

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

**UT Staff Council: General Meeting**

**May 18, 2017**

**POB 2.302, 2:00 – 3:30 PM**

**Roster:**

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

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Ellis Trinh	282	P
Tiffo Carmichael	291	P
Patrick Stafford	300.1	<b>Absent</b>
Teresita Gonzalez	300.2	P
Gabrielle Harding	311	<b>Absent</b>
Philip Pool	322	<b>Absent</b>
Rachel Poole	342	P
Ana Aguilar	360	<b>Absent</b>
Rebecca Fitch	360.1	<b>Absent</b>
Pratikshya Rijal	371	<b>Absent</b>
Mirna Benhamou	382	P
Jeff Meserve	391	P
Shannon Mann	411	<b>Absent</b>
Joe Posada-Triana	422	<b>Absent</b>
William Pieper	431	<b>Absent</b>
Sean Saxe	442	P
Marcy Drapes	451	<b>Absent</b>
Joseph Bussey	460.2	<b>Absent</b>
Ricardo Vela	461	P
Michael Walker	470.1	P
Michael Walker	470.1	P
Wendy Nelson	470.2	<b>Absent</b>
Vicki Miller	491	P
Robert Hernandez	511	<b>Absent</b>
Stephanie Myers	522	P
Eda Matthews	540.1	P
Tracy DeMont	540.2	<b>Absent</b>
Stephen Walker	550	<b>Absent</b>
Brian Hurdle	550.1	<b>Absent</b>
Caroline Taylor	550.2	P
Larrimie Gordon	560.1	P
Anthony Pass	560.2	P
Danielle Myricks	560.3	<b>Absent</b>
Courtney Glynn	560.4	P

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

**Guests: Greg Fenves, President**

**May Meeting:**

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

Staff Council committees will present the progress on their year-long projects to President Fenves. Some are fully funded pilot projects, while others are in a stage of research and development. These represent near-term and long-term work of Staff Council. They represent some of the different ways we take staff feedback, collate it, and bring it into actionable projects.

After the committee reports, the president is invited to speak. Then regular Staff Council business will resume.

A moment of silence was given for Harrison Brown, the student killed on our campus recently. If Representatives have feedback regarding this tragedy, please reach out to Jaime Davis or Page Stephens.

**Committee Reports:**

**President's Staff Luncheon:** Eda Matthews

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A staff member suggested a lunch with President Fenves, similar to the one done with students. A committee was formed and worked in cooperation with the President's Office. Four main themes were considered:

- Career Paths/Growth Opportunity
- Diversity, Equity, and Disability Resources
- Creative Work Structures
- ASMP

The first luncheon was themed around career paths.

The process to select participants for the lunch was: the committee sent staff an email with a link to a survey with three questions depending on the topic. The survey results were downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet. A randomizer was used to select 20 staff members. The first 13-17 were invited to the luncheon, while the remaining were placed on a waitlist in case someone could not attend.

The President's Office also sent communications regarding the lunch lotto. 7,882 that read the email from the President's Office and 5,167 people read the follow-up email sent by UT Staff Council. 310 staff members that applied.

Feedback from those that attended the luncheon was overall positive. The location, food, and size of the group were rated positively. One suggestion was to create a President's Luncheon blog.

**Comments by President Fenves:** The staff lunch lotto is a very sophisticated process. The luncheons have been very productive when centered on a particular theme. The idea about having a blog for what is communicated should be explored.

#### **Refresh@UT Pilot Program:** David Barrett

Continuing a project started two years ago, the guiding principle/question was: Does free, on campus shower and locker access increase active commuting and/or exercise for staff?

Active commuting was defined as walking, biking, or running to work.

This project built on survey results that showed what type of services staff wanted and what the roadblocks were to active commuting and/or exercising before, during, or after work. The survey last year had over 900 responses. Partnerships were created with RecSports and Parking and Transportation Services. The two major barriers were cost of locker/shower access and distance from the workplace.

The hypothesis was that if there were more showers within a 5 to 10 minute walk the percentage of active commuters would increase. Phase 1 of Refresh@UT offered a locker rental and shower access at Belmont Hall for \$8 per month. It was open to all faculty and staff, but the current participation is low.

