

Attendees:

Co-Chair Cathy Caiazza, Co-Chair Amanda Sharpe, Marc Seigfred, Jon Powers, Sherri Gunter, Jenny Hamson, Paul Wlosinski, Sasha Eloi, Theresa Danylak, Rani Bhagwat, Janice Holland, Heidi Mergenthaler, Dawn Marshall-Hosier, Alexander Pita, Harish Nayak, Terra Buttram, Katie Papas, Michael Osadciw, , Amy Kadrie, Joe Williams, Diane Crane

Agenda

9:00 – 9:20 – Announcements and Housekeeping

- Welcome and reminder of Zoom protocols
- Meeting minutes approval
- Updates from the chairs and areas of GSC impact
 - Administrative support
 - 2022 Meetings

9:20 – 10:00 – Discussion of Annual Report

- Review Council priorities and format

10:00 – 10:10 – Break

10:10 – 10:15 – Bylaws

- Vote on proposed changes

10:15 – 10:45 – Committee Planning

- Operational committee assignments
- Discussion of additional committees
- Committee expectations

10:45 – 11:30 – Relationship Development (Joe Testani)

- Tools and strategies for building partnerships and effective collaboration

11:30 – 11:35 – Wrap-Up

- Matters arising
- Summary, wrap up, and takeaways
- Good news

Cathy Caiazza: We are still in need of filling our Administrative Support position and are working with HR to see if we can post it as a permanent position. Our budget proposal does include financial support for a permanent position.

Amanda Sharpe: Calendar invitations for the first three months have been sent. There is a list of the remainder of the dates in Teams. Please note that we have moved our February meeting to virtual given the current situation with Covid.

Cathy Caiazza: Amanda and I are meeting with President Mangelsdorf and Kathy Gallucci next week. We would like to spend some time today to hear from everyone what questions and concerns you are hearing from staff constituents so that we can share that information in our conversation with them.

Amanda Sharpe: Different school districts are having different issues right now with remote learning. Some have gone virtual while some are still in-person which may pose issues with childcare. We would like to suggest that managers be flexible with their staff that is able to work remotely when possible.

Katie Papas: Will the booster be mandated for staff?

Cathy Caiazza: We do plan to bring this up next week, but as of now we have heard they are trying to balance the desire for mandates around boosters for faculty and staff with staffing challenges, specifically at the Medical Center.

Mike Osadciw: Administration seems to be flailing a bit, is there a plan regarding the decision to move to remote classes for students?

Marc Seigfred: The change in the direction was prompted by the county due to the rising cases. There were outside sources that pushed them to change their decision.

Paul Wlosinski: It's clear the boosters aren't as effective against the new variants so to force people to get booster shots would just cause us to hemorrhage staff for no reason.

Cathy Caiazza: The Medical Center is guiding the expertise on the effectiveness and the advocacy of the vaccine.

Amanda Sharpe: The vaccine is meant to prevent serious illness. The vaccines are doing what they are supposed to do.

Paul Wlosinski: I am not anti-vaccine this is just concern I'm hearing throughout our office.

Janice Holland: I would like to refer to policy 175 which is the remote work policy. My recommendation would be to take a deeper dive with a more equitable lens because we have several populations who work in positions who are affected by the abrupt closing of the City School District and other districts who all have small children at home. We must understand that asking for accommodations just for an individual may create further inequity issues.

Jon Powers: Has anyone working in academic department, are professors still coming into the classroom?

Amanda Sharpe: I can respond from an Eastman perspective. Eastman is still open, and faculty is welcome to come in, but they will be the only ones there. Students will still have access to practice rooms.

Sherri Gunter: There is a lack of communications from the Provost's Office on the process of remote instruction and we do not know how to support faculty. The communications that review the process have not been sent to the academic support staff.

Dawn Marshall-Hosier: In your meeting with Sarah and Kathy, I would like you to ask them to consider the fact that we are essential employees and if our children are not in school and we cannot work we would like the University not to hamper access to unemployment insurance. We would like them to

understand if folks can't work and there are no funds coming in it becomes a serious crisis for housing and food.

