University Staff Advisory Council Meeting
April 14, 2015
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
THC 305

The meeting was called to order by Maya Vincelli, USAC Chair, at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present: Katie Bell, Patrick Benner, Paul Brockwell, Mickie Campos, Tracy Cassalia, Stephanie Charles, Michele Cox, Du'Neika Easley, Gina Flanagan, Debbie Hardy, Iria Jones, Susan Kirby, Ebony Kirkland, Jackson Knox, Roger Mancastroppa, Tim Meacham, Cynthia McMillan, Andi Minor, Bob Plymale, Nancy Propst, Bianca Spurlock, Marti Tomlin, Maya Vincelli

Non-Voting Attendees: Carl Sorensen

Members Absent: Tom Parfitt, Lynn Robertson

Announcements

Help is needed for the year's Springfest on May 27. Please contact Cindy Stearns for more information. Help is also needed for the USAC table and voting.

Web Submissions

• Question: When I recently turned 65, and my Medicare and social security was automatically activated, I began to lose benefits due to my insurance through anthem as I found out later through Anthem. Isn't there some kind of checklist that can be provided for those of us working in the workplace that are up in age and still working? It would have been nice to know about this ahead of time to save a lot of trouble and headaches. some of us are able bodied or need to keep working beyond normal retirement age, and HR and USAC needs to recognize that. a quick search of the HR page resulted in no assistance, and when I contacted XURUR I was passed around the center and eventually dumped into a voice mail box. I would appreciate the people "in the know" like HR and USAC to a lesser extent to be a little more proactive for the employees here.

-Response: USAC Exec forwarded this information to HR to alert them to the difficulty the anonymous staff member had in gaining access to material about retirement. They will be putting this on the list of items to be considered as they consider adding these types of checklists to the new website. The USAC Exec board was also notified and wishes for the staff to know that both HR and USAC understand that the age of the workforce at the university is changing as people
are tending to work longer. This is being seen in a variety of places and requests for benefit changes. Please know that this is being considered USAC and HR, and HR will be considering how best to adapt to this trend.

• Question: I wanted to see where the University is with possibly offering tuition remission/reimbursement for post-graduate or PhD programs that staff might take at other schools since UR does not offer these programs? I have had a few, unrelated, conversations with folks about this in the past month so would like to provide them an update. I know we (USAC) has discussed this before but cannot remember what was decided or if anything had been decided. Thanks (Roger :)

  -Response: This benefit was listed as a new benefit in 2007 and was denied as a part of the benefits package.

• Question: I think the University could improve greatly on its internal communication efforts. There have been several recent examples of the appropriate parties being uninformed about major transitions or changes at a department and campus level. For example, a VP level employee recently left the University, and it was not widely communicated so staff who worked with them felt forgotten and unimportant as it had been failed to be communicated. It is important to know when relevant parties are leaving, retiring, changing positions, etc. so all feel equipped to manage the transition and be prepared for changes.

  -Response: As far as I know, the only AVP/VP that departed recently without a widely-circulated email was Lisa Van Riper, and I’m unsure as to why a communication didn’t go out. It is the normal protocol to send an announcement to the entire community when someone leaves who is at the administration level or very well-known across campus that a campus wide email is issued. This will also be a part of the updates provided by HR via their newsletter that will begin again next year after they make the transition to their new website.

• Question: I have two related suggestions. First, the University should use the term "bereavement leave" rather than "funeral leave." There are situations where a person cannot attend the funeral (for whatever reason) but still needs to take time off to grieve the loss of an immediate family member. Second, employees should be permitted to use vacation leave OR sick leave if more than 3 days off is needed for bereavement/funeral attendance. Going to the funeral of a loved one should never be considered "vacation."

  -Response: Leave for the death of a family member is defined as
Bereavement Leave - http://hr.richmond.edu/benefits/leave/bereavement.html. There is a discrepancy in the display on Banner Web. This will be changed.

Vacation and personal leave are the most flexible leave types available to employees. If additional time is needed for bereavement than these should be used and scheduled in advance with your supervisor. Sick leave is approved for the following purposes:

- To cover absences from an employee’s regular work schedule caused by his or her own illness or temporary disability.
- To cover absences caused by the sickness or temporary disability of a member of an employee’s immediate family.
- To cover time needed for medical or dental appointments for the employee or his or her immediate family. If appointments are reasonably foreseeable, this time should be approved by the employee’s supervisor in advance. In addition, our employee assistance program is available to assist people in difficult situations requiring counseling.

• Question: There seems to be quite a bit of misunderstanding about flex time and flex space. I can tell you I have submitted to flex time requests and they have gone nowhere. If my supervisor won't respond, what can I do?

-Response: Supervisors should consider all flexible work arrangements and respond back to the employee with a decision – whatever that decision is. If this is not happening, please contact URHR at urhr@richmond.edu or ext. 8747 to communicate your concern confidentially. Most likely, the call will be forwarded to the appropriate business partner for further inquiry.

• Question: This is what is wrong about UR and its really awful communications department: a long-time staff member of the library sadly passes away. It is posted on Facebook on the library page, his obit is printed in the Richmond Times Dispatch, AND there is no mass email to all faculty/staff/students from the administration. So much for that caring, kind, community we supposedly have here. Our internal communications is BROKEN here...I thought we had people whose sole job it is to do that. I’m sure they’ll be promoted to Associate Vice President soon.

