

University Staff Council
November 18, 2008
701 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Diane Hurtado, Jeannie Laird, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannion, Monica Poehl, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Jen Potter, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson

Not Present: James Laird, Carla Wiseniske

Visitors: N/A

Call to Order: 1:37 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Executive Officers Meeting Update

a. Current Staff Demographics – Kimberlee Pottberg

Members asked to review the 2003-2007 Employee Services Staff Diversity Profile.

Agency numbers include:

Agriculture

07 adloc: 315 classified employees, 1048 non-classified, 280 in Bryan/College Station

06 adloc: 324 classified employees, 802 non-classified, 771 in Bryan/College Station

02 adloc: 36 classified employees, 74 non-classified, 116 in Bryan/College Station

Engineering

Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) – 336

Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) – 445

Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) – 1359

These numbers represent full-time and part-time staff in College Station

USC represents a large and diverse group. Jeff Wilson asked to have Ag and Engineering numbers broken down by gender. How should demographic data be used? It was noted the value of knowing populations and how they are affected by various issues. This could be useful in forming representative committees to address specific issues. Data in the demographic reports comes from BPP and as such is self-reported. Human Resources does not interpret data or investigate results, and thus they may be of limited assistance with interpreting demographics and trends.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Rosie will follow up with more detailed demographics. Kimberlee requested data for 2008.

b. Standardized Council Member Statement – Dean Endler

USC represents approximately 9,000 employees in the College Station area, thus it is important to get out word of USC presence to the community. An introductory statement was distributed to members for review and comment. The idea of the statement is to let people know they have representation and to promote unity among all staff, regardless of role, level, classification, etc. Because it speaks of the USC as a whole, it is important this statement communicate a positive message effectively.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: All members should review Dean's statement and make recommendations to him at d-endler@tamu.edu.

c. Communications: Inquiry/Concerns Acknowledgement – Patti Urbina

There is a need for a "common voice" and some uniformity in statements made by the USC. Patti and Dean are working on creating a PowerPoint presentation and script and asked for participation and feedback from

USC members. The idea is to get the word out that the USC exists and its mission is to promote communication between staff and the administration. Patti asked for volunteers for a Communications Committee. Kathy Collins, Jen Potter, Lori O'Bannion, Debbie Hoffmann, and Jackie Caruso volunteered. A Facebook page is likely to be created in order to provide updates and information to the community. Discussion followed about the importance of using various communication mediums in order to effectively reach the four generations of staff who currently work on this campus.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Patti will work with her newly-formed Communications group to establish some basic USC materials.*

- d. Budget Draft Update – Rosie Schoenfeld
Rosie is working with CIS on web site design alternatives which will affect the budget. She will present the council with a budget draft once the alternatives have been further examined.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Rosie will continue to develop a USC budget proposal.*

2. USC Introduction at Transportation Services Forum 12/09/2008 (601 Rudder) – Kimberlee Pottberg

Kimberlee called for a few council members to participate to do a quick USC introduction and provide basic info about who USC is, what USC does, and how USC can be contacted. December 9 forum is at 10 a.m. in 601Rudder. Additional forums will take place on Wednesday, January 14 at 3:00 p.m. in the GSC and on February 5 at 11 a.m. in 601 Rudder. Forums will cover general rate information, master plans, effects on community and costs, etc.

USC should consider whether to set a standard of deferring certain issues to departments or taking more of an advocacy role. As parking is an issue that has been and will continue to keep coming to the council, a consensus should be reached concerning parking issues and USC's position on these matters.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Kimberlee will follow up with Rosie or Debbie about who will participate in TS forums on behalf of USC.*

President's Meritorious Service Award event is taking place on 12/1. This event may be ideal for USC participation. The USAC Task Force participated last year by handing out cards about the Task Force and staff open forums. A suggestion was made to place cards with web site information on tables at the event. The issue was raised about a USC mail stop for communication from staff who do not have computers. Jeannie Laird has not been able to get a response from mail services regarding a USC mail stop. Diane Hurtado offered to also place cards at the TEES holiday function. (This includes approx 150 people.) Cards will be printed in English and Spanish.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Jackie will check with President Murano's office to see if her comments have been written in order to determine if USC formation could be mentioned as a staff accomplishment this year. Jeannie will get back to the council about a USC mail stop. Olga will assist Patti with translating USC information cards.*

3. Pending USC E-mail Inquiries – Kimberlee Pottberg

Maternity Leave: Currently TAMU only has annual and sick leave policies and not a policy specific to maternity leave. Faculty appointments are unique, and maternity leave could be negotiated as part of a faculty hiring package. Faculty must adhere to a separate set of policies from staff, and as such the USC should emphasize that difference and not encourage comparisons between these two groups. USC will examine whether there is a significant demographic and need for advocating a maternity leave policy and in the interim, USC should respond to the inquiry received by providing information regarding existing leave policies as they apply to staff. Further research should take place to examine how existing leave policies could be applied in order to meet maternity needs.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Patti Urbina asked for volunteers to contact her via e-mail (purbina@ipomail.tamu.edu) to participate on a committee to examine maternity leave issue.*

Members of USC agree that the role of USC is not limited solely to educating staff about existing policies, thus it is important each staff issue be examined and researched in order to determine an appropriate course of action. Members also agree that there are likely to be numerous issues, and USC must establish a means to prioritize those issues. The Executive Committee intends to form standing committees to address various types of issues. Inquiries received by the USC should be collected and grouped in such a way as to indicate which issues are most important to staff and what USC priorities should be. USC should also establish a process of evaluating inquiries to determine if issues are appropriate for USC handling prior to assigning issues to committees.

