



University Staff Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 13, 2025
Special Programs Building – Room 156

In attendance: Carole Yeatts, Kirstin Stacia, Wendy Sheppard, Jess Oliver, Mirinda McCants, Geraldine Sullivan, Amanda Boyd, Mirabel Street, Aretha Harris, Jennifer Horton, Mary Wheaton, Cort Schneider, Lisa Matthews-Ailsworth, Holly Blevins, Meghan Gill, Derek Miller, Darrel Tyler, Chase Monroe, Heidi Thompson, Erin Lowery, Joy Heinzman, Jacqueline Carrell, Jennifer Phillips, Ellie H McGlamery, Aaliyah McClean, Stephanie Fillman, Upen Milani Julie Trachtenberg, Miriam Blackmon, Pietra Balsamo, Angeline Gardner, Yahneet Morton, Justin Woodson, Matt Dewald, Aesha Uqdah, Elisabeth Rigsby, Tom Walsh, Julia Kelly, Ashley Blount, Jamie Lynn Haskins, Elizabeth Donaldson, Mina Zatelli, Sara Tandy, Ilana Lavine

1. Call to Order at 1:03
2. Featured Speaker: HR Business Partners (Rodney Cogbill, Tracy Kitt, Christina Page) and Geraldine Sullivan
 - Rodney Cogbill – has been with UR for 7.5 years
 - Christina Page – has been with UR for a year and a half
 - Tracy Kitt – has been with UR for 14 years
 - HR Department structure was explained. Representation for Business Partners was explained – this is on the HR website.
 - What they do:
 - Employee Relations & conflict Resolution is one of the main responsibilities of their jobs. They work together for resolution; have to take policy into account, may require an investigation
 - Performance Management & Employee Development – must understand the business operations to work effectively with stakeholders
 - Distinction between HR's Role and the Manager's Role was discussed.
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - Questions: How to contact your HR Business Partner for a meeting? There is a contact button on the website or email your partner to set up a meeting.
 - Question of confidentiality – There is confidentiality unless a law is being broken or danger is presented. Unless a formal investigation is launched, the person who is being discussed is not contacted. HR will need to be compelled to act. Just venting is in confidence.
 - Performance issues will not be discussed with other employees.
 - No step-by-step manual – every situation is handled separately.
 - Questions sent in were addressed in the presentation.

- Derek Miller asked – support career path initiatives – what does this mean? – career structure for the division. Plan to do it with more client groups, or if there is a vacancy, redefine the position to ensure that a career path is there, aspirations about new roles, should be discussed during the performance management cycle; HR can be a resource for career paths or shifts, and talent acquisition specialists also can help with this.
- Upen Milani commented about cross-training
- Jess Oliver – what about exit interviews or surveys – where is the information going? HR Business partner will not share specific information, but will look for trends that may affect the position; comment – Has HR met with others in the department who have not left? This has not happened, yet; many people leave reviews when they are not happy instead of when they are. HR Business Partners can glean information about a situation without divulging who has the issues.
- Is UR open to 365 degree evaluations? Geraldine explained what it is: A full 365 review is done for members of the President's Cabinet, and then again, every 5-years. If there is an Executive Coaching situation, a 365 may be done to ensure all information is collected to make the coaching more effective.
- Comment – there is no process in which the employees can formally review managers – a 365 review would be helpful for that. There is a question on the Check-in about what the manager can do to help the employee – who sees it? Only the employee and the manager.

2. Upen Milani gave a follow-up report – question about menus for catered events and lack of vegan or vegetarian options – Dining Services provides the menu options, but the client has the final say in what is offered. Dining Services must respect traditions for events, but also have progressed to be more responsive to others' needs. Must always work within the client's budget. When you plan to attend an event, it would be helpful to reach out to the client to let them know your dietary restrictions. Want to avoid waste but be responsive to attendee needs.

3. Chair's Report (Carole)– Spiders in the Know tomorrow morning. Please wear your nametags even if not ushering. Carole will be giving remarks. Lunch is 12:30-1:00 June 10th meeting is annual luncheon -in Richmond Room in the Heilman Dining Hall lower level (changed to Robins Pavilion in JAC). Shannon Sinclair will speak, and representatives of the research symposium will present, and new Executive Committee will be introduced. Committee chairs annual report.

4. Treasury report and Approval of the Minutes (Kirstin) The USAC budget of \$5875 will be the same next year and are dedicated funds, even though it is more challenging to see the balance in Workday; there is approximately \$2210 left to spend for the end-of-year lunch, swag and drawing for participants. Miriam Blackmon made a motion to approve the minutes from the April meeting, and Jess Oliver seconded the motion; the April meeting minutes were approved.

5. Reports from Committees and Liaisons

- Faculty Senate (Cort) – Heather Sadowski, Well 100 class is being changed to ten weeks; still offered and required, but the format will change;
- Planning & Priorities (Miriam) – Meeting was rescheduled; and there was discussion about the Executive Actions and no solutions were presented, but the Administration stewardship of Spider Management, we are encouraged to hope that the impact will be manageable. The Campus Plan was presented.
- Benefits Committee (Jess) Meetings coming up for the medical insurance – UR is seeking other companies
- Campus Plan (Monica) – No updates.
- Plant Involvement Team (John) – No updates.
- Food Service Involvement Team (Amanda) – Did not meet last month. Busch Garden tickets were requested and to do away with Spring Fling.
- Communications (Mary & Erin) – USAC updates will be added to the Spider Insider for more exposure for USAC.
- Events & Engagement (Justin & Mina) – Volunteers for Spiders in the Know; possibly add the test kitchen meals for new employees.

6. Web Submissions (Wendy)

Program for donating unused sick-leave – was done in the past; challenging to manage, and some employees felt pressured to donate; instead Benefits implemented an employer-paid short-term disability program; eligible for first day for both short-term and long-term disability; sick leave can be used for family members' illnesses as well as the employee.

Question about ICE and Visas – who to contact with Visa questions is on the HR website. Contact URPD if ICE is on campus. Classrooms are non-public spaces. If you see something, contact URPD. You can use the Spider Safe App to contact URPD directly, file an incident report or text URPD directly or call the non-emergency line at 8715.

Letter – Call for Constructive Engagement – upholding DEI, etc. President Hallock did sign the letter on April 25th.

Secure Act 2.0 – Roth 403B account question – Benefits responded that currently UR does not offer this type of plan; to implement it would require payroll and numerous other changes. This will be considered. Please reach out to the Benefits Committee with questions.

Compliance training – could a pretest be used? No, due to changes in compliance each year, the full training needs to be reviewed and knowledge refreshed each year.

Open Session adjourned at 2:31.

Announcements:

Spiders in the Know – Wednesday, May 14 at 8:30-10:30 am at Camp Concert Hall.
USAC reps to usher.

USAC Meeting – Tuesday, June 10 at 1pm.



University Staff Advisory Council

Goals 2024-2025

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.