

UI Staff Council
April 8, 2026
2:30-4:30 pm
UCC 2520-D and Zoom

Present

Marie Adams , Jerusalem Alleyne, Kesten Anderson, Neda Barrett, Josey Bathke , Abbie Beadle, Amanda Bibb, Amir Bozorgzadeh, Amy Burklund, Nima Chaudhary, Xirui Chen, Brett Cloyd, Molly Collins, Laura Croteau-Lopez, Kayla Faust, Michael Fletcher, Hunter Floyd, Anna Gaw, Ashley Glassberg-Nazette, Tom Hicks, Anne Hinkle, Michele Hogue, Andrew Holland, Erika Holm-Brown, Hilary Jensen, James Jorris, Ashly Lagneaux, Lindsay Lansberry, Shuhui Lin, Sarah Livesay, Sam Mitchell, Brian Morelli, Evans Ochola, Alex Paternostro, Tammy Paulus, Ashley Peters, Alysha Robinson, Kayla Rojas, Mel Sanders, Jonathon Scanlan, Breno Silvestrini Rodrigues, Monica Smith, Lisa Smith, Brooke Swain, Bridget Toomey, Rebecca Tritten, Adam Walsh, Casey Westlake, Donna Wong-Gibbons

Not Present

Michael Chimenti, Brittany Grabe, David Hartley, Liz Lara, Anne Lawler, Ali McCue, Tiffany Reaves, Vickie Roesner, Tony Senio, Heath Vignes, Kate Woods

Administrative Liaisons

Kellie Digmann

Presenters

Corey Pass, Chanelle Reese, Joni Troester

Constituents

Aaron Miers, Aaron Ripple, Alicia Peden, Alyssa Campbell, Amber Cross, Amber Mower, Amy Mattix, Andrew Kness, Anna Lopez, Becky Tjelmeland, Candice Clark Stevens, Carey Dieleman, Catherine Franz, Chris Sang, Christopher Harrison, David Lippe, David Rooney, Dawn Marshall, Deb Henricks, Debbie Ross, Diaba Keita, Diane Fountain, Emily Fox, Emily Stagman, Emina Titmus, Erin Litton, Erin Turnis, Esther Baker, Ethan Rogers, Francine Bryce, Grant Burke, Hailey Nielsen, Hayley Bruce, Heidi Haines, Hellecktra Orozco, Hillary Ramaker , iPhone, Jamie Sexton, Janet Niebuhr, Joel Gavin, Joshua Anderson, Judith Meyer, Julie Crow, Julie Weber, Justin Fraase, Kara Gerardi , Kate Klefstad, Kathryn Harrison, Kileen Martin, Kim Stoltz, Kristina Huffman, Liz Swanton, Mackenzie Keil, Maria Lugo, Mary Owens, Matrice Young, Melia Pieper, Melissa Close, Mia Brunelli, Mindy Sickels Sterbenz, Molly Rechkemmer, Molly Walter, Morolake Adeagbo, Naomi Pundt, Natalie De Jardin, Nico Sheck, Paul Adesokan, Paul Oh, Rebecca Olson, Solange Decezare, Susan Walsh, Susmita Das Sarkar, Tanya Villhauer, Taylor Copp, Tim Pundt, Travis Pogmore , Trent Siver, Victoria Jaeger, Zoe Morris , Brian Morris

Leadership

Cheryl Reardon

Past President

James Jorris

Minutes

The March Staff Council Minutes were approved. Motion by Kayla Faust, second by Jonathon Scanlan. [approved with no edits].

Meeting

Welcome, Expectations, Agenda Overview, & Minute Approval

President Barrett opened the meeting with an overview of expectations and a review of the agenda.

Volunteer of the Year, Highlights & Upcoming Volunteer Events

Anne Hinkle received the Volunteer of the Year Award, with 64 hours of service across 16 events. Hinkle and Amanda Bibb, UISC Community Outreach Chairs, highlighted service from councilors for the year, including 538.5 total hours across 46 events, with 68% of councilors participating in at least 1 event.

The Food Pantry Donation Drive collected 750 pounds of food plus financial donations. Staff Council also participated in several events during the past month including the DVIP Souper Bowl, the Special Olympics, Shelter House Literary Grants and Book Sale Fundraiser. Upcoming opportunities include the 29th Annual Powwow, DVIP Shop for Supervisors, Miyawaki Forest Tree Planting, the Iowa City Neighborhood Energy Blitz, Test Proctoring at UI, Health Care Week, and the popular Adopt A Highway cleanup. Checkout the UISC Volunteerism for more information and to sign up for an event. <https://staff-council.uiowa.edu/volunteerism>. As always please remember to log your volunteer participation at <http://workflow.uiowa.edu/form/staff-volunteer-hours> President Barrett thanked Hinkle and Bibb for their leadership and councilors for their participation.