Terra Buttram: I know your group had some significant challenges with unemployment at the beginning of the pandemic. Let's talk more closely about opportunities to understand better what your folks are running into.

Harish Nayak has posted the minutes from the December meeting for review and minutes were approved.

Amanda Sharpe reviewed the changes to the by-laws that were presented at the December meeting. A vote was placed for the changes, and the by-law changes were approved. We will update the current by-laws document and date and a new version for our Council records.

Cathy Caiazza: We wanted to follow up on the priorities on our work together as a group that will be presented in the Annual Report. We wanted to present to you a summary of where we have landed with these work priorities. In terms of annual report, we thought it would be a good idea to present the information in the way that we have summarized it here, working together with the Communications Committee on wording.

1. ***Future of Work-We will work to contribute to the development of standardized processes and criteria for flexible work opportunities, transparent compensation practices, competitive benefit programs, the recruitment of a diverse workforce and other areas important to employees.***

Janice Holland: Since this is in collaboration with HR, we need to make sure we include that information in our statement... continuity of messaging is crucial to reach the goals of working as one university.

2. ***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion -We will work to partner with key university offices including the Office of Equity and Inclusion, in identifying 1-2 new ways to engage staff in more clearly defining a university culture that supports the multiple identities and the whole person that defines each staff member among our current and future constituencies.***

Janice Holland: since this is in collaboration with the Institutional Office of Equity and inclusion it should include the charge given to the office.

Cathy Caiazza: We will be sure to share this with your office to for your feedback.

Mike Osadciw: While we are talking about collaboration, we want to be sure we don't become a surrogate to the Institutional Office of Equity and Inclusion. While we are collaborating with them, the Council has things we're hearing from our constituents that may not align. We don't want it to seem that we are doing the exact same thing because we can't.

Cathy Caiazza: That's a point of distinction for all of these points. It's not the Council's work to execute any of these things, it's our mission as a council to inform and be a channel of communication between various campus partners, leadership, and our staff constituents. It's also important that we work in alignment so that we are not working on separate things.

Janice Holland: The critical component here is none of us can just make a change, it requires collaboration of all entities. So the critical piece is that we all have to collaborate to work toward making

the University of Rochester an equitable and inclusive environment. If we cannot create a consistent continuity of messaging to our constituents, then who do our constituents believe?

Diane Crane: I heard a word this morning that I feel is perfect here, the word is amplify. I feel like our role as a Council is to work with each of these groups to consider their message and help them amplify it to our constituents. We are not trying to reinvent it we are trying to bring it to a larger audience.

3. ***Culture and Climate- How are engaging in staff and who are we missing? Identifying new ways to reach out to these groups to ensure all constituents' voices are heard and feel welcomed***
4. ***Professional Development-We will work to engage with those who administer university training programs to ensure that all employees have ample access to all offerings both in person and online via MyPath as well as encourage development of clearly defined curricula that align with Career Path Modernization project.***
5. ***Council Operations and Communications- to strengthen relationships between Council members with staff, establish consistent communication with constituents, recruit diverse candidates for new and open seats, and collaborate with leadership to expand representation to medical center staff.***

Amanda Sharpe: Committee Structure-At the last meeting we reviewed the operational committees and asked our newly elected members to express their interest in those committees so that we could assign them to at least one of them.

Cathy Caiazza: I've added the line to the file with assignments in Teams

Amanda Sharpe: Committee expectations- as part of running for a seat on the Council you agreed to the committee work to help outreach to our constituents to help make recommendations to leadership and provide feedback.

Committee expectations:

1. Select a chair-let Cathy know
2. Set a regular time and date for meetings- once we have some administrative support that person will be able to assist in scheduling these meetings. Please add your meeting times to the sheet in Teams
3. Attendance- please make sure you are regularly attending committee meetings as your schedule permits
4. Someone should keep notes so that whoever continues after us they have record of the work we have done. Keep materials in Team channel
5. Periodically report on your progress

Cathy asked if there are any additional committees that should be considered

- **Professional Development** and Employee Engagement? Keep but reconsider the Employee Engagement title
- **Community Engagement** Is there enough to warrant its own committee or should it fall within another committee (Maybe outreach and engagement)
- **Future of Work** How the nature of work is changing

- **Diversity Equity and Inclusion** As a council we should be looking at everything through a DEI lens.

