

Seattle University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 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, Dario Ogaz, Dawn Madore, Jenna Isakson, Jessica Allen, Julie Schwabe, Laura Hauck-Vixie, Matt Burton

Minutes: Chelsea Lien, SUSC Secretary/Treasurer

Welcome

- Introductions, Land acknowledgement, Group norms, SUSC Check-in

President's Report: Eduardo Peñalver

President Peñalver reported on the topics:

- COVID
 - Masking changing on campus
 - Our COVID infection rate was quite high in January, Fig. 1, but we have come way down in rate of infection. See SU's COVID-19 [dashboard](#) of positive cases on campus.

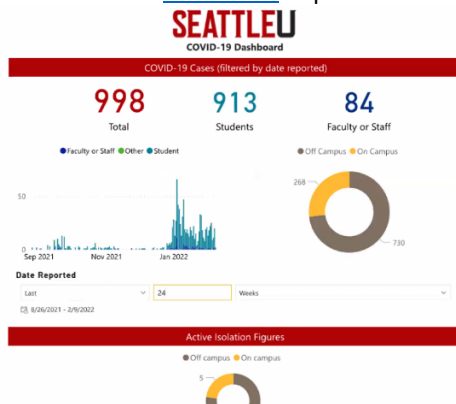


Fig. 1 January's SU Positive COVID Dashboard

- We are headed in the right direction and are following state and local directives. We will remove mask mandate starting March 21st.
- Everyone can choose for themselves whether to wear masks.
- KN95 masks are effective at protecting you and others. Wear for extra protection.
- Students are encouraged to test before they come back on campus following spring break, but there will be no wide spread testing regime
- Faculty can remove masks between now and end of the quarter
- Student mental health and wellness
 - Campus mental health infrastructure not meeting needs of campus community
 - Student demand for mental health services are increasing in a nonlinear way and universities are trying to catch up with this need
 - Our shortcoming – length of time getting in with CAPS, and the number of appointments students can make in a year
 - Announced new partnership, [TimelyMD](#), expands access to student health and wellness resources. TimelyMD is a telehealth company that offers more than just mental health and will go into effect at the beginning of the Spring Quarter.
 - Adding TimelyMD falls under Goal 3 of the Strategic Directions, Enhance the Student Experience. This is one immediate action we can take to push this goal forward. Telehealth is not the only step but an important first step.
 - For some Strategic Directions Goals, we can move forward quickly, like TimelyMD, but others will take a bit longer to implement.

- This is available to all students no matter the health insurance they carry. It will be paid through a Student Wellness Fee, and students can access no matter where the student is in the geographical US, available in all 50-states. If the student is on break, they can still access this service.
- Leadership transitions are top priority. The initial round of leadership new hires were conducted simultaneously and was taxing on everyone. The important thing I have to do is to hire the people who will be the future of SU. Thank you for dedicating that time.
 - VP for University Advancement
 - Recent hire of Edgardo “Edgar” Gonzalez
 - Beginning on 4/1/22
 - AVP for Development, Oregon Health Sciences University – completed \$2 billion campaign
 - 20-years of higher education development experience with 15-years at UW
 - VP for Mission Integration
 - Existed previously, but was phased out
 - Important to lay-leadership
 - Key role that reinforces Jesuit and Catholic character
 - In midst of forums for the final candidates
 - VP for Human Resources
 - Early state of this search
 - Matt Philip has stepped in as Interim VP but will complete his role on 6/30/22
 - Still gathering candidates
 - Finalists will come through in April and start on 7/1/22
 - Dean, School of Law
 - Recent hire of Anthony “Tony” Varona
 - Former Dean, University of Miami Law School
 - Former General Counsel, Human Rights Campaign
 - Educated at Boston College and Georgetown University
 - Dean, College of Science and Engineering
 - Recent hire Amit Shukla
 - Founding Director, Center for Assistive Technology
 - Chair of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering at Miami University in Ohio

Increasing diversity in senior leadership at SU

- Changes in leadership structure
 - Currently, many campus areas are under the Executive VP
 - Changing structure to be more in alignment with other universities’ structures
 - There will be more reports to the President including University Counsel, University Advancement, the new role for the VP of Strategic Initiatives, and Mission Integration, which is also new and waiting to be filled.
 - Tim Leary will step down as Executive VP, after 25-years of service to SU. His departure allows for reconsideration of this position moving forward. Instead of filling this position, the President will take on more direct reports and reorganization of areas like Campus Services under the CFO and Student Development and Public Safety under the Provost.
 - Athletic Director, HR and Marketing and Communication will also report directly to the President.
- Academic Excellence
 - One of my jobs is to enhance the university’s reputation, not just ranking-wise but substantively.
 - Goals for Academic Excellence – Track where we sit compared to other AJCU schools on Endowment per UG versus US News ranking – We sit in the bottom 3rd of other AJCU universities, but within reach of the main cluster in graph comparison.
 - There is a direct correlation between ranking and faculty excellence and student experience
 - One obvious way to move the needle is resources. Faculty excellence helps. We get our revenue through tuition and from philanthropy. Faculty/staff compensation are impacted by this.
 - One of the goals is to work on increasing endowment, and it will help impact all these things. Our compensation lags behind our peers. We have built salaries into our 5-year plan.
 - Analysis was done on tenured faculty compensation. While other groups will be analyzed in the future, the tenured faculty was an easy first group to analyze. What was found is that senior faculty are far less undercompensated than those newer to SU. However, the averages overall are below the median.
 - That’s only part of the story for both faculty and staff. We need to focus on opportunities for advancement and professional development, and we have working groups on these.

- We want SU to be a fulfilling and a fun place to work. Our compensation should be in-line with other non-profits.
- We are looking at growing revenue. One way to do this is to bring in more students, mainly students of all ages and stages of life.
- Please send your questions and feedback to the President using the [Suggestion Box](#).