HR Strategic Plan – Year 4 Tactics/Programs

Cheryl Reardon, Chief HR Officer and Associate Vice President, shared her gratitude to UISC for the volunteer work on campus and in the community, as well as their participation in shared governance. The focus of her presentation was on Staff Success Initiatives. She shared how including Holistic Wellbeing in the UI Strategic Plan has helped open priorities and funding to support the staff experience.

Recruitment and retention are key focus areas. Reardon highlighted efforts to optimize HR operations, invest in talent and organizational performance, embed HR leaders in units on campus, and bring clarity in policy and streamline employee/labor relations.

Reardon gave updates to (University Human Resources) UHR's structure due to Joni Troester's retirement on June 1st. Rachel Napoli who has visited UISC many times will be the new UISC Human Resources Committee liaison.

UHR is using data to inform more of their decisions as analytics tools are improving. Goals will include increasing staff engagement, especially in the first 3 months and first year. Many of UI's staff positions attract from a regional market so retaining employees is important for unit and institutional success. Successful on boarding is an important part of the employee experience.

Reardon shared a slide highlighting the focus of Year 4. Completed tactics include offering short-term disability insurance, parental leave, and the retirement modernization plan. Progress has been made on improving staff recognition, the P3-merit expansion, and optimizing onboarding.

UI has received the Eddy Award for the TIAA Retirement Plan that includes a new default option, simplified investment choices, a brokerage plan, and millions of dollars in estimated cost savings, including 31% reduction in participant paid expenses. Special Thanks to Joni Troester for her leadership on this project.

Career Pathways on the UHR website has seen more than 2,000 interactions, 2,500 visits to MyCareer, and close to 1,000 individuals have used the Career Pathways mapping feature to explore career development options. Over 1,100 Hawkeye High Fives (a new recognition tool) have been submitted. SPOT awards for temporary appointments (including student employees) are now available.

Paid Parental Leave is now available at Iowa. Upcoming voluntary benefits will be offered including Pet Insurance.

ReSparc looks at the UI Strategic Plan going forward. One initiative advancing is Faculty and Staff Immigration Service moving from UHR to International Programs. UHR is also looking at streamlining human resource reports and supporting microtransactions to reduce staff time on common workflow applications.

Well-Being Strategic Plan – Year 4 Tactics/Programs

Joni Troester, Senior Assistant Vice President and Deputy CHRO, focused her presentation on the connection between Financial Well-Being and Basic Needs and the importance of community and connection. Building a culture of caring on UI campus is important. Troester highlighted the need of the Basic Needs Food Pantry on campus and is addressing staff and student concerns about utilizing the location at the IMU by offering parking passes and further review. Troester thanks UISC for its annual food drive.

A new offering is “You Need a Budget” that includes use of an app and a coach to help staff with financial management. Information is available on the [website](#). Hills Bank is also offering financial coaching to staff, students and faculty. These offer staff the opportunity staff a time to review their financial situation and create a plan. UISC heard positive testimonials about the service at a previous meeting. ([website](#)).

Troester reviewed productivity barriers reported through the Personal Health Assessment from 2019 to the present. *Financial* and *Too Much To Do* were top in the survey results and are reasons for these priorities in UHR and LiveWell.

The [Student Emergency Fund](#) and the [UI Emergency Hardship Funds](#) are available for people experiencing an unexpected emergency.

To provide on-going support for mental well-being, Troester discussed how can we best leverage the peer relationships. Student Life is using a tool called [Togetherall](#) and has found it has produced positive results.

[R U OK](#) has been used at several organizational units on campus to help staff check in with each other. Units can reach out to the Employee Assistance Program for a consultation.

Troester thanked the over 200 Wellness Ambassadors for their outreach efforts across the University to help support a culture of engagement. She is also appreciative of the research collaborations with faculty in the Tippie College of Business and the College of Public Health to foster research initiatives into employee well-being.

Lastly, Troester thanked UISC for the many years of partnership and collaboration. She really appreciated the relationships and work we were able to do together.

Annual Report from the Office of the Ombudsperson

Chanelle Reese, University Ombudsperson, and Corey Pass, Associate Ombudsperson, offered a review of the [Office's 2025 Annual Report](#) and an overview of their services. Consistent with campus overall, staff's top concerns focused on the evaluative relationship. Career progression and development, and Peer and Colleague Relationships were also a common concern. Most concerns are informally resolved, but some require additional attention. If staff have a question about an issue with their HR representative, the Ombuds office can help with this kind of concern. Staff can email or call the office to make an appointment. Supervisors may benefit from a meeting especially as they are most likely to experience a concern. The office can be available afterward to see how things are going but are not required. The office can reach out to UI leadership if appropriate in consultation with staff or can help suggest next steps. Please reach out to the Ombudsperson's office if you have a concern.

