

Staff Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 11, 2004, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
21271 PFP UIHC

Present: Matthew Anderson, Christine Annicella, Ella Born, Kimberly Chamberlin, Jan Christensen, Julee Darner, Charlie Eastham, David Fitzgerald, Jo Ann Franklin, Julie Gilmore, Donna Hirst, Pamela Kacena, Hazel Kerr, Kathy Klein, Joy Kross, Mark Long, Dave Martin, Bonnie McIntosh, Donna Muller, Mary Lee Neuberger, Sara Nichols, Deb Pfab, Cheryl Reardon, Sandra Reed, Keri Semrau, Rebecca Stamy, Duncan Stewart, Rachelle Stewart, Jennifer Tucker, Jeffrey Wasson, Jan Waterhouse, Rhonda Weaver, Michelle Wichman, Kathryn Wynes, Al Young

Absent: Cheri Arneson, Vicki Brown, Wendy Ford, Karon Kolek, Dongwang Liu, Christine Remmert, Amy Welter

Administrative Liaison:

Sue Buckley, AVP of Finance & University Services and Director of Human Resources (HR)

1. **The meeting was called to order at 2:29 p.m.**
2. **Graduate College Review Committee—Lisa Troyer, Chair**

Dr. Troyer gave a brief description of the process that has been followed thus far and what is planned for the review of the Graduate College. The college completed a self-study in February 2003, which can be viewed at the College's web site. Dr. Troyer has chaired a committee of internal reviewers. External reviewers have been invited to complete a review and should begin their work some time in March. The college now will be looking at goals and where it is headed. A report to be presented to University President Skorton, the Provost, and the Dean of the Graduate College is due in April.

A handout was included in the Staff Council meeting packet with questions that Dr. Troyer suggested could be used to guide the meeting discussion. She opened the floor to comments and questions from Staff Councilors. Several Councilors had comments and there was some discussion. Dr. Troyer then said that additional comments are welcomed and could be sent to her via email. She asked to have any additional comments sent to her by the end of February.

3. **Hancher Auditorium Charter Committee—Carol Senneff and Sarah Mimick**

Carol is a staff member of the Hancher Auditorium Charter Committee and Sarah is a student member of the committee. They have served as co-chairs of the committee for two years. Hancher was one thing that attracted Sarah to the University. She was especially attracted to the University Symphony and the offering of Master classes. She is a double major and is pursuing Arts Management. Carol admitted being a student at the University before Hancher existed. She asked if anyone knew what year Hancher opened. There were several guesses then she revealed that Hancher opened in 1972. Carol has great interest in theatre. Both

ladies believe they have gained a lot by serving on the committee and in the interaction they have had with other students, staff, and faculty. They asked if anyone had an idea how many people have attended events at Hancher. Again, there were several guesses before they revealed that 4,500,000 people have attended performances at Hancher since it opened. Sarah said that 22.7% of these attendants were students. Carol also mentioned that more than 20,000 elementary school children have attended special performances. The committee has toured the box office and helped set prices for the Tony Bennett performance last summer. The committee provides advice to, and advocacy for, Hancher administrators. The committee meets every six to eight weeks and has had three meetings so far this year. As a group, the committee attends one performance a year. Carol also mentioned that Hancher recently received an \$800,000 Wallace Foundation Grant.

One Councilor asked if the committee helps to select events and performances. Carol said that the committee does not make selections, but they do provide input and have discussions with Judy Hurtig, Artistic Director at Hancher. Another question was if Carol or Sarah had an idea what percentage of attendants at Hancher events are University staff and faculty. They did not know an exact percentage but did say that community attendance is far greater than staff and faculty attendance. Carol confirmed that there are three staff members on the committee and she thought two staff members, including her, would be completing their terms on the committee. Both Carol and Sarah reiterated that serving in this capacity has been a very valuable experience.

