

UI Staff Council
February 11, 2026
2:30-4:30 pm
UCC 2520-D and Zoom

Present

Jerusalem Alleyne, Kesten Anderson, Neda Barrett, Josey Bathke, Abbie Beadle, Amanda Bibb, Amir Bozorgzadeh, Amy Burklund, Xirui Chen, Brett Cloyd, Molly Collins, Laura Croteau-Lopez, Kayla Faust, Hunter Floyd, Ashley Glassberg-Nazette, Brittany Grabe, David Hartley, Tom Hicks, Anne Hinkle, Andrew Holland, Erika Holm-Brown, Hilary Jensen, James Jorris, Lindsay Lansberry, Ann Lawler, Shuhui Lin, Sarah Livesay, Ali McCue, Sam Mitchell, Brian Morelli, Evans Ochola, Alex Paternostro, Tammy Paulus, Tiffany Reaves, Alysha Robinson, Kayla Rojas, Ali Romano-McClain, Mel Sanders, Tony Senio, Breno Silvestrini Rodrigues, Monica Smith, Lisa Smith, Brooke Swain, Bridget Toomey, Rebecca Tritten, Heath Vignes, Adam Walsh, Donna Wong-Gibbons

Not Present

Marie Adams, Nima Chaudhary, Michael Chimenti, Michael Fletcher, Michele Hogue, Liz Lara, Ashley Peters, Vickie Roesner, Jonathon Scanlan, Casey Westlake, Gabrielle Wilson, Kate Woods

Administrative Liaisons

Kellie Digmann

Presenters

Keith Becker, Maggie Jesse, Erin Litton, Tiffini Stevenson Earl

Constituents

Paul Adesokan, Katelyn Anderson, Staci Anderson, Jordan Anderson, Brian Bacher, iPhone (81)bart, Ian Bjurstrom, Erica Blaha, Kelli Brommel, Mia Brunelli, Jason Buck, Bonnie Butler, Alyssa Campbell, Kimberly Carter, Curtis Chung, Melissa Close, Mariana Colombo, Samantha Cross, Julie Crow, Melanie Cuchna, Shaeloren Deering, Sean Devlin, Laura Diebold, Miranda Dlhly, Benjamin Dudley, Janet Duncan, Sonatina Fernandes, Dena Fife, Jody Fisher, Jenny Fitzpatrick, Diane Fountain, Justin Fraase, Nonalee Gardner, Joel Gavin, Patrice Gomado, Tamara Griffith, Aarin Harper, Christopher Harrison, Kathryn Harrison, Michelle Hayes, Maxi Hedlund, Jan Heidemann, Cynthia Hernandez, Suzanne Hilleman, Courtney Hoffman, Eli Hotchkin, Jiongting Hu, Alexa Iben, Niko Iben, Victoria Jaeger, Tara Jennerjohn, Drew Kabala, Mackenzie Keil, Diaba Keita, Kevin Keyser, Emma Kirk-Alvarez, Andrew Kness, Brett Koenig, Diana Kremzar, David Lippe, Becca Mallon, Rachel Marek, Amy Mattix, Kathy Maxey, Alex McFarland, Traci Miller, Brian Morris, Zoe Morris, Marni Morrison, Amber Mower, Viki Mueller, Rachel Napoli, Julie NoLastName, Lynne Nugent, Hannah Oberhoffer-Phillips, Susmita Pal, Lily Phonphiboun, Melia Pieper, Travis Pogmore, Adam Potter, Christal Quigley, Molly Rechkemmer, Haley Reseweher, Michelle Ribble, Melissa Richlen, Sherry Roe, Vickie Roesner, David Rooney, Blake Rupe, Dillon Sampson,

Chris Sang, Denise Schief, Jamie Sexton, Alec Shultz, Laura Sinn, Trent Siver, Colton Spaur, Eileen Sullivan, Sarah Tillman, Allie Tokarski, Doris Vaske , Daniel Vorwerk, Jennifer Wagner, Elizabeth Wallace, Molly Walter, T, Vanessa Wiest, Haley Wolf, Sean Yerkey, iPhone

Leadership

Cheryl Reardon

Past President

James Jorris

Minutes

The January Staff Council Minutes were approved. Barrett asked if all members agreed with approval, all responded 'aye', and there were no objections or corrections.