With this and other inquiries, Communications Coordinator Patti Urbina defined USC responsibilities as follows:

- Be responsive to employees, recognize concerns, and confirm we have received their messages.
- Let them know if we are forming a committee to investigate the issue.
- Report findings (some of which may simply be a reference to the relevant policy).
- Respond to employee.
- Decide if we move forward with the issue and how.

The group agreed this was an appropriate course of action. The USC must remain accountable to staff and not just pass issues off on other entities. The role of the USC is to determine appropriate action for various issues/inquiries and look at those issues/inquiries from a larger perspective. It is important to be thorough and make sure any referrals to other departments are sent to the appropriate place. The council agreed on a goal of addressing issues broadly and not setting the expectation that any one individual will be directly affected by council action. It is not the role of the USC to intervene in specific employee/employer relations. The USC should establish a standard method of addressing issues which does not force a time line which would prevent USC from making good decisions about how issues should be handled.

An inquiry regarding parking cost issues was received late Monday and sent to the Executive Committee. The inquiry included a sliding scale cost recommendation and adjusted costs for certain salary ranges.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Debbie Hoffmann, Missy Amos, Robert Pottberg, and Jackie Caruso agreed to serve on a committee for reviewing parking issues.*

4. Future USC Meeting Dates & Times – Kimberlee Pottberg

Meeting times will alternate to accommodate for different staff schedules. Odd-numbered months will meet mornings (8:30-10:30 am), and even-numbered months will meet afternoons (1:30-3:30). Bylaws address specific days of meetings. While meeting dates and times can be published for up to a year, meeting places will not be available as far in advance. It is estimated locations could be secured for up to six months. Secured meeting times and places thus far can be included on information cards proposed for upcoming events.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Kimberlee and Venesa will attempt to schedule meeting locations for upcoming months.*

5. Other Business

Rosie Schoenfeld agreed to represent USC on the Transportation Council.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 16, 2008, 1:30-3:30 p.m., 701 Rudder

University Staff Council
December 16, 2008
701 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Diane Hurtado, Jeannie Laird, James Laird, Monica Poehl, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Jen Potter, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Not Present: Missy Amos, Dean Endler, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannon

Visitors: N/A

Call to Order: 1:37 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

Recommended corrections were made to the November meeting minutes, and they were approved at 1:38 p.m.

2. Staff Demographics Update

USC members were provided handouts with a demographic breakdown of various Engineering agencies and cumulative totals. The information reflects staff on campus, and adjunct faculty are included. Numbers include full-time and part-time staff in all agencies.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Diane will ask about the existence of an "Other" category with regard to Engineering demographics. Rosie will get information from Agriculture. Jackie is requesting 2008 data.*

3. USC Participation at Transportation Services Forum and HR Liaison Network Meeting

Several USC members attended the Transportation Services forum, and while staff turnout was low, many questions and comments were addressed. It was suggested the PowerPoint presentation used at the forum be made available on the USC web site. Discussion followed on what USC could do to help improve turnout at events such as these. There are two additional forums on Jan 14 from 3 to 5 p.m. and Feb 5 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Kimberlee presented at the General Services Complex for approximately 90 people who are HR Liaisons or Coordinators. A brief handout which lists USC members and future meeting dates, times, and locations was included in the meeting packets. Early next year there is a CSBA meeting, an all-staff meeting in Custodial Services, and a meeting of Dining Services leadership. Carla also mentioned an event on Jan 6 for Facilities staff held in Sbis Dining Hall. Robert Pottberg mentioned the Ag Program Conference and indicated Patricia Gerling was the appropriate contact to get on the agenda. It was also suggested USC make an effort to reach out to some of the large committees on campus.

There is a need for additional outreach efforts. There are various meetings that occur in each of the colleges for their staff. Dean Endler has been asked to gather info about college meetings where USC could participate. Kimberlee asked the group to think about other opportunities to make a short presentation, especially in January. She asked people to contact her or Dean with this information.

Lisa Blum asked about the possibility of including information about USC with the posters and various employment information Human Resources asks each department to post in the workplace. Jackie Caruso expressed it is important to emphasize that USC is not mandatory, and it must be clear what USC does not do, so people understand USC is not the appropriate body for certain disputes. Lawrence Vega made a suggestion that all materials be presented in English and Spanish. Patti Urbina asked Lawrence if he could help in her efforts to make sure translated material was effective.

USC is scheduled to meet on April 21, but because Aggie Muster also takes place on this date, USC members were asked to consider whether the university cancelling classes that afternoon should affect the meeting schedule.

No additional inquiries have been received at staff@tamu.edu,

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: All members should contact Kimberlee Pottberg about opportunities for disbursing information about the USC.

4. Update on Pending Inquiries

A committee met regarding issues brought to USC thus far, and it was clear that both inquiries were a statement of a lack of fairness. The group concluded Employee Relations exists to help address questions of fairness and policy interpretation. Patti Urbina presented a draft process, regardless of the question, for addressing inquiries. She stated that while we have minimal inquiries we can establish ad hoc committees to address them, but as inquiries increase, this will no longer be the most efficient and effective way to address concerns. Some suggested additions to the procedure were made in order to explain how USC prioritizes issues and how we handle issues according to those priorities. In response to a call for a needs assessment, Kimberlee referred to recent staff survey that was conducted. The survey was conducted a year ago, and could provide insight into past issues in order to allow USC to begin to set priorities prior to receiving a large number of inquiries. Jackie recommended a disclaimer at the time inquiries are received to advise individuals which issues are appropriate for USC and how issues not appropriate will not be addressed by USC but could be referred to other departments. This will better educate staff members up front about what USC does and does not do. Also addressed was the issue of confidentiality and the need for discretion in handling and discussing the inquiries USC receives. Some suggestions included a notice of who received emails sent to staff@tamu.edu and the removal of personal data from specific inquiries when they are being discussed in open meetings. Another suggestion included a mode of communicating with USC anonymously, similar to the form used to report hate crimes. USC will continue to discuss these issues in future meetings.

