

UI Staff Council
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
2:30-4:30 pm
2520-D UCC & Zoom

Present

Marie Adams, Jerusalem Alleyne, Neda Barrett, Josey Bathke , Amanda Bibb, Amir Bozorgzadeh, Maria Bruno, Bradley Carson, Nima Chaudhary, Brett Cloyd, Rich Dvorsky, Shawn Eyestone, Michael Fletcher, Hunter Floyd, Ashley Glasberg-Nazette, Anne Hinkle, Michele Hogue, Erika Holm-Brown, Griffin Idleman, Jordan Immerfall, Molly James, Hilary Jensen, James Jorris, Lindsay Lansberry, Ann Lawler, Sarah Livesay, Veronica LynnLee, Cathy McGinnis, Sam Mitchell, Brian Morelli, Evans Ochola , Jamie O'Meara, Alex Paternostro, Tammy Paulus, Ashley Peters, Vickie Roesner, Kayla Rojas, Rubia Ruiz, Mel Sanders, Tony Senio, Lin Shuhui, David Stenersen, Kathleen Tandy, Bridget Toomey, Santhana Velupillai, Heath Vignes, Adam Walsh, Jessica Welter, Casey Westlake, Donna Wong-Gibbons, Jennifer Yoder

Not Present

Monica Dreyer Rossi, Glen Fuhrmeister, Brittany Grabe, Dave Hartley, Liz Lara, Eric Schnedler, Teri Schnelle, Sara Sullivan

Administrative Liaisons

Kellie Digmann

Guests

Leanne Hotek, Diana Kremzar, Erin Litton, Liz Mendez-Shannon, Cheryl Reardon, Keith Saunders, Charlie Taylor, Bronwyn Threlkeld-Wiegand, Liz Tovar, Debby Zumbach

Past Presidents

John Laverty, Mike Weaver

Constituents

Vedansh Airen, Staci Anderson, Steve Andresen , Susan Bailey, Sharon Beck , Brendan Beeter, Rob Beland, Brittany Benda, Alma Bernal , Diane Berwald, Heidi Bodensteiner, Kelly Bridenstine , Mia Brunelli, Paige Carlson, Xirui Chen, Ramadevi Chinthala, Cintia Cutter, Natalie Dejardin, Lisa Ellenson, Jody Fisher, Sonja Galligan, Trevor Glanz, Tamara Griffith, Courtney Hoffman, Nicole Hoppenworth, Suzanne J. Hilleman, Vicki Jaeger, Lydia Jedlicka, Emily Johnson, Alaa Kayed, Izzy Kippes, Bethany Kluender, Denise Krutzfeldt, Ashly Lagneaux, Lin Lin, Jennifer Lynch , Gavin Macdonald, Frankline Matanji, Brennah McCorkell, Nikki Miller, Renae Miller, Jess Muschaweck, Hailey Nielsen, Brenda Olson, Hellecktra Orozco, H Pedelty, Alicia Peden, Stacia Phillips, Lily Phonphiboun, Linda Pyrah, Molly Rechkemmer, Cooper Reittinger, Justine Retz, Michelle Ribble, Emily Rodriguez , Sherry Roe, Blake Rupe, Sayeh Sabbagh, Jake Scharff, KatyBeth Schmid, Jamie Sexton, Michelle Sillman, Lori Skoff, Abigail Spragg, Danelle Stipes, Kim Stout, Kelly Taylor, Derek Timmerman, Yoko Tsoi, Brenda Van Dee, Christa Venenga, Joey Villalobos, Brenda W, Connie Wason, Megan Wiebersch

Minutes

The November Staff Council Minutes were approved.

Meeting

President James Jorris welcomed everyone to the November UI Staff Council (UISC) meeting. He reviewed the meeting protocols. James motioned and Morelli seconded approval of the November minutes. The minutes were approved. Jorris reviewed the meeting agenda.

Volunteer of the Month

Lindsay Lansberry was awarded Staff Council Volunteer of the Month for November.