Meeting

Welcome, Agenda Overview and Minute Approval/Volunteer Highlights

Barrett welcomed all to the February Staff Council meeting. Provided brief overview of agenda. Mitchell welcomed 3 new Staff Council members, Abbie Beadle, Amy Burklund and Ali McCue.

Community Outreach Chairs Hinkle and Bibb recognized volunteer contributions and upcoming volunteer opportunities. Michele Hogue was highlighted for contributing the most volunteer hours and participating in the most events. They outlined that Staff Council received an appreciation placard from the Iowa DOT for our efforts during the recent highway cleanup.

Accessible Iowa: Countdown to Digital Accessibility

The Accessibility Task Force provided an update led by Tiffini Stevenson Earl, Senior Director and ADA Coordinator in the Office of Civil Rights Compliance, and Maggie Jesse, Co-Chair of the UI Accessibility Task Force. They reviewed the 2024 federal accessibility ruling and the April 2026 compliance deadline, noting that the task force was formed in January 2025 to support campus-wide adherence to new requirements. The ruling applies to all digital platforms—including websites, apps, multimedia, documents, software, email, digital signage, ICON, MAUI, self-service tools, and MyChart—and reflects a positive cultural shift toward inclusive access. The presenters highlighted accomplishments to date and emphasized the importance of changing daily habits by using accessibility checkers, enabling automatic captions in Zoom, Teams, and PowerPoint, and participating in available training. Tools already integrated across campus systems were reviewed, such as Ally in ICON, accessibility checkers in Office 365, Adobe Acrobat Pro, and built-in features that support faculty and staff. Training opportunities include short videos, Accessibility 101 in self-service, and instructor-led sessions. They introduced the 3Rs framework—Remove, Revise, and Right First—to guide digital content creation and maintenance. Additional updates included new support systems for faculty, the development of an accessibility liaison program, and ongoing outreach such as engaging researchers for feedback. The task force encouraged all employees to promote training, review their websites, follow

accessibility best practices, raise awareness, and provide feedback to support campus compliance and inclusion efforts.

Recruitment & Hiring Strategies

Keith Becker, Senior Director of Talent Acquisition, provided an update on recruitment and hiring strategies, highlighting recent progress in developing data dashboards to improve visibility into recruitment activity. He explained that initial challenges included limited built-in analytics and a lack of integration with self-service systems, which led the team to learn the Taleo data model and create daily data extracts through a lean, multi-year effort. The resulting campus-wide dashboard now runs on more than five million rows of data and integrates recruitment and employment information. Becker demonstrated what HR Senior Leadership can view for their respective colleges. He also shared insights gained from surveys administered to new employees—including exit, new-hire, 30–90-day, six-month, and one-year surveys—which apply specifically to employees newly entering the university. Finally, he reviewed available onboarding resources, including required items, policy and procedure guidance, and tools designed to support a smooth transition for new staff.

2026: Evidence-Based Approach to Population Health

Erin Litton, Senior Director of UI Wellness, presented the 2025 Personal Health Assessment (PHA) findings, highlighting themes related to campus culture and the importance of maintaining a sustained, evidence-based approach to wellbeing. She emphasized the significant role supervisors play, noting that when employees strongly agree they are supported by their supervisor, they report a higher level of well-being. Litton discussed opportunities to improve the built environment to better support wellbeing and shared that the university continues to outperform national benchmarks in physical ability metrics. She highlighted campus leaders and built environments that are setting strong examples in supporting employee wellbeing. While national trends show a decline in overall thriving, UI offers programs like EAP, health coaching, RUOK initiatives, and wellness grants to help address productivity barriers and bolster supervisor support. She concluded with a call to action, encouraging attendees to consider how they can support wellbeing—whether as supervisors, role models, participants, or by creating spaces that foster a healthier campus environment. [See the liveWELL 2025 Population Health Report here.](#)

