific elections</b>	<b>Turnout rate</b>	<b>Elected member</b>	<b>Number of candidates</b>
School Staffs (All)	60%	Shannon Best	4
Dining and Retail	21%	Lisa Bayard	3
Facilities	23%	Austin Leach	3
<b>General elections</b>		<b>Elected member</b>	
Academic Affairs	59%	Dustin Engels	6
Advancement and Communications	78%	Pam Lee	1
Athletics	66%	Mika Elovaara	3
		Stephanie Bernthal (1-year)	
Business Affairs	31%	Wendy Burchard	6
		Rick Richardson	
Enrollment Management	91%	Emily Martin	2
Information Services	99%	Jason Cope	2
Student Development and Chaplaincy	79%	Meg Pevarski	2

**Volunteer Engagement Committee**

*Submitted by Brittany Schaal*

The Volunteer and Engagement Committee collaborated with the Elections and Communications Committees to staff the Benefits Fairs in November with current USAC Members armed with giveaways and information. In December, the Committee organized a group of individuals to stuff 48 stockings full of donated goods. Additionally, the Committee supported recruiting volunteers to work on and walk with the UR float in the annual Richmond Christmas Parade.

In January, the group proposed a change to the bylaws to eliminate the committee and instead appoint a Volunteer and Engagement Coordinator. USAC unanimously voted in favor of the change and current committee members were then shifted to others areas where their efforts were most needed.

The last task for the Coordinator was to support a request from Human Resources for USAC's presence at the March Wellness Fair.

### **Workplace Environment Committee**

*Submitted by Matt Barany*

The Workplace Environment Committee fielded 78 web submissions from the campus community during the 2016-17 year. The Workplace Environment Committee spent the year reviewing and revising the web submission process. After researching this process at other schools and examining old web subs, the committee recommended a new format for the web subs at Richmond.

The new format will neatly categorize all web subs into compliments, suggestions, or questions. The compliment form will collect and share employee praise. The suggestion form will capture and share ideas from employees. The question form will behave similar to the existing web sub format except it will ask the employees to direct their question to senior administration, USAC, HR, IT, Wellness, Dining, Campus safety, Building/facilities, and Accounting.

The committee believes this new format will efficiently drive thoughtful feedback from employees to the appropriate decision-makers on campus.

### **Budget Report**

USAC continued to operate in a fiscally-responsible manner in 2016-2017 and concluded the year in a good position financially. The Council's overall budget was \$5,875.00, and we ended the year with a surplus.

This surplus can be attributed to the lack of an Affinity Group program this year. Historically, \$500 was allocated to each Affinity Group (5 groups, \$2,500.00 total) but since we spent this year re-evaluating these groups they were, for the most part, inactive. Therefore, we did not incur any expenses outside a few items for Caregiving, the remaining active group.

Our largest expenses were printing of marketing materials/banners, our subscription to the election system (Simply Voting), and our End of the Year Celebration.

### **Topics to Address and Recommendations for the upcoming year**

- Continue to improve communication with Staff
  - Look for ways to share USAC messaging around campus
  - Recommendation:
    - Watch the development of the faculty/staff website and newsletter and consider requesting bylines or updates in each
    - Utilize the USAC website more. For example, publicize USAC's endorsements. When USAC supports a campus-wide or staff-specific issue, the University community should see that reflected on the website and in social media
    - Encourage meetings between Council members and their respective division leadership
- Open Meetings
  - Keep pushing the openness of meetings and plan for a "gallery" at each
- Strategic Plan

- Continue to look for ways in which USAC can be involved with the rollout of the Strategic Plan
- Committee liaisons reporting back to the Council – if people are serving on committees, request they share their experiences with Council.
- Representative Model for Elections
  - Increase communication efforts around Elections
  - Follow the Elections Best Practices Guide created for Council this year
  - Continue to monitor the representative model and turnout at elections
  - Continue to focus on increasing turnout from historically low-turnout groups
- Welcoming Employees
  - Expect Council members to follow through on the welcoming of new staff to campus and ask them to report on their staff meetings to Council

Recommendations to each Council member

- If you're interested in helping with something, let the leadership know
- Bring things to Council even if they do not specifically apply to your department or division
- Report back to your departments, as well as gather information from your division leadership
- Request time at your division meetings to speak about your involvement with USAC

## Addendum

1. Membership
2. Response letter regarding draft goals and initiatives of the Strategic Plan
3. Statement of support for the Strategic Plan

## Membership

### 2016-17 Executive Officers

Kirsten McKinney, *Chair*

Advancement or Communications Divisional Seat, 2015-17

Matt Barany, *Vice Chair*

Athletics Divisional Seat, 2015-17

Kate Sirc, *Secretary and Treasurer*

Athletics Divisional Seat, 2015-17

### Academic Affairs

Barb Michelson, *Administrative Coordinator, Academic Advising*

Academic Affairs At-Large Seat, 2015-17

Cassandra Taylor-Anderson, *Customer Service Supervisor, Boatwright Memorial Library*