- a. Leave – Patti spoke to the individual who made the inquiry regarding maternity leave.
- b. Parking – Patti could not reach the individual with the parking issue.

5. USC Outreach

As Chair Elect, Dean Endler will be heading up the outreach effort and needs volunteers to assist him. Ron Carter, Lisa Blum, Diane Hurtado, Jeff Wilson, and Vic Frysinger volunteered.

6. Future USC Meeting Dates & Times

The following dates and times were listed on the meeting agenda:

January 20	510 Rudder Tower	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
February 17	701 Rudder Tower	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
March 17	General Service Complex (GSC)	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
April 21	701 Rudder Tower	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
May 19	General Service Complex (GSC)	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
June 16	701 Rudder Tower	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

7. Other Business

In an effort to provide a simple and consistent process for addressing inquiries made to individuals, including verbal inquiries which may be made at any time by staff members, Jackie referred to the format of the USC email response message and suggested members use that as a basis in speaking to individuals about their concerns or the USC.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee will send the standard USC email inquiry response to the listserv so all can review it.

James Laird clarified how the USC listserv works. The listserv was created as a closed listserv, and James asked that if any members are rejected when trying to send messages to the listserv, send the rejection message to him (jlaird@mays.tamu.edu) so he can investigate the matter.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Jeannie, Rosie and Carla will look into logistics of holding open forums in order to begin planning these events for the coming year.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 20, 8:30-10:30 a.m., 510 Rudder

University Staff Council
January 20, 2009
510 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Ron Carter, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Debbie Hoffmann, Diane Hurtado, Jeannie Laird, Kimberlee Pottberg, Jen Potter, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson

Not Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Jackie Caruso, Vic Frysinger, James Laird, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannion, Monica Poehl, Robert Pottberg, Carla Wiseniske

Visitors: N/A

Call to Order: 8:36 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as presented at 8:37 a.m.

2. USC Participation at University Events

In the first weeks of January 2009 members of USC gave presentations to several groups, including Dining Services, Custodial Services, and CSBA. These events were all well-attended, and as a result staff members are becoming increasingly aware of the existence of the USC and its mission. USC informational materials are now available in electronic format.

3. Update on Pending Inquiries/Issues

- a. Parking: USC received three additional inquiries regarding parking. As it is clear parking is a high priority among staff, Patti asked for additional volunteers from USC to assist her in researching the various issues associated with parking.
- b. Maternity Leave: This issue was again raised at the Custodial Services meeting. While work on this issue continues, some aspects to consider are policies of peer institutions, benefits to both full-time and part-time employees, length of service required for benefits, and employer costs.

Dean suggested sending a message to Distribution A in order to make the university community aware of the issues currently being addressed by USC.

4. Town Hall Meetings

Kimberlee proposed March 5 for the first USC Town Hall Meeting. Members agreed on a 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. time, formatted to allow 1.5 hours of open discussion followed by a 30-minute period in which refreshments could be served and staff would be given the opportunity to speak individually among themselves and with members of USC. Given the trend of higher turnouts at the General Services Complex, this was the preferred location.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Dean will request GSC room reservation on behalf of USC.*

5. Other Business

Dean and Kimberlee are working on outreach efforts in the colleges and different units across campus.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:11 a.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 17, 1:30-3:30 p.m., 701 Rudder

University Staff Council
February 17, 2009
701 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannon, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina

Not Present: Diane Hurtado, James Laird, Jeannie Laird, Monica Poehl, Jen Potter, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Visitors: Dr. Clint Magill, Speaker of the Faculty Senate

Call to Order: 1:32 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as presented at 1:32 p.m.

2. Dr. Clint Magill – Speaker, Faculty Senate

Dr. Magill attended to provide members of the USC with information about the Faculty Senate and some of the issues addressed by various committees within the Faculty Senate, as some of these issues coincide with those raised in the inquiries received by the USC. Dr. Magill specifically mentioned the Personnel and Welfare Committee, a group which considers issues surrounding pay rates and benefits. Patti Urbina has been invited to attend meetings of this group. Other committees include a Budget Committee and a Legislative Issues Committee.

3. USC Outreach

Kimberlee and Dean have been attending numerous meetings across campus in order to promote the USC. These groups included Deans' Assistants on Feb 5, a Parking Forum on Feb 5, the College of Engineering on Feb 11, and the College of Education and Human Development, also on Feb 11. They are scheduled to attend a Dean's Corner meeting at the Library on Feb 20.

4. Update on Pending Issues/Inquiries

Some USC members met with Dr. Pierce Cantrell, Vice President and Associate Provost for Information Technology, about the creation of a staff workstation replacement program. Dr. Cantrell expressed interest in pursuing this and requested some additional information about "knowledge-based staff"—those whose employment relies upon the use of a computer on a daily basis. James Laird is working with Todd Gregory in using inventory information to determine the age of staff workstations across campus. Several issues were raised in considering how a staff workstation replacement program should operate; including which staff should be affected, where funds for the program should originate, how those funds should be used, and how groups currently participating in workstation replacement will be affected. Additional research is needed, and the committee will continue to gather data to share at the next meeting.