Well-Being Update: Financial Well-Being / Basic Needs by Diana Kremzar and Bronwyn Threlkeld-Wiegand, University Human Resources

Kremzar reported that 38% of employees has had difficulty concentrating at work due to financial stress according to questions in the Personal Health Assessment. These hardships can be a productivity barrier and include a range of concerns. The University is [working with Hills Bank](#) to provide free financial coaching to faculty and staff, as well as access to a library of programming and resource materials.

Threlkeld-Wiegand provided information about the employee Emergency Hardship Fund. Employees may apply and receive up to \$1,000 for an “emergent event.” The funding is not for an on-going expense. The application process is available through the HR Workflow system. Questions can be directed to uhr-hardshipfund@uiowa.edu. There are a series of eligibility requirements included on the [meeting slides](#). New in FY24, coverage is available for medical and dental costs. The funding supported 79 people in FY24, up from 58 in FY23. Funding is first-come, first-serve and funded by UI HR. 86% of fund recipients reported improve work performance.

Community Outreach Highlight

Jorris shared several activities from the past month, including the United Way fundraiser at the Iowa Heartlanders Hockey Game, and the United Way campus kickoff at the Old Capitol featuring Coach Lisa Bluder and President Barbara Wilson.

Division of Access, Opportunity & Diversity (AOD) by Liz Tovar, Access Opportunity and Diversity, with Charlie Taylor, Office of Access and Support, and Liz Mendez-Shannon, CLAS Administration.

Tovar updated Staff Council on a busy 2024. Updates she provided were current as of December 11, 2025. Her office has been reviewed and reorganized to help the University meet changes in state law as well as directives from the Iowa Board of Regents (BOR). The University is a complicated space and includes a large campus with different kinds of work happening every day. Accreditation requirements and federal legislation are described in the state’s requirements. Positions engaged in DEI-related work have been reviewed, updated, or eliminated. While the purpose of the AOD has changed, it still aims to help create a welcoming campus culture. A Hub and Spoke model like ones used by Human Resources and Information Technology has been developed for AOD to ensure compliance with state and federal laws. Fundamental changes to all work on campus has take place ahead of the BOR December 31, 2024, deadline.

“What does diversity mean to Iowa” was an important question and there were many answers among staff, faculty and students. DEI has so many definitions and there was a lack of measurable goals and outcomes around the programs and services at Iowa. With 50,000 people part of UI, and visitors from across the United States and the world, a question became clear: “How can UI ensure all Hawkeyes develop skills to become competent leaders in the global society and workforce?”

Tovar described how the University has defined diversity (very clearly and broadly) and shared the [Engagement Framework](#) that has been helping units and organization at UI plan and move forward. To help students become future employees and leaders, Iowa consulted employers to explore what goals, principles, skills and impact they hoped for Iowa graduates. These contributions are an important part of the Framework.

At the end of her remarks, Tovar provided an overview of [SF2435](#) (the legislation passed this year) and the BOR directives. There are still some unclear areas but the University is continuing its work. Tovar, Taylor and Mendez-Shannon have been visiting groups across campus to discuss the legislation and BOR directives and offer supportive guidance. They welcome questions about changes to AOD and guidance if Councilors have concerns.

Parking and Transportation by Debby Zumbach, Parking and Transportation

Zumbach began her remarks by sharing information about how Parking and Transportation is funded at Iowa. It is a self-supporting organization that uses its revenue to fund all projects and staff. Cambus is partially funded by Parking and Transportation as employees rely on this service to get from their parking areas to work. Cambus also receives funding from student fees and the Iowa Department of Transportation. There are plans to increase hourly and meter parking rates that will be reviewed at a future Iowa Board of Regents meeting – and have been approved by the UI Charter Committee on Parking and Transportation. This is needed to meet requirements for the Department’s 120% debt service ratio required for bond funded projects such as the new Hawkeye Ramp and Arena Ramp, and to support the maintenance of facilities and lots.

