

Seattle University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 9th, 2022, 1:00 PM PT – 3:00 PM PT

Location: Remote using Zoom

Present: Kit Morse, Kari Langsea, Chelsea Lien, Andrea Ross, Angie Jenkins, Carly Darcher, Christina Juarez, Chuy Garcia, Corey Belser, Craig Nisgor, Dario Ogaz, Dawn Madore, Eunice MacGill, Jenna Isakson, Jessica Allen, Julie Schwabe, Laura Hauck-Vixie, Matt Burton, Stephanie Lewis

Minutes: Eddie Salazar & Chelsea Lien, SUSC Secretary/Treasurer

Welcome

- Introductions, Land acknowledgement, Black History Month acknowledgement, Group norms, SUSC Check-in, SUSC email report
- Announce newest staff council member, Craig Nisgor (represents Exempt Student Focus Area)
- SUSC email (Kari) – The top issues raised in the SUSC mailbox include flex work, HR related questions (which were sent to HR), Project Positive (a UREC event and SUSC was invited to participate). Noted that when we send emails onto other departments, we remove the name of the person who submitted the feedback. However, it is helpful when you need a response from SUSC to include your contact information. Submit feedback to <https://www.seattleu.edu/staff-council/feedback/>.

Cabinet Report: Timothy Leary, Executive Vice President

- Welcome to Craig Nisgor (Athletics – Swim Coach) as new council member
- Updates on VP/Dean searches:
 - New VP for Advancement is now filled – Edgar Gonzalez will join SU in the spring
 - VP for Mission Integration – narrowed to 6-candidates which will soon be narrowed to 2- to 3-candidates
 - VP for HR will be interviewing in April. Matt Philip will be our interim VP of HR until the end of June 2022
 - Dean for Science & Engineering – interviews have concluded, and decision is coming soon
- Reignite the Strategic Directions report: Overview of themes
- Staff professional formation committee continues their work. Stephanie Lewis and Kit Morse of staff council are part of this group. Hopefully will have a draft to share by next SUSC meeting.
- Mission Day – April 7 – planning in process
- Staff/Faculty Appreciation in late May – In-person or hybrid?
- How has the return to campus been? Reporting of various experiences
- Initial conversation (continued below) on Flex-work – Pilot program

Human Resources: Ellen Huelmann and Matt Philip

- Results from Flex survey will be first shared with Staff Council
- Permanent procedures and policies to be determined
- Ellen stated that if staff are running into resistance with a proposed flex work plan, reach out to her so she can add support.
- Sick leave policy and donation bank introduced to staff council. SU previously has a policy that was sunset. This allows HR to roll out this policy in a timely fashion.
 - If a person used all their sick time, they can apply to receive a sick leave donation.
 - The donations are pooled and employees cannot choose who will receive the donation of their time. Instead, a decision will be made by HR based on need.
 - Employees can donate up to 5-days
 - An applicant can receive a max of 22-days
- Staff raised some contrary points in response to the proposed sick leave donation bank.
 - University needs to develop realistic sick leave policy, especially for COVID, so as not to rely on donations
 - Extensive discussion continued with personal sharing asking HR to reconsider rolling back to the sick leave policy that we had during the beginning of the pandemic. A big stress is put on staff who are working extensively within the campus community and have had COVID and associated complications, those caring for children (especially young

children who cannot be vaccinated) not able to attend school or daycare, and those caring for others within their family. Another point was brought up that employees may be reluctant to donate their time given we are still in this pandemic and may need this time if they get really sick.

- HR asked for SUSC LT to send the transcript of the chat messages to them for further review.

COVID & Campus Info: Tara Hicks and Josh Halbert

- COVID reports at SU – Confirmed data dashboard: <https://www.seattleu.edu/coronavirus/confirmed-cases/>
- KN-95 masks purchased by Facilities and availability to campus areas. The KN-95 masks are intended to be worn for about a week.
- Able to track case severity on campus. For those who tested positive, they were overwhelmingly asymptomatic to mild.
- The COVID numbers in King County peaked on January 10th where there were 2,000 cases per 100,000
- Strongly recommend boosters. 60-70% protection from serious infection for those boosted.
- Update to face covering policy is coming soon.
- Washington state at-home test request: <https://www.sayyescovidhometest.org/>

ACA Update: Angie Jenkins

- Notification came out yesterday about the new partnership to extend student access to health and wellness resources through Timely MD, a student 1st telehealth provider. Quality, on demand health services, 24/7 access with no cost to students. Intended to augment and not replace CAPS services. Will likely go live in March.

Committee Reports

- Review, Benefits, & Compensation (Jenna & Laura)
 - Retirement benefit HR discussions, LTC tax, MRR benchmarking, sick leave benefit/sharing, COVID leave, staff morale
- Communications Committee (Carly & Dario)
 - Second staff office hour (virtual) – 9 in attendance
- Inclusion & Community (Christina & Matt)
 - Letter drafted for departure of Coach Hayford – trainings on implicit bias – resources? Support for this?
- Recognition & Appreciation (Kari)
 - Survey of all campus recognitions (who to ask) – reignite Kudos for colleagues – morale issues – (Ellen) – HR developing processes for “stay” interviews for retentions
- Nominations, Elections, & Bylaws (Kari)
 - Council asked to begin nominating

Conversation with VP Natasha Martin

- Status of ombudsperson role development
 - Expand ombuds role for both faculty & staff
 - Working group offered direction for reimagined ombuds role.
 - New structure extension of ODI, reporting to Natasha Martin
 - Job description is being used to pursue the RFP process – search firm engaged for profile with stakeholders
 - Independence, neutrality of this role key
 - Reigniting Strategic Directions - GOAL FOUR - PROMOTE INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE
- ODI/LiftSU updates – We ran out of time for this update. We will invite VP Martin back for this important update.

Wrap Up: Kari Langsea

Next SUSC meeting: Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 1:00-3:00pm PST (<https://seattleu.zoom.us/j/99968641737>)

Next SUSC office hour: Wednesday, February 23, 2022, 2:00-3:00pm PST (<https://seattleu.zoom.us/j/94757508691>)