

Please note: These minutes were not brought before the Staff Council for official approval.

UT Staff Council: General/Working Meeting

February 16, 2017

POB 2.302, 2:00 – 3:30 PM

Roster:

Name	District	Attendance
Jaime Davis	110.1	P
Malena Castillo	110.2	Absent
Chelsea Cowley	120.1	P
Victoria Cervantes	120.2	Absent
Wendy Nesmith	130.1	P
Larayne Dallas	130.2	P
Daedelus Hoffman	130.3	Absent
Rebekah Sylvia	140.1	Absent
John Vernon	140.2	P
John Vernon	140.2	Absent
Jessica Meyerson	151	Absent
Elizabeth Krieg	160.1	P
Kristine Mae Manahan	160.2	P
Michelle Monk	170.1	Absent
Lauren Phillips	170.2	Absent
David Barrett	190.1	P
Stephanie Hill	190.2	Absent
Amy Reyna	202	P
Sarah Shields	210.1	Absent
Sarah Parker	210.2	Absent
Karen Little	220.1	Absent
Maureen Kelly	220.2	Absent
Noemi Govea	230.1	P
Page Stephens	230.2	P
Alex Reshanov	240.1	P
Bug Davidson	240.2	Absent
Jessica Crawford	251	Absent

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Ellis Trinh	282	P
Tiffo Carmichael	291	P
Patrick Stafford	300.1	Absent
Teresita Gonzalez	300.2	P
Gabrielle Harding	311	Absent
Philip Pool	322	Absent
Rachel Poole	342	P
Ana Aguilar	360	P
Rebecca Fitch	360.1	Absent
Pratikshya Rijal	371	Absent
Mirna Benhamou	382	P
Jeff Meserve	391	P
Sonja Hartley	402	Absent
Shannon Mann	411	Absent
Joe Posada-Triana	422	Absent
William Pieper	431	Absent
Sean Saxe	442	P
Marcy Drapes	451	P
Joseph Bussey	460.2	Absent
Ricardo Vela	461	P
Michael Walker	470.1	P
Michael Walker	470.1	Absent
Wendy Nelson	470.2	P
Vicki Miller	491	P
Robert Hernandez	511	P
Stephanie Myers	522	P
Tamika Thomas	530.3	P
Eda Matthews	540.1	P
Tracy DeMont	540.2	P
Stephen Walker	550	Absent
Brian Hurdle	550.1	Absent
Caroline Taylor	550.2	P
Larrimie Gordon	560.1	Absent
Anthony Pass	560.2	Absent
Danielle Myricks	560.3	Absent

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Courtney Glynn	560.4	Absent
Derrick Ozuna	600.2	Absent
Marisol Sanchez	600.3	P
Susan Stockton	610.1	P
Luke McEneny	652	Absent
Gary Kosmas	660.1	P
Jocelyn Elder	660.2	Absent
Maria Ruffino	660.4	P
Rachel Cohen	660.5	P
Miles Sapp	672	P
Trina Calkins	692	P
Elizabeth Cobbe Goeller	701	P
Jenna Dugan	999	P
LeeAnn Gibson	999	P
Bryan Hill	999	P
Jason Eitelbach	999	P
Tracy Brzozowski	999	Absent
Dustin Slater	999.5	Absent

Guests: Darrell Bazzell, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

February Meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Jason Eitelbach, UTSC Interim Chair at 2:03 PM

Q&A with the CFO: <https://financials.utexas.edu/about-senior-vice-president-and-cfo>

Background: Darrell Bazzell is a Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. He came from University of Wisconsin previously where he worked for 13 years and chaired a staff committee. He also worked in government for an additional 18 years.

Wisconsin has a very strong “shared governance” culture, including at the staff level. But we need to have solutions at UT that fit UT’s environment. We may need to look at how to bring different ideas to solving issues at UT and Staff Council can be one of the voices at the table. Staff are the strength of the university. “It’s fairly common that when we’re doing our job really, really well, no one even knows we’re here. I want you to know that I notice and others notice and appreciate the important contributions you make to this institution each and every day.”

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Workday and ITS deficit are two big issues that have significant impact on our campus.

Q: With the Texas State Legislature, many are concerned about budget cuts. What are your ideas for keeping staff motivated and moving forward? How will you advocate for us?

A: The cost of living is tough in Austin. I would like to host forums and talk with staff about their concerns. I think you should look forward to the campus communicating about major milestones. We'll see competing budgets come out of the legislature, but we can probably anticipate lower levels of state resources. The university has to make the case for what additional resources we need to the legislature. We can get a lot of things done if we prioritize and use our money wisely. We need to figure out if we are being good stewards of the money and resources we already have. I think one of the best things we can be doing right now is understand staff issues, and what kinds of priorities staff would set. We can also encourage deans and directors to engage their staff at the local level. We were all surprised about the hiring freeze when it was announced. We're working through the mechanics on how to actually implement it. Only exceptions right now are public safety related. Everything else has to go through a waiver process. The first round of waivers we sent were primarily related to faculty and some were administrative-level positions. Plans to implement "guidance document" to deans and directors so they can identify other positions they need filled. See the CFO website for more information on the hiring freeze.

