

UI Staff Council
Wednesday, September 8, 2021
2:30 – 4:30 pm
4th Floor Student Lounge, Boyd Law Building and Online via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Present

Wendy Askling, Brian Baxter, Mihaela Bojin, Matsalyn Brown, Brett Cloyd, Jackie Curnick, Em Domingues, Brian Douglas, Jadvyga Gerasimovic, Zach Girazian, Shari Heick, Anne Hinkle, Erika Holm-Brown, Cody Howell, Makur Jain, Jackie Kleppe, Sarah Ling, Emily Milke, Heather Mineart, Evans Ochola, Debra O'Connell-Moore, Jamie O'Meara, Stephen Pacha, Jessica Padilla, Yelena Perkhounkova, Lisa Piper, Isaac Podolefsky, Ted Potter, Molly Rechkemmer, Jeremy Richardson, Rubia Ruiz, Lisa Schumacher, Mary Shumaker, Glenda Smith, Warren Staal, David Stenersen, Jennifer Stout, Erin Turnis, Jim Verry, Jessica Welter, Carrie Whittaker, Darrelle Wilkinson, Toni Woodbury, Kevin Zihlman, Molly James, Dawn Coffman

Absent

Damien Blair, James Jorris, Becky Keogh, Liz Lara, Carlton Petty, Teri Schnelle, Sonia Slevinski

Administrative Liaisons

None

Guests

Kevin Washburn, Walt Wang, Kendra Belski, Debra Henricks, Hannah Hodges, Jodi Kennedy, Jamie O'Meara, Tracey Pritchard, Cheryl Reardon, Regan Smock, Teresa Suchomel, Brenda Van Dee, Angela Ward, Lynette Williams

Presenters

- Theresa Marshall – President of Faculty Senate
- Moala Bannavti – President of the Graduate/Professional Student Group
- Regan Smock – President of the Undergraduate Student Government
- Chuck Swanson – Executive Director of Hancher Auditorium
- Joni Troester – Senior Assistant VP & Deputy Chief Human Resource Officer
- Diana Kremzar – Director of UI Family Services

WELCOME, MEETING PROTOCOL, ATTENDANCE, MEETING MINUTES

Kevin introduced Dean Kevin Washburn from the College of Law, who welcomed Staff Council to the Boyd Law Building and expressed his gratitude to staff for all they do for the College and the University.

Minutes approval:

- SC Minutes of August 11, 2021. *The minutes were approved with votes in the room and via Zoom poll.*
- SCEC Minutes of September 1, 2021 were presented; *no comments were made.*

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UI SHARED GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP PANEL

- Dr. Teresa Marshall, President of Faculty Senate – College of Dentistry; The Faculty Senate will focus this year on facilitating and advocating a safe working environment and targeted UI Operations Manual changes. They will examine proposed faculty tracks changes and make recommendations for the updates. They will look for ways to protect tenured faculty and their academic freedom, particularly because institutions of higher learning exist to challenge our minds and to exchange ideas. The Faculty Senate wants to establish a strong relationship with President Wilson. They also recognize that campus morale needs to be addressed and that the UI parental leave and the catastrophic leave policies need further review as well.
- Ms. Moala Bannavti, President of the Graduate/Professional Student Group – Graduate Research Assistant in the College of Engineering. GPSG plans to spend this academic year conducting an examination of their structure and membership to recruit a broad spectrum of students and to be more equitable and inclusive; to that end, they have more members with disabilities, gender identities, first year grad students, and those with children. There are 7 member colleges, so many different constituencies. Their funds support students through grants. In addition to their focus on internal operations, they will do some outreach activities.
- Ms. Regan Smock, President of the Undergraduate Student Government – Sociology Major, with Spanish and Anthropology Minors. She described USG as having a similar structure to the federal government, with President, a cabinet, and different committees working on discrete areas. She feels disconnected from Staff Council but hopes to work more together. USG wants to work with counseling services especially for LGBTQ and other underrepresented groups – they want more assistance for mental health issues and they want services to all people, including staff and students. They are also looking into a shuttle service for students who travel to conferences and other UI-related destinations.
- Q and A – Kevin Zihlman asked, “What are some things UI can do to help students become future teachers and staff at UI?”
 - Ms. Bannavti – staff in her department have helped her to stay in the program, but if asked to become a faculty member here, she wouldn’t stay because UI is not welcoming enough. She said UI needs to fix many things such as sexual harassment, microaggressions, and other forms of discrimination. She hopes UI is prepared for radical change that she thinks will be demanded by those entering UI. Staff make a big difference in students’ lives, particularly in terms of mentoring, so that can help recruit some UI graduates to faculty and staff positions.
 - Ms. Smock – everyone should finish school and should have support, but lots of students don’t have that kind of support, so UI should work on ways to provide that support.
 - Ms. Marshall – employees, students, and UI administration need to be careful over the next couple of years to listen to one another and to our community and state so that we can care for all faculty, students, and staff. She emphasized the importance of staff to her own department by saying, “Staff “make or break” our junior faculty.”
- What mechanisms are in place for shared governance to cross-pollinate?