-Response: We understand that grieving members of the community often struggle and you have our deepest condolences. Notifications of members of our community who pass are communicated as quickly as possible. That said, very often the office of the President waits for the information about services or where donations or flowers may be sent before sending the email in an effort to not have to send duplicate emails.
• Question: I have been going to the Weinstein Fitness Center for years (6:00 am). Believe it or not the locker rooms can be crowded that time of morning. So, I was very surprised to learn that (some) student workers had permission to use the (Ladies) Faculty/Staff Locker Room. I thought this was STRICTLY for Faculty & Staff. Some mornings it's so crowded ... difficult to get a shower & outlets for everyone to get ready & out the door & work on time. Not to mention, I really don't want to be in a locker room with students. Students can use the regular locker rooms or go back to their dorms/apts.

-Response: Students are not permitted to use the faculty/staff locker room. If any members see someone in the locker room that they do not feel should be in there that member is welcome to stop by the Member Services Desk and ask that the supervisor follow up with the person in question. All WCRW staff (student, part-time and full time) will be reminded that these locker rooms are dedicated to faculty/staff use only.

Affinity Groups

• If you will be a returning co-chair or you would like to become a co-chair of an established Affinity Group for the 2015-16 academic year, please contact Marti Tomlin-Allen.
• For Affinity Group events please visit https://usac.richmond.edu/affinity-groups/index.html.

USAC Member Nominations and Voting

There were 114 nominations with 63 currently having been accepted. Nomination responses will be open until April 15.

Discussion for Proposed Bylaws Change

Changes proposed to the Bylaws:

Current Bylaw
Article IV: Membership
Section 10: Elections
e. Elections shall close five business days after they begin.

Proposed Amendment:
Article IV: Membership
Section 10: Elections
e. Elections shall open after the nomination process has closed and shall close on May 31st of each year. The election process shall be open and available to all campus staff employees for a period no shorter than one week, and not to extend beyond May 31st of each year.
Current Bylaw

**Article IV: Membership**

*Section 7*

No elected member shall serve consecutive terms.

**Proposed Amendment:**

*Article IV: Membership*

*Section 7*

- a. No elected member shall serve consecutive terms.
- b. Members appointed by the Executive Board to serve in a vacated position may be nominated and elected in the following election process/cycle.

Current Bylaw

**Article IV: Membership**

*Section 8*

Ex-officio (non-voting) membership shall include:

- a. The Associate Vice President of Human Resources
- b. The immediate past chair of USAC

**Proposed Amendment**

*Article IV: Membership*

*Section 8: Other Members of USAC*

- a. Ex-officio (non-voting) membership shall include:
  - a. The Associate Vice President of Human Resources
  - b. The Manager of Events and Prop Service
- b. Other Membership
  - a. The immediate Past Chair of the USAC Board shall serve as a non-voting member of USAC, but may participate in Executive Board meetings and remain in closed sessions of USAC meetings at the discretion of the current Chair or Vice-Chair.
  - b. If the immediate Past Chair is unable to participate in a meeting, the immediate Past Vice-Chair may be allowed to participate in place of the immediate Past Chair at the discretion of the current Chair or Vice-Chair.
  - c. Neither the immediate Past Chair nor immediate Past Vice Chair shall have voting authority.

Current Bylaw

**Article V: Officers**

*Section 2*

At the regular meeting held in March or April of each year, members shall vote and select the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Recording Secretary from among those who will be continuing the remainder of their term on the Council. Their term of office shall commence during the USAC meeting held the following July.

**Proposed Amendment**

*Article V: Officers*

*Section 2: Nomination and Election of Officers*
a. The current Executive Board will receive nominations for the upcoming Chair, Vice-Chair and Recording Secretary beginning in January. Nominations will close at the end of February (28th or 29th depending on leap year).

b. Prior to the election for the Executive Board, the Parliamentarian will confirm from each USAC member nominated for a position on the Executive Board that person accepts the nomination.

c. The Parliamentarian will also confirm eligibility of nominees. Eligibility includes eligibility for membership as stated in Article III, Section 2, Article IV, Section 6 and the nominee still has at least one year remaining in their term to serve.

d. At the regular meeting in March or April of each year, members shall vote and select the Chair, Vice-Chair and Recording Secretary from the confirmed nominations provided by the Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian shall also provide ballots to members for voting.

e. Electors in this process shall be those who will be continuing the remainder of their term on the Council, and exclude those who complete their term on the Council in July of the same year.

f. After being elected, the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Recording Secretary term of office shall commence during the USAC meeting held the following July.

Current Bylaw

Article IX: Amendment of Bylaws

Section 2

A two-thirds vote of the USAC membership is required to accept or reject a proposed amendment.

Proposed Amendment

Article IX: Amendment of Bylaws

Section 2

A two-thirds vote of the USAC membership is required to accept a proposed amendment.

Voting of USAC New Executive Board

Please join USAC in congratulating and welcoming its new Executive Board Members:

Paul Brockwell, USAC Chair
Andi Minor, USAC Co-Chair
Nancy Propst, USAC Recording Secretary

Hearing no other announcements, Maya adjourned the regular meeting at 2:31pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Ebony Kirkland, USAC Secretary