

UI Staff Council Executive Committee
Wednesday, October 6, 2021
2:30 – 4:30 pm
UCC 2670 and Online via Zoom

Attendance

Present

Kevin Zihlman, Rubia Ruiz, Shari Heick, Matsalyn Brown, James Jorris, Heather Mineart, Becky Keogh, David Stenersen

Absent

Jackie Kleppe

Administrative Liaison

Marla Rosenblum

Guests

- Mirra Anson, Coordinator of Strategic Plan and Student Success Initiatives, Office of the Provost
- Mackenzie Lechlitr Kirby, Educational Policy and Leadership, Graduate College
- Glenda Smith and Darrelle Wilkinson, Education Committee
- Jackie Curnick, Communications Committee

Approval of UISC Executive committee meeting minutes

Minutes approval:

- September 1, 2021 – UISC Executive Committee Meeting – motion by Rubia, second by Heather, approved with no edits.

Discussion topics

Introduce David Stenersen

- New Budget Officer David Stenersen, Assistant Director – Purchasing Operations and Business Analytics. David serves as a UISC Business and Finance function representative.

Strategic Plan Listening Session

- Mirra Anson and Mackenzie Lechlitr Kirby facilitated a listening session to receive feedback regarding strategic planning to identify institutional priorities of focus over the next 5 years as well as areas of opportunity and distinction. Staff Council also has the opportunity to engage with the strategic planning process through representatives Heather Mineart and Kevin Zihlman.
- **Question: as the University of Iowa develops the next strategic plan, what are the priorities from your perspective that should guide campus decision makers for the next 5 years?**
 - o SCEC members discussed: retention at all levels for staff and students; keeping a focus on the student experience and how that enhances the staff experience; creating a more formalized staff to student mentoring process; future-proofing UI processes and procedures; a continued and enhanced focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion; increased funding for the Diversity Resources Team; increased communication from top leaders to campus and constituents in general and on social issues; a greater focus on sustainability

UI Staff Council Executive Committee

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

2:30 – 4:30 pm

UCC 2670 and Online via Zoom

regarding resources and processes; and preventing burnout and incentivizing employee commitments throughout UI and specifically in the clinic setting.

- **Question: part of the strategic planning process involves identifying areas of distinction which can be understood as institutional strengths or things we do really well or want to do really well. If you could decide what you would like the university to be known for, what would you choose?**
 - SCEC members discussed: showing people in our community, state, and region how UI impacts their lives; building rapport across the state through marketing and person to person level interactions; enhancing UI employment opportunities for those around the state; highlighting unique features of UI like the autonomous vehicle simulator and top level programs; utilizing research done by UI faculty to determine future UI processes, especially regarding campus benefits and what future generations view as good benefits; and showing what we do at UI and why we do it.
- The following graphic was shared showing broad areas or strategies from collegiate and unit level plans:

Student Success

- Recruiting & retaining a diverse, high-ability student body
- Identify and address obstacles to degree completion, particularly for student groups, spanning underrepresented minority, low-income, first generation, students with disabilities, and veteran students
- Strengthen access to and existence of student wellness programs
- Increase access to and engagement in experiential, evidence-based learning opportunities
- Further refine curriculum to meet 21st century to enhance efficacy of a liberal arts education and meet employment demands

Faculty & Staff Success

- Support instructional resources through new and existing resources
- Recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff
- Better diversity applicant pools for faculty and staff positions
- Develop and emphasize critical leadership practices and behaviors
- Support wellness across the employee lifecycle

Research & Discovery

- Focus on and increase existing and emerging areas of research excellence
- Invest in research facilities and infrastructure
- Increase external and internal research grants and fellowships awarded to faculty, staff, and students
- Develop a more formalized postdoctoral fellowship program
- Identify and address obstacles to cross-disciplinary and multidisciplinary research within and across colleges
- Assist faculty in the promotion of themselves and their research

Diversity, Inclusion, & Equity

- Create better pathways for undergraduate and graduate programs for recruitment
- Facilitate mentorship opportunities for marginalized faculty and students while increasing opportunities to be advanced or promoted to leadership roles
- Examine/audit existing policies and practices
- Update performance evaluations to include attention to DEI
- Promote a culture and system of accountability, communication, and transparency

- **Question: what roles do you see for central administration in supporting the items listed? Which should be centrally because of their scope or potentially high impact on a range of students, faculty, and staff?**
 - SCEC discussion included: central support for wellness programs for student, faculty, and staff; greater understanding of where staff resources can be found; increased focus on accountability regarding performance evaluations including DEI; ongoing supervisor trainings; incentivizing continual learning and creating a culture where it's expected

UI Staff Council Executive Committee

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

2:30 – 4:30 pm

UCC 2670 and Online via Zoom

Staff Council Orientation Video

- Representatives from the Education Committee (Glenda Smith and Darrelle Wilkinson) and Communications Committee (Jackie Curnick) discussed the potential for a staff council video to be shown to new UI staff.
- SCEC was supportive of the idea and brought forth questions regarding video content and message, plans for distribution, sustainability of the practice for future years, and potential to use the video for UISC recruiting.
- There is a concern about the amount of information presented to new staff members early on and a video may be able to break up the long emails new staff receive.
- The video could contain footage of the homecoming parade and UISC volunteer events.
- UISC sends a one-time letter to all new UI staff. This letter is typically sent to over 60 people each month and includes academic and healthcare new employees. Engagement seems low for the letter.
- Ideas to increase engagement for the letter included QR codes or a quarterly drawing for new staff similar to the codes found in the liveWELL newsletters.

Committee Chair Selection Process

- This topic was not discussed during the meeting and will be handled via email communication.

October Staff Council Meeting Agenda

- SCEC reviewed the upcoming October Staff Council meeting agenda.

SCEC Meetings with President Wilson; Debrief and Plan Forward

- SCEC met with President Wilson for the first time in September. These meetings serve as an opportunity to share specific feedback and brainstorm potential solutions.
- SCEC understands these meetings help provide a staff perspective to President Wilson. SCEC members shared how they received feedback to share from staff members via surveys and meetings with local staff councils.
- SCEC will continue to present UISC accomplishments from the last couple of years as well as provide talking points to discuss with President Wilson's senior leadership.
- President Wilson views one of her roles as a messenger to tell UI's story to constituents in the community, state, and region, specifically legislators.

Exit Interview Feedback

- Current SCEC members have been meeting with previous UISC members who were willing to share feedback.
- Feedback has been very positive, and the following suggestions were made:
 - A need for greater ease when sharing out meeting information. The "may share, please share" labels in UISC emails and a commitment to sending out minutes earlier have helped.
 - Appreciation for in-person meetings at different locations with a tour included.
 - Suggestions for greater engagement with UISC members during the meetings such as more Q&A or breakout rooms.

UI Staff Council Executive Committee

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

2:30 – 4:30 pm

UCC 2670 and Online via Zoom

- A suggestion for creating a mini retreat for new committee chairs so they understand their roles.
- A need for increased mingling for UISC members before/after meetings.
- Greater connection with UNI and ISU staff councils.

Adjournment

- James motioned, Matsalyn seconded; motion carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 4:27 pm.

Next meeting: November 3, 2021 2:30-4:30 pm, TBA