Strategic Directions Professional Formation Committee Update: Tim Leary and Jen Tilghman-Havens

- Formation of the committee and Strategic Directions – This is part of Goal 2. When Strategic Directions was originally put together, there was a professional formation component, but was focused on faculty. President Peñalver expanded this to also include staff and students.
- This group is composed of Tim Leary, Matt Philip, Jen Tilghman-Havens, Eli Voigt, Dion Wade, Stephanie Lewis, Monica Scott, and Kit Morse
- Before getting too far along in planning, we put a document together to reflect the needs of staff on campus. The committee is starting with Staff Council to get early feedback to make sure we are in line with what staff want.
- Objective: Recruit, develop, and retain talented and diverse group of professionals
- Staff are crucial to the university. Staff serve as full partners in the formation of students.
- Goals:
 - Provide market-rate and competitive total rewards package for all staff members
 - Develop a comprehensive, mission focused program to on-board new staff members to develop a sense of belonging, purpose and connection to the university
 - Provide additional opportunities for all staff to enhance their skills and professional growth and development
 - Identify and implement creative ways to improve the quality of the work environment
 - Initiate new ways to honor and reward staff achievements and contributions
- This council is looking to staff for feedback. Please send feedback to [Kit Morse](#).
- Timeline: Looking for feedback on the high-level goals and then decide what to prioritize. The overall Strategic Direction timeline is 5-years.

Flexwork – Pilot Survey Results: Maggie Ricketts, Brittany Goff, and Leann Wagele

- Reopening Taskforce originally convened June 2021
- Pilot guiding principles and criteria was approved by Cabinet in July 2021
- In September 2021, the pilot began and ends this month, March 2022
- The taskforce is currently in the process of developing the permanent program moving forward
- Sent survey last fall and had great participation – 44% of staff completed the survey. Of those, 75% were staff and 25% were staff supervisors and roughly 64% were exempt and roughly 36% were non-exempt. From the survey, we found that 86% are using a hybrid program.
- Likert summary shows that most see that they have the flexibility and are supported, and more are honoring work/live balance
- 292-comments regarding impact on operation and service excellence
- There were 218 open ended comments
 - The top 3-positive themes include:
 - Enhances work/life balance
 - Provides option for students to engage with SU
 - Enhances retention
 - The top 3-challenges include:
 - Unable to participate in flexwork
 - Perceived lack of trust from leaders
 - Understaffing preventing participation
- Using the results of this survey, SU will develop a formal flexwork policy, and Cabinet granted approval to move forward. Key aspects to this proposed policy includes:
 - Professional Formation will now include flexwork
 - Program will have options, and some are similar to those in the pilot.
 - Common options:
 - Hybrid work schedule
 - Flexible work hours

- Limited roles:
 - Compressed work week
 - Reduced work hours
- Exception basis:
 - In-State remote
 - Out-of-State remote
- HR is developing the policy and program. There will be a formal application process that includes recertification. In addition to developing the policy and program, HR will:
 - Consult with supervisor and staff as needed
 - Update Colleague to reflect payroll related schedule changes
 - Report and audit
 - Establish escalation process – If staff feel a policy and related guidelines have not been fairly administered, they may contact [HR](#).
- Timeline
 - February '22 – Recommend plan to Cabinet and seek approval
 - March '22
 - Cascade plan to Deans Council
 - Communicate plan to Staff Council
 - Develop policy
 - Develop application form and process
 - Communicate plan to staff
 - April '22 – Launch recertification process
 - May/June '22
 - Complete recertification and communicate decisions
 - Provide flexwork training
 - Share flexwork guidelines and best practices
 - July '22 – Implement approved flexwork plans
 - Future
 - Launch automated forms and processes
 - Periodic recertification
- Approval process is similar to the original process. Individuals will complete their application and send it to their supervisor. The supervisor will share this with the Deans/Cabinet leaders to ensure there is consistency among their group. Must apply consistently across jobs.

Committee Reports

- Nominations, Elections, and Bylaws (NEB)
 - SUSC election cycle approaching on the timeline:
 - April 25th – Open nominations
 - April 26th – Open forum on Zoom
 - May 9th – Close nominations. Once nominations close, NEB will create the voters pamphlet and attend to outstanding voter validation processes
 - May 13th – Voting opens to campus
 - May 22nd – Voting closes
 - Last week in May – Certify election
 - Beginning of June – Announce newly elected Staff Council members
- Recognition and Appreciation (RAA)
 - Spring Quarter Recognition Project
 - Communicate with campus leaders in order to improve staff recognition here at SU. We believe this will help improve staff retention.
 - Create a survey to gather info on current processes that may already be in place within other campus areas
 - Coordinate with campus leaders and gather information for recognition practices
 - Ready by the middle of this summer
- Inclusion and Community (IAC)

- Spring Quarter goal to host an in-person event for staff to foster community. This is all the more important because we know that 42% of staff are new hires at SU within the past 2-3 years, and many only know SU during COVID times. IAC is asking council if there is anyone interested or if there are any ideas. If so, please reach out to an IAC member.
- SUSC's [Staff Connections](#) page is now updated with a list of SU affinity groups. This provides one place where staff can view SU's affinity groups along with the contact information for joining the group. If you know of other groups on campus that are not listed on this page, please let [IAC](#) know so it can be added as a resource.

Wrap Up and Email Report: Kari Langsea

Next SUSC meeting: Wednesday, April 13, 2022, 1:00-3:00pm PT (<https://seattleu.zoom.us/j/99968641737>)

Next SUSC office hour: Thursday, March 24, 2022, 11:00am-12:00pm PT (<https://seattleu.zoom.us/j/93858908961>)