The Communications Committee met last week and outlined a pattern of USC communication needs. Jackie is working on draft statements for members who may be approached about an issue for USC consideration. She will present these statements for review at a future meeting. These responses are intended to help members be open to accepting feedback from staff and be consistent in how these situations are handled.

5. Web Site Update

Jeannie is assisting Patti in researching web communication options, including the use of Facebook. It appears a blog may be the ideal medium for disseminating USC information online. They are also working with the Provost's office to get the USC web address abbreviated to something more user-friendly. Kathy mentioned the release of results of a Facebook study at TAMU conducted last spring.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Kathy will find a contact to provide results of the Facebook study to USC members.*

Patti and Kathy attended an MSC renovation focus group where the focus was on maintaining traditions and meaning in the new design. Much of the emphasis was on the Flagroom and how the current content could be integrated in a more organized way into the new structure. Patti also noted a proposal for replacing the MSC post office with a UPS Store and how this move could impact students and employees. Demolition on the MSC begins Aug 15.

Kimberlee is looking into a potential way to track USC inquiries. Some Executive Committee officers will meet with Kim Reverman, the CIS programmer who created their Keystone tracking system, on Thursday. A system such as this could benefit USC by improving response time to inquiries and by allowing tracking of inquiries and their subject matter as they continue to increase in numbers. Patti also pointed out how tracking inquiries is helpful in determining effectiveness of outreach efforts.

6. Town Hall Forum

A small group met to draft a flier and email from President Murano to promote the first Town Hall. This event will take place March 5 at 10:30 a.m. in the General Services Complex, Assembly Room A. The forum will last one hour, with a 30 minute "meet and greet" with USC members to follow. Karan Chavis has agreed to facilitate, and President Murano will participate for a portion of the event. Jackie suggested having a computer set up to allow online inquiries to be submitted for people who may not be able to attend or who may not be comfortable speaking in front of a group. Olga, Lawrence and Patti will work on communications for Spanish speaking staff members.

**Since the USC meeting, the Town Hall Forum has been postponed. This event will no longer take place on March 5, and a new date will be discussed at the next USC meeting.*

7. Other Business

On Feb 27 Dean will meet with President Murano and Dr. Vitter at 1 p.m. on behalf of USC. Kimberlee will not be able to attend this meeting. The budget has gone forward for consideration and may be discussed at that time. Kimberlee asked members who are able to attend to contact her with this information.* The meeting is scheduled for one hour, and a PowerPoint presentation and an executive summary have been prepared.

**Since the USC meeting, it was determined that in order to effectively utilize our allotted time, attendance at this first meeting with President Murano should be limited to Executive Committee members.*

There was discussion of which members should comprise the two-thirds of USC serving three-year terms and which remaining one-third should serve two-year terms (per USC Bylaws). Venesa proposed allowing the four University Staff Council Task Force members currently serving on USC to serve only two-year terms, in consideration of the year of service spent as a member of the Task Force. Members present approved this proposal. Venesa will solicit an additional three volunteers to serve two-year terms via the listserv. Results and any necessary further action will be discussed at a future meeting.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Venesa will send a message to the USC listserv asking for individuals who wish to serve only a two-year term with USC.*

Anne Mayer of the Employee and Organizational Development office would like to make a presentation to USC regarding professional development, available training, a business career ladder, and new employee orientation. Kimberlee suggested March 17. However, Dean suggested another date, as March 17 is during Spring Break, and meeting attendance may be lower than usual.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:27 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 17, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m., General Services Complex, Assembly Room A

University Staff Council
March 17, 2009
GSC 1501
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Jeannie Laird, Lori O'Bannon, Monica Poehl, Kimberlee Pottberg, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Not Present: Dean Endler, Diane Hurtado, James Laird, Olga Martinez, Robert Pottberg, Jen Potter, Lawrence Vega
Visitors:

Call to Order: 8:32 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as presented at 1:32 p.m.

2. Meeting with Drs. Murano and Vitter

Members of the USC Executive Committee met with Drs. Murano and Vitter on Feb 27 to give an update on the progress of the USC and to provide information about some of the staff concerns voiced thus far. Dr. Murano expressed an interest in USC meetings and the level of staff participation. She also indicated she would be working with Dr. Cross to better address the issue of parking, as this was clearly a high priority for staff. Executive Committee members also made a request for various resources in order to better reach out to and serve staff. As a result, USC was granted a budget and invited to participate on the Council of Councils and the Council on the Built Environment. Dr. Murano expressed a great interest in continuing to support the USC and requested a regular meeting with representatives from USC in order to continue to receive updates on staff issues.

3. Town Hall Forum

Kimberlee suggested a May 21 date for the first Town Hall Forum in order to allow for the end of the spring semester, grading, and graduation. Jeannie Laird noted May 21 is the date of the CSBA Workshop, but suggested the Town Hall Forum may benefit from the guaranteed attendance of CSBA attendees. Kimberlee asked for additional input on any other dates for the Town Hall Forum, including dates to avoid and any possible conflicts with other events.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee and Jeannie will discuss further the possibility of combining the Town Hall Forum with the CSBA Workshop.

4. Other Business

President Murano approved a budget for the USC. The USC web site will soon be <http://staff.tamu.edu>. The URL was made available, but account information in order to access our budget is required in order to set up the necessary web support needed to maintain the site.