Phase 2 will provide 30 lockers (15 men, 15 women), free of charge to eligible users. The \$8/month cost will be subsidized by PTS and Staff council. Partnerships were created with the Office of Sustainability and Healthpoint Wellness to market it better. A survey will be sent to those who participate, asking them about their experience and to see if there are any behavior changes.

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Eligibility for the subsidized lockers/showers includes: full-time, benefits eligible staff who do not have a current Rec Sports membership. This does not include faculty or students.

Phase 2 will begin September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018. The enrollment period is from June 14 through August 14. Reduced price lockers will still be available for \$8 per month for those who do not receive the 30 subsidized lockers.

**Comments by President Fenves:** Creating a healthy life also helps create a productive work environment. Work-life balance is a trend in American society and the workplace, but change is often slow at a large state institution. Giving access to lockers and researching the effect it has on active commuting and exercise is a well-thought out trial. With new construction and renovations to old buildings, there have been discussions about including showers, as is common in the private sector.

**Health and Wellness:** Rachel Cohen Ford and Rachel Poole

The purpose of this committee is to explore and increase opportunities and programs on campus. This committee was formed based on the Fall survey results, which ranked wellness as the third most popular category. Results showed a knowledge gap about programs that already exist on campus.

- Wellness Champions Partnerships-Rachel Cohen Ford

Created by Claire Hahn, the Work-life Balance and Wellness Manager. Wellness Champions are staff and faculty members who agree to attend meetings, receive emails, share feedback from their units, and spread information about the different wellness programs going on campus.

Staff Council partnered with Claire and sent emails to all reps so they could share the information with their constituents. As a result, 15 new wellness champions registered. This brings the total to 90 active members. The goal is to send information each year to recruit new members and ultimately reduce the knowledge gap.

- Health and Wellness Report- Rachel Poole

Staff Council received feedback that staff wanted time at work to participate in wellness activities. This included greater access to gyms and better work-life balance. The committee reviewed the past Employee Engagement Survey results, reviewed data collected by Claire Hahn, benchmarked 31 other state agencies and universities, and sent a survey to staff.

There are plans to survey direct managers and supervisors to see how changes in wellness policies might affect them. There may also be departmental policies or programs already in place.

The goal of the report is to use the existing information and gather new information and data to provide targeted solutions to UT campus. The committee will create 2 to 4 well-researched recommendations that will introduce broader access to health and wellness on campus.

**Comments by President Fenves:** The role of managers and supervisors is a really important issue because the workplace culture and decision making is done by the supervisors and managers. The training for front-line managers needs to be more consistent. We want to make this a desirable place for people to work.

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**Flexible Work Arrangements:** Alex Reshanov

Flexible work arrangements, such as flexible schedules outside of the 8-5 standard, as well as teleworking, are currently allowed by the university. Policies can be found in the Handbook of Operating Procedures. There are some additional policies that exist at the college/school/unit level as well. All policies require supervisor approval for an employee to take advantage of flexible work arrangements.

In a UTSC survey that went out earlier this year, slightly over half of all respondents selected flexible work arrangements as a topic they wanted Staff Council to focus on. Flexible work arrangements have an impact on other concerns, such as traffic/commute time, parking, office space shortage, work/life balance, and employee recruitment and retention.

Managers and directors from academic and non-academic colleges/units were interviewed to see who was already using these arrangements, what their experiences have been so far, and what their concerns are. From those already managing flex work staff, the response was overwhelmingly favorable. They reported increased productivity, improved morale, no reduction in work quality. Managers also mentioned having telework or flex work was an attractive option to recruit and retain employees.

Among those who are not yet managing flex work, they expressed concerns over misuse, fairness, staff availability, and assessing productivity. Suggestions for overcoming the barriers were introduced, such as starting with a trial period, deciding in advance which positions are eligible based on job duties, and what technology is needed to support teleworking.

Some managers said they would like support from the top, such as from their Dean's office or the CFO. Suggestions were also given about having all resources in one place, i.e., the policy, the forms, and technical support resources.

The Financial Administrative Services flex work committee was also consulted about the guidelines they are creating for their units. The hope is that those guidelines may serve as a model for units that are hoping to increase their flex work arrangements.