Last year, the Department increased permit rates. Now it is looking to increase public meter and cashiered parking rates. This will put the cost closer to the City of Iowa City facilities. The graduate and student rate will be eliminated to simplify payments.

This year there are 838 fewer spaces available on campus due to construction projects. This should be remedied with the opening of the Hawkeye Ramp in FY25 and the Arena Ramp in FY27. There was also discussion of changes to the Night & Weekend Pass. The pass will be restricted to use during nighttime and weekend times. Employees will be able to continue to park in their assigned areas, but no longer be able to use the pass to park (for a fee) in other UI parking areas (More detail in the [meeting slides](#)).

Councilors and guests had several questions,

- There are several bike repair stations; however no plans to offer space for e-bike charging.
- Hawkeye Ramp will have 50 bike capacity lockers
- There are currently EV charging stations available on campus, but future focus will likely be to support the UI EV fleet of vehicles. Charging is available for a fee.
- Policy is being considered to not add EV charging stations in ramps due to potential fire hazards and lack of sprinklers in ramps.

- Hawkeye Ramp will be an employee and public ramp. It will not be used for patient parking
- Bike Rental Program. In 2019, Iowa City and UI issued a bid for a bike rental program. In 2020, the vendor filed bankruptcy. We are in conversation with Iowa City about doing a new RFP. We must work in partnership with Iowa City given we anticipate the bikes needing to be interchangeable.
- Options for decreasing commuters who drive or park? There are several mentioned – Vanpool is a significant one. Carpooling is another. We have found that employees prefer to drive and park. The cost is not a motivating factor because many need to be able to leave for their families, etc.
- Potential CRANDIC rail line for Cedar Rapids, Coralville, North Liberty commuters? UI is still reviewing the program cost and interest.
- Any thoughts about extending the Night and Weekend hours from 4:30am to maybe 7? In my department we have lots of persons coming in on-call and then if the calls go after 4:30am they have to move their cars or get charged for being on campus for a service to the We have reviewed a lot of data to get to where we are today. We know if someone comes in from 4:30 to 6:30 am, they will park all day. We do not have space with hospital ramp 1 coming down to allow them to park all day. We do need them to move their vehicles to their permit location. While this can be problematic, we need every space for patients and their visitors. UIHC administration is aware of this particular situation as well and supports the time frame we have the cards set for.

Procedure for UIHC employees parking in UIHC for patient care

- UIHC requires that we scan the ramp for employee's parking in the patient ramp.
- Historically, UIHC employees parked and taken space for patients. Daily we scan the vehicles in HR 1, 2, and 4 for employee plates. Understand, when we do this, we have no idea why the vehicles is there other than they do not have a permit.
- We then send the ticket file to UIHC. They compare the names and addresses with their EPIC system to see if they can find a match for an appointment. If they find a match, we cancel the ticket. This process is only as accurate as the information they compare. There are situation where an employee will get a ticket issued because there is not a match. We have a process for the employee to appeal the ticket.
- So if someone does get a ticket, they should appeal and fill out the form on our website. We share these with UIHC for them to manually verify.

Staff Councilors volunteering at the IMU Food Pantry. Slides were shared from a recent volunteer shift.

UI State and Federal Government Relations by Leanne Hotek and Keith Saunders

Saunders remarks focused on his work representing the University of Iowa at the state legislature. He has been in his role for the last 17 years. January 13, 2025, a new general assembly with new legislators begins. Republicans increased their majorities in both the House and Senate, and they have a "Supermajority" in each chamber. Governor Reynolds gives her State of the State address on January 14, 2025, and will discuss her priorities for the session. Expected priorities include health care workforce, rural health, property taxes and additional future income tax proposals. Give past tax changes, it is expected that there will be a reduction in state revenue. Per diem

support of the legislators lasts until May 2, 110 days, which is a target date for adjournment. Regarding state policy, usually the 1st year of the assembly is most active as new legislators bring new ideas. There is a new House Committee on Higher Education (focus on Regents Universities, Community Colleges, and Private Colleges), and it looks like the existing Education Committee will focus on K-12. Typically, subcommittees will hold hearings on proposed legislation at the start of the session. There may be lots of ideas reaching the news, but many will not complete the process of becoming state law. For the University, focus includes rural health care, mental health workforce expansion, and improved health outcomes. The University will be looking to train and graduate more health care professionals and find ways to partner with the state. The Government Relations Office is re-thinking Hawkeye Caucus day to imagine best ways to meet and share information with legislators.