Boatwright Memorial Library Seat, 2016-18

Shannon Best, *Manager, Community Events*

School Staffs - Any Seat 2016-17

Beth Ann Howard, *Manager, Credit Programs, SPCS School Staffs - Any Seat, 2016-18*

Tara Stewart, *Program Coordinator, Graduate School of Business*

School Staffs - MBA, Law, or SPCS, 2016-18

### Advancement and Communications

Amy Gallagher, *Administrative Coordinator, Annual Giving*

Advancement or Communications Divisional Seat, 2016-18

### Business Affairs

Jackson Knox, *Social Media Specialist, University Bookstore*

Business Affairs At-Large Seat, 2015-17

Ingrid Lasrado, *Assistant to the Vice President for Business and Finance*

Business Affairs At-Large Seat, 2015-17

Cindy Stearns, *Assistant Director for Marketing and Special Programs, Heilman Dining Center*  
Dining Services Departmental Seat, 2015–17

Joseph Woodford, *Line Attendant, Heilman Dining Center*  
Dining Services Departmental Seat, 2016–18

Paul Lozo, *Director of Maintenance*  
Facilities Departmental Seat, 2016–18

Harold Wainwright, *Custodian*  
Facilities Departmental Seat, 2015–17

Brittany Schaal, *Director of Emergency Management*  
Public Safety Departmental Seat, 2016–18

#### Enrollment Management

Cindy Sharp, *Administrative Coordinator*  
Enrollment Management Divisional Seat, 2015–17

#### Information Services

John Hurst, *User Services Systems Administrator*  
Information Services Divisional Seat, 2015–17

Julie Neville, *Technical Support Analyst*  
Information Services Divisional Seat, 2016–18

#### Student Development and Chaplaincy

Slade Gormus, *Nurse*  
Student Development/Chaplaincy Divisional Seat, 2016–17

Heather Sadowski, *Assistant Director for Wellness*  
Student Development/Chaplaincy Divisional Seat, 2016–18

#### Ex Officio Membership

Paul Brockwell, *Writer/Editor, University Communications*  
Immediate Past Chair, 2016-17

Lynn Robertson, *Manager, Events, Conferences, and Support Services*

Carl Sorensen, *Associate Vice President for Human Resources*





# University Staff Advisory Council

December 20, 2016

To: Ronald A. Crutcher  
President, Co-chair Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Jan French  
Associate Professor, Co-chair Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Dear Drs. Crutcher and French,

The University Staff Advisory Council wishes to communicate strong interest in the current draft goals and initiatives for the new strategic plan. After the open forum for staff, we conducted a listening tour with several former USAC chairs and University staff leadership.

Overall, our staff is supportive of a strategic plan and believes that it should inspire, challenge, and encourage a spirit of unity and collaboration. Staff is eager for a plan that will offer guidance for all members of our community and encapsulate how everyone can participate in attaining the University's academic mission. Staff will champion a plan that recognizes our involvement in student development, respects our engagement in the intellectual community, values the services we provide towards the daily support of the University, and mines the richness of the longstanding dedication many staff have to this institution. A more narrowly conceived plan, heavily focused on faculty outcomes, does little to harness the energy and commitment that staff has to offer.

We recognize that the ultimate role of staff at the University is to support the academic mission, but without staff, any plan will fail. In that regard, as a part of Goal 6, we support the initiative for research and continued collection of data to determine and further define what we, as a University, mean by "thriving." We also support professional development opportunities for all staff and encourage more detailed and specific language throughout Goal 9.

It is our understanding that the current draft will be edited and streamlined and it is our hope that the two goals mentioned above, which significantly reference staff, be enhanced and protected from deletion.

Please know that we are strong supporters and offer any assistance needed in achieving a strategic plan that is for everyone at the University of Richmond.

Thank you for your care and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirsten A. McKinney".

Kirsten A. McKinney  
Chair, University Staff Advisory Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Barany".

Matt Barany  
Vice Chair, University Staff Advisory Council

cc: Lori Schuyler, Vice President for Planning and Policy, Chief of Staff  
Chris Cotropia, Faculty Senate President



## University Staff Advisory Council

### **Resolution in Support of the University of Richmond Strategic Plan**

WHEREAS, the University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) has been involved in the feedback and formation of the University of Richmond Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, USAC cosponsored Strategic Plan forums with the Office of the President for University staff; and

WHEREAS, staff understand the mission of the institution to be an intellectually vibrant and collaborative community; and

WHEREAS, staff efforts contribute to how the institution effectively meets the challenges of our time; and

WHEREAS, staff believe in the proposed values of student growth, pursuit of knowledge, inclusivity and equity, diversity, opportunity, ethical engagement and responsible stewardship; and

WHEREAS, staff understand that the goals of Academic Excellence, Access and Affordability, Thriving Community, Engaged Alumni, and Stewardship are focused on growing into our values; and

WHEREAS, the goal of USAC is to support a thriving campus community; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the University Staff Advisory Council on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2017, hereby supports the University of Richmond Strategic Plan and the work ahead embedded in it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirsten McKinney".

Kirsten McKinney, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kate Sirc".

Kate Sirc, Secretary and Treasurer