Carla raised a concern about the need for regulating bicycles on campus. Debbie Hoffmann provided some information about the long-standing concern over bicycles on campus and some of the challenges faced in addressing this issue. The Transportation Advisory Committee has appointed a subcommittee tasked with addressing bicycle safety issues, and a proposed SAP is currently under consideration.

Human Resources will have a table at the Women's Leadership Forum from 12 – 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24. The table will include information about workplace policies, and Jackie Caruso suggested USC information also be included. The current USC information document will be amended to indicate <http://staff.tamu.edu> is coming soon.

The VP for Finance office has generously offered its IT resources in order to support the USC web site. Patti Urbina asked council members to consider whether the demands of maintaining the USC site would pose a strain on a

division's resources and suggested it may be more beneficial for the USC to contract with CIS to support the site. The proposed budget includes an allowance for web site maintenance costs.

The USC is currently seeking nominees to serve on President Murano's Task Force for Enlightened Governance. Kimberlee indicated a number of nominees were being received from different areas across campus. Names will go forward the week of March 23, and names received thus far will be shared with USC members via the listserv.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee will send the list of Task Force nominees to be submitted by USC to the USC listserv.

Kimberlee would like to schedule a half-day retreat in order to address some recent issues with the USC Constitution and Bylaws. This retreat should take place prior to the first Town Hall Forum.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Venesa will coordinate date information to determine an ideal time to hold the USC retreat.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:10 a.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 21, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., 701 Rudder

University Staff Council
April 21, 2009
701 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Diane Hurtado, Jeannie Laird, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannon, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Jen Potter, Rosie Schoenfeld, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Not Present: James Laird, Monica Poehl, Patti Urbina

Visitors: Anne Mayer, Director of Employee & Organizational Development; Deanna White, Assistant Director of Human Resources

Call to Order: 1:35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as presented at 1:35 p.m.

2. Anne Mayer – Director, Employee & Organizational Development

Anne Mayer provided USC members with some information about the mission, purpose, and methods of Employee & Organizational Development. Council members were asked for input about a summer initiative to create a New Employee Orientation Program.

Deanna White briefed the USC about Required Employee Training and an upcoming task force recommendation for goals and accountability measures related to Required Employee Training Compliance. Consequences for non-compliance were outlined in detail, and Council members expressed some concern for staff perception of the recommendation that non-compliance be considered in promotion and/or title changes for staff and not for faculty. USC members were asked for any feedback or recommendations related to this issue.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee will send task force recommendation summary and feedback survey information to the USC listserv.

3. Budget and USC Account Update

University Staff Council now has an account, and initial purchases are planned. These purchases will be related to the upcoming USC Retreat.

4. Communications Update

Patti is working with Pete Marchbanks in CIS on a contract for the USC web site. USC has acquired the "staff.tamu.edu" url, and it is expected the site will be working and available as soon as possible. Jackie suggested that when the site is ready, it can be linked from the HR web site.

5. Town Hall Forum

CSBA through James and Jeannie Laird have offered USC time at the CSBA Workshop for the Town Hall Forum. The Forum will take place on Thursday, May 21 from 3 – 4 p.m. followed by a 30-minute meet-and-greet with USC members in the Ray Auditorium at the Mays Business School. An Aggie Hotline announcement and Distribution A message will go out with information about this event. Members are asked to save this date.

6. Call for USC Retreat Agenda Items

A primary USC Retreat agenda item will be consideration for some amendments to the Bylaws. USC Executive Committee will meet briefly with USC members on the Transportation Services Advisory Committee in order to begin organizing information about the USC role in addressing the many concerns over parking issues raised by staff. Jackie also asked that the retreat include a discussion about the format and structure of the upcoming Town Hall Forum and how USC should address issues brought forth at the open forums held by the University Staff Advisory Council Task Force. Other items for discussion will include the recent system policy revision regarding presidential searches, the USC's process for receiving staff inquiries and concerns, and the overall role of the USC.

7. Other Business

USC meetings have been scheduled through summer. The July meeting will take place on July 21 from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. in Assembly Room A of the General Services Complex. The August meeting will take place on August 18 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. in 501 Rudder. Meetings with President Murano are planned for June 23 and Sept 8.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee will send meeting dates to the USC listserv.

The current set up for staff@tamu.edu results in inquiries going to the Executive Committee. However, it is intended that all members will have access to the USC Keystone such that any member can review the items submitted and provide feedback.

Lori presented members with an inquiry she received regarding the TAMU limit on Medical Spending Accounts. Jackie suggested this inquiry should be shared with SEBAC representative, Jane Schneider.

USC members discussed an inquiry received regarding the growing trend of a four-day work week during the summer months at other institutions. The four-day week was considered by TAMU officials in recent years in an effort to decrease utility costs, but was not implemented due to factors such as course contact hours and various faculty appointments.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:34 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m., General Assembly A, General Services Complex

University Staff Council
May 19, 2009
General Services Complex, Assembly A
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Jackie Caruso, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Jeannie Laird, Olga Martinez, Monica Poehl, Kimberlee Pottberg, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega

Not Present: Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Kathy Collins, Debbie Hoffmann, Diane Hurtado, James Laird, Lori O'Bannon, Robert Pottberg, Jen Potter, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Visitors:

Call to Order: 8:35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

All members present approved the April meeting minutes; however there were not enough members present to conduct an official USC vote. Minutes will be brought to the June meeting.