Staff members broke into break out rooms to discuss their interests in the new committees, choose a chair and schedule a meeting date.

More time will be devoted to this subject at the next meeting and a summary from today's meeting will be in Teams.

Joe Testani, Associate Vice Provost of Career Education Initiatives and Assistant Dean and Director of the Career Center is here to help us think about relationship development.

Joe Testani: I am here today really to have a conversation and hear some of your thoughts on relationship building and development in your roles. I hope some of the thoughts I'll share can be applied in a variety of ways.

Discussion topics:

Cathy Caiazza: We invited Sarah Peyre a few meetings back and she discussed her roles as Interim Provost and her previous roles in the Medical Center and then Warner and helping us reflect on how we all serve as representatives within our own districts that have their own cultures and communication styles, but really those districts really live within a larger ecosystem.

Joe Testani: If you think or compare of the organization as being similar in ways to the circulatory system, we know how everything is organized and where everybody is, but we really don't know who's making decisions or who the power players are within the key organs of the University until you push something through the organization. Do you understand what that is for your organization, from both a department level to school level to the University level, and if you don't, how do you learn that? I think these are the key factors in relationship building and understanding this organization which is complex. I think this is really the empathy piece-do we take enough time to understand what the other person's pain points are and how they are making decisions especially now in times that are a little bit more high stress.

Amanda Sharpe: I would like to know some strategies that might be helpful to the Council. What would you recommend to a group of people who receive anonymous feedback and trying to build trust with those individuals when you don't know who they are?

Joe Testani: Everything stems from communication. It challenging to always do this well, it needs to be a consistent communication and repetition on message. We need to establish a baseline of trust and maybe begin at a place where we can establish grace. Can we do this through email, slack channel etc...?

Marc Seigfred: We are dealing with people we don't necessarily know and haven't met before. What are some strategies on breaking the ice and forming relationships with these folks?

Joe Testani: When I first arrived, I went on extensive listening tour for the first 90 days. I then reported back out to team and leaders. I encourage you to go on a listening tour to understand what people's needs are. Keeping these channels open over time, because you may need to use them in the future at some point.

Dawn Marshall Hosier: My biggest challenge is we have senior folks that communicate in a certain way and younger staff may communicate differently. Does the Green Center do work with staff?

Joe Testani: Any stakeholder within the university we communicate to. Yours is a continual challenge. Do you have a core concept or theme that you are trying to communicate? You can have a core concept but communicate the message in different ways.

Diane Crane: Can you talk about how you are able to successfully collaborate and some ideas we might be able to borrow?

Joe Testani: It starts with our team first. We need to have some common language and goals as a starting point that binds you together as a group. Second phase was to prioritize our work. We had a lot of work to do, and we had to look at the early wins we could go after that will have a significant success measure that will really send a message to constituents that progress is being made. I think we have to do this early on to show that we are responding to what the needs are.

Jon Powers: What if some of these communications involve opposing viewpoints. Can we approach these situations delicately but with confidence?

Joe Testani: It goes back to respect, empathy and understanding. Make sure you are really listening but understand you won't be able to please everyone. People need to feel respected and heard. You can also provide them with data and information as to why a decision has been made.

Joe Testani: Please reach out if you have any questions regarding this presentation and I will share the information from today with Cathy.

Conclusion

Amanda Sharpe: Thank you for sharing your feedback earlier in the meeting. We will take your concerns to Sarah and Kathy when we meet with them. A reminder that our next meeting will take place via Zoom.

Dawn Marshall-Hosier: Dining came back this week after the holidays. We were able to do a quick survey and I will share the results with Cathy and Amanda. There is a lot of uncertainty in our department regarding Covid and the services we provide to your students.

Cathy Caiazza: We have the announcement of baby Summer Cota-Buckhout has joined the world. Everyone doing very well.

Next meeting will take place February 11th at 9 am