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- Kevin Zihlman: shared governance leaders meet monthly, and they meet regularly with UI administration
- Ms. Marshall: the Faculty Senate has open meetings; SC Past President Heather Mineart attended most of those monthly meetings. The Faculty Senate leadership also meets with other groups on campus
- GPSG doesn't invite shared governance partners to their meetings, but Ms. Bannavti will look into it.
- How do you make time for your responsibilities?
 - Ms. Smock – time management; Ms. Bannavti – she works with her Executive Team / Ms. Marshall – difficult to make time

[we ran into Zoom difficulties, so we couldn't share slides from this point forward; slides will be shared on the SC website]

HANCHER AUDITORIUM

Charles (Chuck) Swanson, Executive Director of Hancher Auditorium

- Mr. Swanson shared one of his favorite descriptions of Hancher by former UI President Sandy Boyd: "Hancher is the largest classroom on campus." That quote informs much of what Hancher does for this campus. He spoke about how departments can collaborate with Hancher and shared a story about working with physicians to help them understand what people feel like when they begin to lose their sight. Mr. Swanson's team commissioned someone to write a play. Physicians and other healthcare workers saw the play and were changed as to how they look at these and other patients.
- Every student should know the history of the university, so Hancher can help to share that history.
- 50th year will be celebrated in August of 2022; there will be artistically created floats; dancers will be brought to Hancher via decorated boats on the river; they hope to have a tightrope across water. The celebration is meant to bring many departments together to build and put on the celebration.
- Fish in front of Hancher were installed in August of 2020 / "Wellspring" is the title of the installation to reflect what Hancher does. The installation will be used as a student recruitment tool; one way it's been used already is 3rd graders from around Iowa were asked to name the fish and to talk about the source of their own wellspring. Perhaps they will remember this exercise as they consider college. "Fishtastic!" is a picture book by Tess Weaver (author) and Jennifer Black Reinhardt (illustrator) that was inspired by "Wellspring" and might also be used to recruit future Hawkeyes.
- One important focus for Hancher is building community. This focus was lived out during the process of envisioning, planning, and building the new Hancher, including all the different groups of architects, contractors, construction managers. They came together for meetings and meals, which solidified the team spirit.
- On a difficult note, UI has eliminated funding for Hancher, which causes Mr. Swanson to be concerned about Hancher's future. His team developed a vision, core values, and a work plan, all of which put people first. They do their best to promote student success and inspiration. Hancher is the most natural form of DEI, say many people from outside of the

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- Would love to work with Staff Council to help build community.

Q & A

- Where should we start to build community? Mr. Swanson answered by asking, “How do we build trust?” Despite the fact that UI no longer funds, Hancher and the community need one another, so perhaps it would be helpful to bring someone in from the outside to lead a discussion about building community.
- Big shows cost big money – are there ways to make those more affordable to the students and the community? Mr. Swanson said 50-60% of their revenue comes from the box office; the rest is donations. “Hancher for Hawkeyes” makes it more affordable for students. Hancher also draws artists, so they can work with the artists on their fees.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Community Outreach – David Stenersen

- OnIowa! was great; we want all councilors to participate in everything, but COVID still prevents as much volunteering as we’d like
- Homecoming Parade and float update – please come help us decorate and walk!

Communications Committee – Jackie Curnick

- The newsletter will be highlighting different places on campus; a survey was linked for councilors to fill out during the meeting and it will be available to all staff in the upcoming newsletter.

Awards Committee – Isaac Podolefsky

- Recipients of awards are being notified / there will be a celebration in October

University Relations – Mihaela Bojin

- Subcommittees are being formed
- A Committee goal is to connect with other groups that are important to SC: the legislators, shared governance partners, and peer universities
- Keith Saunders is invited to speak to the Committee to share the priorities of the UI in working with the legislature

DEI Committee – Matsalyn Brown

- Partnering with diversity councils and other groups, especially as to celebration in the spring

Human Resources – Brian Baxter

- Starting to talk about initiatives at their next meeting

UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESOURCES EMERGENCY HARDSHIP FUND

Joni Troester – Senior Assistant VP & Deputy Chief Human Resource Officer and Diana Kremzar – Director of UI Family Services

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- Part of the Employee Assistance Program; go to the [EAP website](#) to find Hardship Fund information and application; employee or supervisor or other can apply on someone's behalf.
- Started Summer 2021
- Idea for fund preceded pandemic but accelerated during the pandemic and after derecho; some peer institutions have this kind of fund.
- Up to \$1,000 as a one-time grant; not for ongoing expenses
- \$25,000 allocated by UI this year and next year
- The Emergency Hardship Fund Committee represents a spectrum of departments and reviews the applications.
- Since the fund started, they've had 39 applications; 13 funded so far
- Healthcare staff is eligible

ADJOURNMENT

- Lisa Piper moved to adjourn; Jadvyga Gerasimovic seconded motion; Kevin called for a vote – all were in favor; Kevin adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

- October 13, 2021, 2:30-4:30 PM (location TBA)