2. May 12 USC Meeting with Transportation Services

Rod Weis from Transportation Services attended this meeting in which USC members learned there are a number of costs associated with maintaining parking services, thus Transportation Services is able to justify their revenue needs. One goal of USC will be to educate staff about services and parking alternatives. Parking is clearly a complicated issue, and while a number of solutions have been proposed, research conducted by Transportation Services indicates these solutions are not without certain consequences, primarily related to the quality and quantity of the services provided to the TAMU campus.

3. April 2009 USC Retreat

Members received copies of a "Summary of Actions and Resolutions" from the April 23 retreat. This document includes details related to the proposed Bylaw Amendments, including Council member terms. Other items listed include creation of the Nominations Committee, comprised of those serving one-year terms; plans for the USC Town Hall Forum, including a need for analysis of the issues raised during the University Staff Advisory Council Task Force open forums; and the process for handling USC inquiries.

Dean presented the analysis of the Task Force forum issues. The analysis shows issues related to Human Resources were most prominent for the University Staff Advisory Council Task Force, while USC members agreed parking is currently a major issue. Since the Task Force forums, HR has addressed some issues, particularly those related to staff training and orientation. Members agreed the analysis documents, if shared with staff, need to clearly explain context in that the information included came from the 2007 Task Force forums. It should also be clear to staff that it does not take a year to make issues known.

4. USC Bylaw Proposed Amendments

USC did not have a quorum to conduct the Bylaw Amendment vote.

5. Town Hall Forum

The forum is this Thursday, May 21 as part of the CSBA workshop. Forum format will include an introduction and a "Meet and Greet." All members will be seated on stage. Members reviewed the introductory slides to be shown at the forum.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Kimberlee will send forum presentation to the USC listserv for feedback.

6. Budget Update

Rosie is turning in retreat expenses and expenses for the USC web site. Kimberlee is also preparing expenses for the upcoming Town Hall Forum.

7. Communications Update

- a. **Inquiries/Issues** - Patti presented a draft document for handling employee inquiries. She asked members to review the document and provide any feedback. She also asked members to be mindful that inquiries are subject to open records act and also that inquiries involving legal or ethical issues would obligate members to take appropriate action. Issues received by the USC will be a permanent USC agenda item. Patti explained inquiries are currently received by the Executive Committee in order to protect any sensitive data included in the inquiry. Issues will be more broadly presented to the Council as a whole.
- b. **USC Website** - Staff.tamu.edu is now live. Patti offered a demonstration of the Council's new web site and its features.
- c. **Keystone Tracking** - The keystone system should be set up, but Patti was not able to get in touch with Kim Reverman to get tutorials or information about managing the Keystone system.

8. 2009 Officer Election

In preparation for the upcoming USC Officer elections, each current officer discussed their position, expectations, related skills, demands, etc.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Venesa will send a message to the listserv to call for nominations.*

9. Other Business

Additional thoughts were added about the Town Hall Forum such as a comment or suggestion form for staff to submit inquiries privately. It was also suggested forum format be explained as part of the introductory presentation, so people know what to expect. Each member should introduce themselves. Ray Auditorium is Wehner, room 113.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Jeannie will make name tags for members to wear during the forum.*

Meeting Adjourned: 10:21 a.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 16, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., 701 Rudder

University Staff Council
June 16, 2009
701 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Jeannie Laird, James Laird, Lori O'Bannon, Monica Poehl, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske

Not Present: Lisa Blum, Diane Hurtado, Olga Martinez, Jen Potter

Visitors:

Call to Order: 1:31 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

The April and May meeting minutes were approved as submitted. June 2 special meeting minutes were approved with a request to add the memo sent to Dr. Murano with staff survey results as an amendment.

2. Officer Election Results

New officers were announced and congratulated. They will begin their terms on September 1, but will be welcome to join current officers in certain activities in order to prepare to assume their posts. New officers will include Dean Endler, Chair; Jeannie Laird, Chair Elect; Lisa Blum, Treasurer; Missy Amos, Secretary; and Patti Urbina will serve another term as Communications Coordinator.

3. USC Bylaw Amendments

Members were provided updated copies of the USC Bylaws to include the amendments approved in May. A Bylaws Committee, led by Venesa, is being established to review current Bylaws to ensure they are consistent with best practices for the University Staff Council.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Debbie, Lori, and Robert will also serve on the Bylaws Committee. Venesa will pull this group together for a meeting.*

4. USC Staff Survey Results

The results of the USC staff survey regarding the merging of the positions of TAMU President and TAMU System Chancellor have been posted to the USC website. The survey received 1,980 responses. Nearly 80% were opposed to the merger. 166 responses were received in paper format, and approximately 15 responses were in Spanish.

The survey was a good indicator of the ability of USC to gather staff input in a short amount of time. 1500 survey results were received within the first three days. While it may take additional time to allow for paper responses, a significant amount of information can still be gathered electronically, should it become necessary to solicit information quickly.

There were several issues identified in sending the survey via TAMU Bulkmail. One major issue is that TAMU does not maintain an e-mail list which consists solely of staff, particularly those represented by USC. The population which includes staff through TAMU Bulkmail also includes faculty and administrators. The Dean of Faculties works to maintain a contact list for faculty, but such an endeavor would be extremely difficult for staff. Debbie mentioned software used by Transportation Services which receives a feed from BPP to allow them to maintain a contact list for staff. However, due to the way TAMU administrators are classified with Human Resources, they are included. Agency employees, despite being on the College Station campus, did not receive the survey message unless they are 02 staff because they do not have TAMU e-mail addresses, thus they are not included in TAMU Bulkmail.