There are two flex-work questions on this year's Employee Engagement Survey. The data will be reviewed once the results are released in July. This may yield more insight into staffs' perspectives.

Going forward, more research is needed. A broader sample of managers will be taken and efforts to build a "one stop shop" resource will be looked into. Other ideas include training managers on what is available and how to overcome barriers, asking staff to bring up the topic to their managers, and tracking the impact of these efforts.

***Comments by President Fenves:*** Labor force studies show that providing some flexibility improves staff morale, recruiting, and retention. Some studies also show it improves productivity, but it depends on the job functions. A university is a service organization and service requires interactions. The way the service is provided has changed over the years with improvements in technology.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Susan Stockton and Ricardo Vela

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This committee came about as a result of the survey last fall that diversity and inclusion was important to the university workforce. The goal of this committee was to educate and promote diversity and inclusion on campus. The desire was to help create a program that would produce an inclusive, safe campus climate. The committee was able to contribute to University's Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

The committee reviewed the demographics of Staff Council to see how it compared with diversity overall at UT. The demographic data is self-reported and is limited by certain restrictions on how the university may collect certain data, such as gender. Information regarding the LGBTQ+ community was not captured in these demographics. The data also does not include faculty, U Temps, or student employees.

Overall the data show that Staff Council has similar diversity levels as the UT workforce. Staff Council is a little younger than the UT workforce as a whole and has a lower percentage of African American and Asian American representatives. In terms of gender, the data only show male and female, with no option for transgender individuals. Based on this, Staff Council has a larger representation by females than males than the overall UT workforce. The graphs also show level of education and salary range.

To address diversity and inclusion issues, the committee recommends collaborating with other UT staff organization such as:

- Hispanic Faculty/Staff Association
- Asian/Asian-American Faculty/Staff Association
- Black Faculty/Staff Association
- Pride and Equity Faculty/Staff Association

The committee also recommends setting up meetings with departments with a larger percentage of underrepresented groups to learn about Staff Council. Some of these departments currently have no representation.

**Comments by President Fenves:** Diversity and inclusion is important personally. The University has the most diverse executive leadership team in the history of the university, and "I believe we have the most effective leadership team in the history of the university. That is not a coincidence." Evidence shows excellence and quality are actually supported by diversity because of the different perspectives, different ideas, and different ways of thinking how to approach problems and solutions to problems. That diversity needs to be reflected at every level in the university.

The University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan was put together over the course of a year. It addresses recruitment, among other items such as campus climate. On the recruiting side, it will effect everything from the position description to the interviews. If there is not have a diverse pool of candidates, there will not be a diverse staff or faculty. On the campus climate side, it has been a stressful time for the university as it has been for the country. As the flagship university for the state of Texas, we have an obligation to try to address those issues.

**Engagement:** Caroline Taylor and Tiffo Carmichael

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The Engagement Committee was created this year to address ways Staff Council can be effective, Representatives can be informed and empowered, and constituents can benefit. This year the focus was on Representatives and the focus next year will be on constituents.

A survey was distributed asking for areas of improvement. Based on the results, a Kudos program was created. It is currently being managed by Rachel Cohen Ford. In the five months the program has been active, there have been 59 kudos submitted. Many of the Representatives asked that their supervisor be informed, which allowed upper management to better see the impact of staff council involvement.

Regroup email training was expanded so that Representatives felt more comfortable sending emails to their constituents. It was offered as part of New Rep Orientation as well as on an as needed basis.

An organizational chart was created so that Representatives could more easily see who was on which committee and what committees existed. Meetings were more closely timed so they did not go over the allotted 90 minutes.

A document was created addressing expectations for being a Staff Council Representative. The Communications Committee was involved and it will be rolled out soon. It will contain links to important documents, including the wiki. The next document that will be created is an Executive Committee expectation document.

The committee plans to send a survey annually to see what improvements have been made to engagement and what still needs to be improved. There are plans to work with Elections to get more of the vacant positions filled. There are currently 28 vacancies on the council. The committee will coordinate the creation of a marketing video to be placed on the UTSC website so staff better know what we do and whether they would like to join the group.

