

UI Staff Council Executive Committee

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

2:30 – 4:30 pm

Zoom

Attendance

Present: Neda Barrett, Nima Chaudhary, Makur Jain, James Jorris, Jackie Kleppe, Brian Morelli, Ashley Peters, David Stenersen.

Absent: Molly James.

Liaison: Kellie Digmann.

Guest: Beth MacKenzie

Minutes

SCEC December minutes were adopted unanimously without changes. (Motioned by Barrett. Seconded by Chaudhary.)

Discussion topics

Staff Council January Agenda Review – Jorris

The agenda is still being formulated.

Word on the Street – Jorris

Jorris introduced a new exercise called “word on the street” to surface topics and issues of interest to UI staff.

The Mercy Hospital acquisition remains a major topic of discussion and question because there are so many aspects and people impacted. Stenersen noted there is considerable work related to Mercy’s roster of vendors. Some vendors had issues as Mercy was dealing with its financial issues. UI must sort through which vendors will be integrated. There is also significant work with on boarding Mercy staff, managing parking, transition to the EPIC patient records system, and other topics.

Another topics is the condition of behavioral health units. There is a feeling that because those units don’t generate as much revenue they are not maintained at the same level as other units that generate more revenue. This has an impact on patient care and rehabilitation. Dementia patients were mentioned as a specific example of a class of patient that is negatively impacted.

Staff salaries were the top topic indicated on the Press Gainey survey of staff on the health care campus.

A topic that continues to generate interest is paid maternity leave such that it doesn’t come from vacation or sick time. This has been explored in the past.

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Office of Sustainability – Beth MacKenzie

MacKenzie provided an overview of the Office of Sustainability. The office has three professional staff and several student interns. MacKenzie noted sustainability can be defined in different ways including meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The office aims to support students, faculty, and staff and campus partners. For students this includes expand sustainability curriculum, provide internships, expand student research opportunities, and engage student orgs. For faculty this includes facilitate research opportunities and collaboration and expand living laboratories on campus. For staff and campus partners, this includes host or collaborate on sustainability events and outreach activities, provide sustainability consultation and technical assistance, assist in achieving UI's campus sustainability goals.

Sustainability is included in the 2022-2027 UI Strategic Plan under transformative societal impact goal. This specific language is to further integrate sustainability into the university's teaching, research, and public engagement missions as well as its operations. UI sustainability goals have been prorated to align with the 2027 end of the strategic plan period. Previously, goals had been benchmarked against 2030.

Sustainability goals:

- Climate Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%.
- Education Goal: 100% of undergraduate students will complete a sustainability-focused course before graduating.
- Waste Goal: Become a Zero Waste campus by achieving PLAN Atlas Bronze Zero Waste certification.
- Water Goal: Improve water quality in the Iowa River by creating best practices for stormwater management and water conservation.
- Campus Goal: Embed sustainability into every college and auxiliary unit's strategic plan and report on progress annually.

MacKenzie pointed out a number of ways staff can volunteer: Trash clean-ups, Tree plantings, Invasive species removal, Garden maintenance, City Nature Challenge, Food pantry, Clothing closet.

Tuition Assistance – Jorris

Jorris said Staff Council leaders continue to introduce the proposal to extend and potentially make permanent the tuition assistance program. Jorris and others have been presenting to campus partners, including the president and provost for feedback prior to presenting to the campus review board, which is a necessary step to getting the proposal incorporated into the budget.

Feedback has included highlighting tuition assistance usage by college rather than unit to provide a higher level snap shot. Other questions have been how many use the program to get a degree versus individual classes. A concern remains what happens to staff after taking classes. Do they stay in their units? There's an expectation deans will question how much their college benefits.

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Budget Review – Stenersen

Stenersen said approximately \$49,000 remains in Coca-Cola Funds to be distributed through the application process. However, Stenersen recommended reducing that amount by \$20,000 to caution against amount that is expected to be deducted in the future.

Action: Unanimous approval to award \$9,020 in Coca-Cola Funds to the Staff Recognition Program. This money will allow the program to meet existing but unfunded applications.

Executive committee deferred a request for \$4,629 in Coca-Cola Funds to support the CLAS staff awards program. Members wanted more information about the level of funding per award and the nature of the applications.

DEI Taskforce – Barrett

Barrett and Jorris serve on the 15 person taskforce that is reviewing Regent DEI report findings. They are tasked with reimagining DEI on campus, including goals and measurable outcomes. They hope to have recommendations drafted in March to present to the Regents in April. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback to the taskforce form: <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/form/dei-forward-task-force-feedback>.

Review 2024 Well-being Topics - Jorris

- January: New Year, New Goals – What’s coming in 2024?
- February: Get involved! Action items for right now!
- March: “Work Life Harmony” / Family Related Services
- April: Built and Natural Environment (Earth Month)
- May: Campus Connections: Discover Your University and Walking Scavenger Hunt
- June: Resilience and Mental Health

Adjournment

Jorris adjourns the meeting.

Next meeting

Next Meeting
February 7, 2024
2:30-4:30p
2520B UCC