CIS indicated a preference for a different survey tool which costs approximately \$2,000 following questions about the legitimacy of a survey hosted by Survey Monkey. Robert added that many spam filters will tag Survey Monkey as spam, thus it is possible a number of staff did not receive the message.

Patti suggested some members of USC may get together to explore ways of obtaining or maintaining an accurate contact list for all staff on the TAMU College Station campus.

5. May 21 Town Hall Forum

Members received a synopsis of information presented to USC at the May 21 Town Hall Forum. Approximately 90 people attended this first Town Hall meeting, and a variety of issues were raised. Kimberlee recommended another forum in September, and members suggested opportunities to include the forum as part of an existing event in order to better ensure attendance. Carla suggested contacting Jane Schneider about participating in the Physical Plant event this fall.

USC members expressed a desire to honor requests related to USC structure and operations. Staff present at the forum asked for an elected council and for additional representation for the colleges. These requests will be brought to the USC Executive Committee meeting with Interim President Loftin to determine if these changes can be made and how quickly these changes could be implemented. Also, as suggested at the forum, USC members will seek to obtain better representation of both classified and non-classified staff when working to fill vacant council seats.

6. Communications Update

The Keystone system for USC is now set up, and while messages have been received, these were primarily responses to the staff survey. The only new issue received was a request for USC to explore tuition reimbursement or forgiveness for full-time staff. This issue will be researched by the appropriate committee, but members discussed some aspects of this issue, including the exclusion of 06 and 08 staff from the existing staff fee waiver, the minimum enrollment requirements to receive the staff fee waiver, the need for funds from an alternate source to make up for tuition which might be waived for staff, and the multiple types of tuition charged which may complicate the ability to bring tuition relief to staff.

7. Budget Update

After Town Hall Forum expenses, USC has approximately \$4,000 remaining in the current budget. However, upcoming expenses from CIS for maintaining the USC website and Keystone system are expected to exhaust the majority of these funds. The USC budget for the upcoming year will be a topic of the Executive Committee meeting with Dr. Loftin.

8. Other Business

USC still needs to work toward ways of better educating staff about the issues which affect them. One important opportunity lies within efforts by HR to educate people about upcoming changes to benefits. USC should actively invite staff to participate and become educated about their benefits options.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Jackie will ask a Human Resources representative to attend a future (July or August) USC meeting.

Kimberlee has contacted Interim President Bowen Loftin's office with information about USC, including the website, purpose, and mission. The Executive Committee's previously-scheduled meeting with Dr. Murano on June 23 will be maintained by Dr. Loftin. Issues to be raised at this meeting include USC budget needs, whether or not USC should maintain the current USC representation structure across reporting levels as proposed by Dr. Murano, and some of the issues staff have brought forward to the USC.

USC members agreed to send a letter or other means of expressing appreciation to Dr. Murano for her creation of the University Staff Council.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: Patti will coordinate this appreciation effort.

A proposal was made to make meeting times more consistent, but the majority of USC members felt staff preferred a variegated schedule since this allows staff with different types of work schedules to participate at a time which is convenient.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:58 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 21, 8:30 a.m., Assembly Room A, General Services Complex

University Staff Council
July 21, 2009
General Services Complex, Assembly A
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Jeannie Laird, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannon, Monica Poehl, Robert Pottberg, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega

Not Present: Venesa Flores, Diane Hurtado, James Laird, Jen Potter, Kimberlee Pottberg, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske
Visitors:

Call to Order: 8:35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Approval of Minutes

The June meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

2. Human Resources Q&A

Due to benefit sessions currently in progress an HR representative was not available to discuss benefits with USC, however, Jackie Caruso provided general information and reviewed the highlights of some of the changes. Because the legislative session was late this year the benefits office did not get information from the System until July 1. Scott & White had the most significant changes. Scott & White still has a \$25.00 copay but they are going to an 80/20 plan for major medical. Specific examples and comparisons have been prepared to answer questions.

Jackie reported that benefit meetings have been highly attended with 400 plus people attending these meetings. Additionally, traffic in the benefit office this week has been very heavy. Jackie encourages questions to be directed to the benefits office. The benefit office is open for walk-ins Tuesday – Thursday until 6:00. p.m. The HR network meetings held in early July yielded a tremendous turnout. HR liasions or USC members should direct choice selections to the benefits office.

Jackie would like to invite Pamela Praesel (Communications Manager) to speak about Aggie Answers at a USC meeting. Aggie Answers is a new technology that has been very helpful for annual enrollment – it has been helpful in identifying systemic questions and providing answers to these questions.

Benefit information is expected in late May next year.

It was suggested that a link from the USC website be set up to the HR website for benefit information. It was also suggested that USC information (such as meeting dates/times and meeting outcomes) be added to the HR listserv (which goes out weekly) and to distribution A.

3. New Members Election Process

Dean Endler reported that a task force met to create a new member nomination form. Dean requested that any suggestions for updates to the form be returned to Missy Amos or Venesa Flores. Missy reported that she has been in contact with DALC (Deans Administrative Liasion Council) members regarding the election process for additional USC members from the colleges. The colleges are willing to handle the election process. They are currently waiting for the nomination form and additional direction from USC regarding the process.

4. Communications Update

Patti reported that she is working to get on the subcommittee for Communications Council.

5. Budget Update

Rosie reported that she is preparing the upcoming budget and that USC will be requesting additional funds.