Staff Council Elections

Sam Mitchell, Staff Council Vice President, provided an update on the Staff Council elections. Executive Committee nominations are open through April 22, with an overview shared of current nominee numbers and a reminder that council members may nominate themselves or others. Nominees are required to submit a statement of 250 words or fewer outlining why they would be a good fit for the position. Functional and organizational representative positions are also open, with nominations closing on April 16. The May meeting will include a panel featuring all Executive Committee candidates, and panel questions have already been developed. In addition, the Council discussed committee

planning for the 2026–2027 term, with a focus on succession planning. Members were encouraged to identify and speak up about potential future leaders to ensure continuity and avoid having all new members serving as committee chairs. The group also reflected on what worked well in the current cycle and highlighted the importance of being thoughtful and intentional when setting future committee goals.

Staff Council Committee Update: Awards

Hilary Jensen, Award Committee co-chair provided an overview of the Awards Committee's goals and accomplishments from the past year, noting that 44 nominations were received, representing a 7% increase over the previous year. She reviewed how the selection committee process will function moving forward. It was also shared that 18 award winners have been notified and will be formally recognized at the institutional ceremony on May 5 at Hancher, as well as at the Board of Regents luncheon in June. Additionally, the committee is in the early stages of developing a more centralized process for the call for nominations, with ongoing work planned in this area.

Staff Council Committee Update: Bylaws

Breno Silvestrini Rodrigues provided an update on the Bylaws Committee's goals for the year, noting that all identified objectives had been successfully completed. Breno reviewed the history of the University of Iowa Staff Council (UISC) representative structure and discussed the development of a more consistent framework for healthcare representation, clarifying that MCD, MCU, and MCNL are all aligned under the healthcare designation. A drafted proposal outlining these structural changes has been published on the Staff Council website, and corresponding updates have been made to the policy manual. Silvestrini Rodrigues also highlighted the strong collaborative approach used in developing these updates, emphasizing the use of data to inform decisions and improve representation across the council.

Staff Council Committee Update: Health Care

Ashley Peters, Co-Chair of the Health Care Committee, provided a committee update focused on increasing staff engagement, ensuring representation across the state, improving communication, and elevating staff voices within the health care system. The committee is now featured on the *Loop* and has created a dedicated Staff Council webpage developed in collaboration with Marketing and Communications. Updates were shared on recent outreach and advocacy efforts, including the elevation of several staff concerns and comments to leadership, with MCNL scheduled to participate in discussion at an upcoming meeting. Committee members also attended MCD events, participated in *Discover Your University*, and raised concerns related to flock cameras. The committee noted that members of the Staff Council Executive Committee visited MCD as part of engagement efforts. Ongoing collaboration with healthcare leadership continues through quarterly meetings to maintain communication and address emerging issues.

Staff Council Committee Update: Human Resources

Ashley Peters, Chair, provided an update focused on policies and procedures, highlighting ongoing collaboration with University Human Resources to improve staff experiences. The

committee continues to address several multi-year goals that require substantial data collection before determining actionable steps. Joni Troester is currently serving on all related committees, with Rachel Napoli scheduled to transition into this role and provide in-the-moment support and responses as needed. Key focus areas include career advancement, with an emphasis on clarifying available resources and reducing confusion for staff; improving the performance review process; and working toward the elimination of pay caps. Committee members met with Compensation and Classification experts, which helped answer numerous staff questions and clarify existing processes. Additional collaboration with UHR representatives Rachel and Jiongting Hu has supported performance review discussions and allowed the committee to provide detailed feedback and input. The committee is also collaborating with the College of Business to help support achieving these goals.

Staff Council Leaving Councilor Recognition

Barrett formally recognized and thanked outgoing councilors for their dedicated service and contributions. Appreciation was extended to Jerusalem Alleyne, Josey Bathke, Amanda Bibb, Michael Chimenti, Molly Collins, Hunter Floyd, Brittany Grabe, Erika Holm-Brown, Hilary Jensen, James Jorris, Lindsay Lansberry, Shuhui Lin, Brian Morelli, Tammy Paulus, Vickie Roesner, Tony Senio, Heath Vignes, and Donna Wong-Gibbons for their commitment, leadership, and positive impact during their time on Staff Council.

Adjournment

- Lindsay Lansberry motioned to adjourn, Sam Mitchell seconded; motion carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

2:30-4:30 PM

Old Capitol Museum, Senate Chamber (2nd level)

In-Person Meeting ONLY for SC Elections