Staff Council Quick Tips & Reminders

President Barrett shared a series of Quick Tips and Reminders, noting that while these items are typically reviewed in closed session, the information was important for all attendees. She highlighted several resources and benefit programs available to our staff.

Lesser-Known Benefits at UI

- Catastrophic Leave – Allows employees to donate or receive leave to support colleagues during extended medical or family emergencies.
- Employee Discount Programs – Discounts available for dining, travel, wellness, technology, and more.
- Food Pantry at Iowa – Free food and essential items available to UI students, staff, faculty, and retirees.

- liveWELL (Well-being Program) – UI’s wellness hub, offering challenges, incentives, and well-being resources.
- Pre-Doctoral Incentive Program – Covers the full cost of dental treatment (aligned with Delta Dental II) when using the College of Dentistry student clinics.
- 380 Express Bus Pass Discounts – Reduced-rate bus passes for travel between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.
- Scanlan Center for Teaching & Learning – Staff-friendly professional development and support offerings.
- UI Emergency Hardship Fund – Provides one-time financial assistance for unexpected personal or family hardship.
- UI Rideshare – Carpool and ridesharing coordination for campus commuters.
- UI Total Compensation Estimator – Helps employees calculate the full value of their compensation and benefits.
- Facilitated Access Overview (UI Health Care) – Established in 2019, is designed to increase outpatient appointment availability for patients with UI health insurance by ensuring new-patient visits can be scheduled within 10 days. Clinical departments are organized into tiers, with primary care assigned the highest number of facilitated-access slots and the most ambitious targets, while secondary and tertiary specialties have proportionally fewer slots and lower access expectations.
- Family Services Resources – include support for a range of caregiving needs, offering primary and backup childcare options, summer youth programs, and dedicated resources for nursing parents. Employees also have access to elder caregiving assistance, along with LivWell Seniors, a service that provides referrals, information, and in-home assessments, and is additionally available through a mobile app using the UI access code.
- Additional Employee Programs – Additional employee programs include support for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), free travel insurance and emergency assistance for employees and their dependents through the Travel Assistance Program, and complimentary Will Preparation and Identity Theft resources that provide tools for creating standard legal documents.

Staff Council Elections: Open Forum & Vacancies

Vice President Mitchell shared an update on the upcoming Staff Council elections, announcing that a virtual open forum will be held on March 5, 2026, and encouraging staff interested in running to add the session to their calendars. She also reviewed current vacancies for functional and organizational representatives and outlined the full election timeline for the upcoming cycle.

Staff Council Committee Update: Committee on Committees

Erika Holm-Brown and Brett Cloyd, Chairs of the Committee on Committees, provided an update on their work to solicit and recommend highly qualified staff candidates for both UI Charter and Non-Charter committees, noting that these roles offer valuable leadership development opportunities on campus. They announced that applications are currently open through March 8, 2026, and will move through the standard workflow process. The chairs also reviewed current committee vacancies and encouraged interested staff to carefully review the expectations and requirements associated with committee service.

Council Corner Feedback from January

Barrett provided an overview of the inaugural constituent corner from January's Staff Council meeting. She outlined the feedback received about why staff attend meetings, what keeps them coming back, topics they want to hear more about and what they value as an employee of the university. Council then broke out into groups to discuss February's topic of reflecting on year-to-date on how meetings have gone, hits and misses and goals for the upcoming year.

Adjournment

- Bathke motioned to adjourn, Cloyd seconded; motion carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 4:27 pm.

Next Meeting

March 11, 2026

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