#### **Communications:** Page Stephens

A survey was sent to Staff Council Representatives to gather data about communications needs and preferences. Several problems were identified, including the need for UTSC branding and marketing, challenges using the Regroup email system, and the need for a comprehensive communications plan.

Emails going through the Regroup system are targeted to constituents, which means people at the Director level and above do not receive them. This needs to be addressed if we want better buy-in from upper management and UT administrators.

Other issues discovered include: a lack of clear expectations for reps, an out-of-date website, and a difficult to navigate wiki site.

A new Staff Council logo was created by Creative Services, which will bring UTSC better in line with UT branding standards. A new Drupal website was purchased and a project to overhaul the current website will start next year. Centralized communications was attempted this year for reps, which meant the Chair would send emails to constituents. However, this removed the main opportunity for reps to communicate with their constituents.



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Internal UT communications were improved. Members of the Executive Committee have regular meetings with key university leaders, such as: President Greg Fenves, AVP of HR Debra Kress, and Cindy Posey. This allows Staff Council to have better access to key staff who can assist us with projects.

In the coming year, a communications plan will be drafted and will include procedures and style guide information for all UTSC communications, including email, social media, and the website. A calendar will be created around monthly meetings so communications happen in a more timely manner.

**Comments by President Fenves:** Engagement and Communications go together and can be viewed as “how do we engage our community to feel and believe and act as if they are part of a single university community?” Many solutions surround communication. We must figure out a better way to communicate across portfolios and to different audiences. We must figure out a way to communicate effectively, accurately, and in a timely manner in the era of social media. It affects direct operations as well as emergency response.

**Additional Comments by President Fenves:**

It has been a tough year for the University of Texas. We have had the legislature in session, which creates our budget. We have had hateful rhetoric and posters placed on our campus that caused concern and fear for our students and employees. It ended with the tragedy of four students being stabbed and Harrison Brown dying. Staff members should be recognized for the work they did across campus in light of this tragedy. UTPD arrived on scene within two minutes of the first call and the perpetrator was brought into custody. Staff from Rec Sports and the Student Activity Center ran to assist some of the victims.

This is a very difficult legislative session on higher education funding and many other policy issues. Higher education will be severely affected and we will need to work across university leadership on how to address the budget once it is finalized by the legislature.

Across campus, there has been some change, including a major reorganization of combining the CFO and University Operations portfolios into one and new Vice Presidents. Two major goals this year are to figure out how to operate more effectively and how to improve communications.

Another change is ASMP and the Workday go-live date. Workday will effect HR, finance, and purchasing and will change the fundamental way UT does business. Darrell Bazzell, CFO, has experience with major ERP changes and made the decision to delay the rollout planned for January 2017.

The hiring freeze will end on August 31. It did not eliminate any particular budget lines for staff positions, however those may have happened as part of normal budgeting decisions.

After the Haruka Weiser murder there was an extensive Department of Public Safety review. This included reviews of every building, policing, security, night-time transportation (like SUREWalk), etc. There were a huge number of recommendations and many are very expensive, however the university will address all of them. Nighttime transportation is being evaluated to see if there should be ride services available and whether the shuttle system is effective or if there are better options. SUREWalk has been an important part of the nighttime transportation options.

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“Thank you” to the unsung heroes of the University of Texas. “Thanks to you and the work you do for the University of Texas. The University would not run without you.”

**Chair Report (Jason Eitelbach):**

Elections for Secretary and Parliamentarian will be done in June. Nominations can be sent to [elections@utsc.utexas.edu](mailto:elections@utsc.utexas.edu). There are other executive committee positions available that are selected with a more informal election process.

There will be potential bylaws changes coming in the future which there is not enough time to address currently.

Thank you to the committees and to the President for his comments. Everybody has an important role to contribute. As you go forward, think of how you can be more of a representative and think about days like to day.

**New Business:**

Jaime Davis presented appreciation awards to the outgoing officers: Jason Eitelbach, Bryan Hill, and Ricardo Vela. The officers have put in their maximum number of years according to the bylaws. “Thank you for all the time that Staff Council takes from your real jobs.”

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 PM

Ricardo Vela

Recording Secretary