Hotek spoke from Washington, DC where she works on federal policy for the University. She described her work as being the eyes and ears for the University. January 20th is the inauguration date for Donald Trump. Senate Republicans will enjoy a 53-47 majority, and House Republicans will have a 220-215 majority. The new congressional session begins January 3rd. Hotek talked about the Department of Education which is encoded of US federal law yet is a discussion point and target for some in the media and among government leaders. She talked about past experiences when a party held power in the executive and both legislative chambers, including the Inflation Reduction Act (Biden) and the Affordable Care Act (Obama). The process they used to achieve their goals is called budget reconciliation, so look for a similar strategy in early 2025. More pressing, the federal government will run out of funds in 10 days but Congress will likely pass a bill to make funding available until February or March 2025. There is also a National Defense Bill that will likely pass soon

A meeting attendee asked both speakers about supporting students, staff and faculty who are LGBTQ. Sanders and Hotek said they would be happy to at look how legislation could effect members of the University community. Another person asked about nominations for FDA, HSS, and other federal agency heads. Hotek shared that she and her office do look at the University's interests in these appointments and weighs in with the Iowa Congressional delegation. Councilors are invited to contact Saunders (keith-saunders@uiowa.edu) and Hotek (leanne-hotek@uiowa.edu) with questions or concerns.

Staff Council Volunteering at Holiday Lights at the Lake. Slides were shared of a recent volunteer shift for this fun event at the West Overlook at Coralville Lake that supports the Bird House Hospice Home of Johnson County.

Staff Council Elections Update

Barrett gave an update of elections procedures for Staff Council Officers and At Large positions. She received feedback from Councilors, the Election Committee, and the Executive Committee. Bylaws will not be changed because they do not describe the actual election, rather they cover the nomination process in detail. Candidates will be asked to prepare a written statement, and she is working on a process where candidates can respond to questions during the May election meeting. As Barrett prepares documentation, she will consult with the Bylaws Committee and the Executive Committee and seek to add it to the Policies and Procedure Manual (PPM). The PPM does not require a full Staff Council vote for changes.

Timeline reminder. At the March meeting, information about the nomination process is shared. At the April meeting, the nomination process timeline starts and continues until May 7. When a nomination is received, candidates will be asked to accept nomination by May 7 and given instructions on the written statement. Councilors will receive copy of written statement a few days before the last meeting of the year. May 14 is the last meeting and election day and will include Q&A.

Council Corner

Small groups of Councilors discussed two prompts.

- Ideas for future presentations or sharing of resources at Staff Council meetings. Are there topics you would like to learn more about? Is there a service at the University you think more staff should know about?
- Are there questions you have or suggestions you would like to make about how Staff Council or Staff Councilors can advocate for staff? Would you like to learn more about how Staff Council represents our university? About how Councilors work with university leadership?

A member from each group will summarize and share points with Kellie Digmann.

Bylaws Committee

Chair Bathke read for the second time the changes to the new Access, Opportunity, and Diversity Committee bylaws. The Bylaws Committee worked with the formerly named Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members to update language, evaluate scope, and meet the University's requirements. Following this second reading, Staff Councilors voted to approve the Bylaws changes. Wong-Gibbons moved, Morelli seconded. The changes were approved unanimously.

Final Remarks

Councilors were reminded to submit photos of events or activities to the Teams site. Also, nominations are open for Staff Council Awards. The [Awards page](#) has information and deadlines. And there is a get together at Buffalo Wild Wings immediately following this meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Cloyd and seconded by James.

Jorris adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

2:30-4:30 pm

UCC2520-D and via Zoom