Q: Your recent announcement about IT budget issues has received a lot of attention. Can you describe your efforts to develop an overall IT strategy?

A: Our IT environment is distributed across campus. The university has been deficit spending and we ended last year's IT budget at about \$15 million negative. The current IT budget has been frozen. Any new positions or equipment must be signed off on by CFO. IT provides about 150 services to the campus and we are working to identify which of those services should be "common goods" or done by the local IT departments. We also need to look at the pros and cons of the potential decisions we make and how we plan to pay for it. Many of the charges/fees were set at a level that did not actually pay for the cost of the service. There will be some sort of fiscal impact to the campus.

Q: Staff members are interested in telecommuting and flexible work arrangements. However, some employees feel their managers are not interested in adopting these options. What's the administration's feeling and how will you support the staff?

A: Far too many people have the mindset of needing to see people in chairs to know they're working. Sometimes there is too much individual discretion on the part of managers. At University of Wisconsin, they worked to create a fair and consistent application of their policies.

Q: A "space study" was conducted on campus recently. There are concerns about HR moving off-campus from NOA to UTA. What is the reasoning for this move and what are the plans to ensure accessibility?

A: We've got a limited footprint for the UT campus. Some feel strongly that we want to avoid construction costs when we can, so we are trying to repurpose spaces where we can. Administrative functions are the ones mostly impacted. Debra Kress and her HR group are working on how to provide easy access to services.

Q: Is administration willing to accept feedback from people who are affected by the move?

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A: Yes. We should mitigate the impact as much as we can. You find people who are really good at what they do and they chose UT Austin because that's where they want to be. We still need to find practical ways to keep staff able to interact face-to-face when needed.

Q: What are your plans for providing staff with professional development and upward mobility at UT?

A: It's part of our responsibilities to develop staff. We could mandate the opportunity for training, even if they aren't specifically beneficial to the institution. But, we need to have more conversations about what's working now and what needs improvement.

Q: What are the plans for money saved during the hiring freeze?

A: We don't know the answer to what happens to the dollars that aren't spent during this freeze. We feel optimistic that the freeze will be over on September 1.

Q: What are the expectations for performance appraisals?

A: I assume it will be standard appraisals. I haven't heard anything different.

Q: What are the top challenges for UT going forward and how do you see staff helping you?

A: I'm still learning about UT. I have to understand the culture and how things work here. I have a lot of ideas, but I need to understand UT first. We need to make sure we're doing tasks in a way that best serves our customers. There is no shortage of opportunity to get better, but it's a question of whether we have the will to do that.

Q: Would you be supportive of standardizing performance management practices, merit increases, etc. It creates disparity on campus.

A: Everyone deserves to know where they stand in terms of performance appraisals. Wisconsin required a formal appraisal annually and another appraisal mid-year. They made it so that if you didn't complete an appraisal for your staff, you weren't eligible for a pay raise. Once a year, however, is not adequate. You should have ongoing conversations with your staff. I will be happy to talk with HR to see if there are ways to strengthen what we're doing here.

Q: Are you willing to make the call if you think the Workday contract is a failure?

A: One problem is the quality of the product, because we are an early adopter for higher education. It's been designed for the corporate world. We believe that as they continue to develop the product, it will give us what we need. We have already invested over \$70 million in this project. At this time, we are not setting go-live dates. We will figure out a critical path to include the perspective of users and as well as business process owners. That input will drive our project deadlines. We are focused on getting this project right. We are at least a year out on payroll, but we will continue to monitor. The challenges aren't limited to the product. We also need to manage the project differently. We have created our own barriers and we need to fix them.

Q: What are your thoughts about the cultural and public arts programs at the university and how those fit in with UT?

A: It's a central part of our campus. These programs add richness to the experience on our campus. There are so many resources here that we should feel very proud about. Thank you for what they do.

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Any additional questions for the CFO can be emailed to uocomm@austin.utexas.edu or talk with your Staff Council Representative. Questions that will sent through the survey will be provided in their raw form to the CFO's office. Jason Eitelbach shared a summary of the questions with President Fenves earlier today.

Nominations and Elections:

Representatives voted to temporarily suspend the bylaws so elections for the 2017-2018 Chair and Vice Chair could be held early. Ana Aguilar said that Jaime Davis was nominated for Chair and Page Stephens was nominated for Vice Chair. No other nominations were given, so no elections were needed.

Chair Report:

Meeting in March has been moved to the week after Spring Break. It will be March 23 from 2-3:30 in Avaya. There will be two guest speakers in March and two guest speakers in April.

Jason will provide an executive summary of the meeting in the next email. Those go to all represented staff (constituents). He will work to get the minutes posted to the website. The minutes should go to all reps.

New Business:

Reminder to fill out kudos for reps you think deserve some recognition for the great work they're doing. See Rachel Cohen if you have questions.

The Financial Administrative Services' telecommuting committee will be meeting soon. Talk to Stephanie Perrone for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM

Ricardo Vela

Recording Secretary