6. Other Business

Dean Endler shared his thoughts on USC as we move forward. Dean would like to announce updates and issues when we hold the forum in the fall. During the forum he would like for issues/questions to be responded to by the representative subject matter expert rather than the USC President. He would also like for USC to be purposeful and diligent in the pursuit and resolution of issues. He encourages the expectation among members that it's not a matter of if you serve but where you will serve. Dean requested that USC members consider what areas may be of interest to you and where you would like to participate.

Additional thoughts from committee members are as follows:

A request was made to share issues that have been submitted.

Patti suggested that the USC elections should be concluded before January and the completion of the presidential search.

Jackie said that we need to be prepared to answer questions at the open forum and that we need to be deliberate about the structure. Additionally, we should be mindful of shared services teams and what they are doing.

Kathy provided an update on the task force on enlightened and shared governance. The task force is looking at faculty, staff, students and the selection process for the shared services task forces and the presidential search committee. Kathy reported that someone from the system office will be at the next meeting. The task force is exploring why someone from staff was not put on the committee. The executive committee plans to draft a letter to the search committee expressing interest in participating on the committee.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:30 a.m

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 18, 1:30 p.m., 501 Rudder Tower

University Staff Council
August 18, 2009
501 Rudder
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Missy Amos, Lisa Blum, Ron Carter, Jackie Caruso, Kathy Collins, Dean Endler, Venesa Flores, Vic Frysinger, Debbie Hoffmann, Jeannie Laird, Kimberlee Pottberg, Robert Pottberg, Jeff Wilson, Carla Wiseniske
Not Present: Diane Hurtado, James Laird, Olga Martinez, Lori O'Bannon, Monica Poehl, Rosie Schoenfeld, Patti Urbina, Lawrence Vega

Visitors: Pam Praesel, Stephanie Payne, John Scroggs, Di Fontenot, Cathy Bresley, Andrea Powers

Call to Order: 1:37 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Aggie Answers Presentation

Pam Praesel from Human Resources provided a brief overview of the "Aggie Answers" interactive tool used by the Division of Finance to provide information and address questions about various issues related to Human Resources including leave, benefits, and employment opportunities at Texas A&M.

2. Survey on Child Care

Dr. Stephanie Payne presented the results of a survey on child care needs and satisfaction, which concluded more childcare is needed than is currently available in the community, particularly for infants. Results also showed overall a high level of satisfaction with childcare services, which Dr. Payne indicated lends to well-being in the workplace and an ability to attract employees. The survey results were previously presented to various members of the administration, the Women Administrators Network, and the Women's Faculty Network. The intent of the survey is to demonstrate the importance of childcare and the need to expand resources in order to meet existing childcare demand.

3. GLBT Professional Network Resolutions

John Scroggs provided some details to USC members about two resolutions being proposed by the GLBT Professional Network. The first resolution seeks to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the TAMU System EEOC policy. The second seeks to expand allowances for healthcare benefits to a "plus one" system whereby an individual may elect for coverage for an additional person of his or her choosing who may not otherwise qualify under the current spouse and/or children requirement.

4. Becky Gates Childcare Center

Di Fontenot, along with Cathy Bresley and Andrea Powers from the Becky Gates Childcare Center, shared information with USC about the services the BGCC provides, as well as some of the advancements made and challenges faced in the more than ten years the center has been serving the TAMU community. Ms. Fontenot addressed changes to the infant program to eliminate acceptance of children under the age of 12 months. Challenges to the center are consistent with other information regarding childcare received by USC, including a need for additional resources to fund services and an ongoing need to manage and help reduce wait lists.

5. Approval of Minutes

There were not enough members present to conduct an official USC vote. Minutes will be presented to members electronically for an online vote.

6. September 8th Meeting with President Loftin

USC members were reminded to attend the full council meeting with Interim President Bowen Loftin from 4-5pm on Tuesday, September 8 in the 10th Floor Rudder conference room.

7. Member Nomination Form and Election

The final version of the USC Member Nomination Form was presented, but many members felt the form should be accompanied by instructions on how to conduct elections before being sent to colleges and executive reporting offices. In an effort to allow the various organizations some flexibility in selecting a representative to the USC, it was agreed some general guidelines would be provided along with the nomination form.

Recommended action(s) and/or follow-up: *Kathy and Jackie will work on drafting some general election guidelines to share with colleges and executive reporting offices along with the Member Nomination Form.*

8. Committee Updates

Shared Governance – Kathy noted this group has had three meetings thus far, with another meeting scheduled on August 31. The Task Force has worked to define enlightened and shared governance thus far.

Childcare – Jackie explained that information presented at the meeting was intended to assist USC members in making decisions about how to move forward in response to some of the concerns raised about childcare thus far.

Bylaws – This committee had not yet met, thus there was no update on USC Bylaws.

9. Communications Update

Jeannie provided an update from the Communications Committee. No new issues were received since the last USC meeting, but it was suggested USC use Survey Monkey this fall to list all existing issues for staff and allow them to prioritize these issues in an effort to guide the USC toward responding to or advocating these issues further. Jackie asked that before the survey is sent out, all issues should first be shared among USC membership.

Patti and the communications group feel a need to create a formal communication plan for the USC to include how often and through what vehicles USC communicates with staff. The plan should also consider the USC web space, what should be included, and how often it should be updated. Members were encouraged to suggest other groups on campus with good web sites and/or a formal communication plan in order to give some direction to USC's plan.

10. Budget Update

Rosie was not present to provide an update on the USC budget.

11. Other Business

Kathy shared news with USC members that Student Body President, Eric Beckham, resigned, and this issue is currently being addressed by the Student Government Association.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:14 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 15, 8:30 a.m., Assembly Room A, General Services Complex