3. **Comments/Regents Report—Sue Buckley**

- a. The Board of Regents (BOR) will be meeting next week here at the University of Iowa. The first day they will be at the hospital in their role as Board of Trustees. The second day they will meet in the Richey Ballroom at the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU). Sue said that right now there is nothing on the agenda that would be centrally important to staff. She again extended an invitation to all Staff Councilors and suggested they attend the open meeting at the IMU.
- b. At a meeting earlier this week, President Skorton and the Vice Presidents (VP) group gave final approval to the recommendations that HR offered with regard to temporary Professional & Scientific (P & S) employees. This was a set of recommendations that Sue presented to Staff Council a few months ago. By policy, hourly-temporary employees will be treated as salaried-temporary employees. Sue mentioned that there are a number of other changes as well. This new policy will be effective July 1st this year.
- c. The VP group also approved, with a few slight revisions, a draft of a criminal background check policy. The Faculty Council and Senate are scheduled to again review the policy in March. Assuming no major issues from the review, the policy is targeted for implementation June 1st of this year.
- d. Sue mentioned something that has just occurred is the start up of the University web site for Principal Investigators. Kathryn Wynes, a current Staff Councilor, and Maureen McCormick were instrumental in pulling the information together and getting this web site up and ready. It offers support, guidance, and resources. Sue asked if Kathryn wanted to say anything about the web site. Kathryn said that she likes to think of it in terms of a Principal Investigator saying "My proposal has been approved, now what?"

This web site will provide that information. Kathryn believes the challenge now will be to make the web site part of the culture of the University.

- e. Sue said that she promised to make a comment regarding the current number of P & S employees. Later in the agenda, Mark and Ella would be giving a report on the number of constituents for Staff Council. Sue assured the Council that even though there is an apparent substantial growth in the number of staff represented, it has nothing to do with actual growth. Rather, it has more to do with mechanisms used to count the number of P & S staff. As a matter of fact, for this fiscal year, FTE for P & S had a net change of 24.
- f. Coming attractions: Sue mentioned that she will present to Staff Council a proposal that the Senior HR Leadership Council has developed that will address what should be monetary adjustments for the Professional employee upon reclassification.

Sue asked if there were any questions. There was a question about a new early retirement policy. Sue said there is no active discussion presently, but if such a discussion occurs it will be very tight and very focused. There was some additional discussion of the PI web site.

4. Proposal to extend emeritus status to retired Research Scientists and Engineers

The Retiree's Association contacted University administration with this proposal. Sue provided some background. A research retiree wanting to access certain data bases, was denied access from an off campus computer since retired staff are not included in Active Directory. (Retired staff can access appropriate data bases from University computers.) Sue read a letter sent by the Retiree's Association that requested the inclusion of Research Scientists under the emeritus status policy. Currently, an exception is made that allows Librarians to be eligible for emeritus status. Some of the benefits include access to an active directory and certain services, some parking accessibility, membership to the Emeritus Faculty Association, representation on various committees including governance groups, library privileges, and the status of the title. Sue asked if there were any questions. Charlie wondered if there was any clear agreement among Staff Councilors as to their views of this proposal or if a wider discussion might be in order. Charlie confirmed with Sue that there is not a particular time frame for this proposal yet. Discussion ensued and some concerns were expressed. Charlie asked two Councilors to talk with him about their concerns and he said that he would add this to the Executive Committee's meeting agenda for next week.

5. Report on Council Representation—Mark Long

Mark announced the increase in numbers of P & S employees based on information that was provided on November 1st as a means to prepare for Staff Council nominations and elections. Due to this apparent increase, each Staff Council category would gain some representatives with the current election. Sue wondered what the Council might consider doing about the growth. That is, what would make for a healthy Council in terms of size.

6. Review/approval of minutes

- a. 12/10/03 Staff Council meeting minutes and 1/13/04 Staff Council meeting minutes approved as presented.

- b. Reviewed minutes from the 1/21/04 Executive Committee meeting and the 1/26/04 Executive Committee meeting with President Skorton. There were no questions or comments.

7. Announcements—Sara Nichols, Chair of the Governmental Relations Committee

Sara Nichols, Chair of the Governmental Relations Committee, invited Councilors to attend the next legislative forum to be held at the Iowa City Council Chambers, at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 28th. Staff Council is co-sponsoring this forum along with Faculty Council and The League of Women Voters.

8. Invitation to serve on Peer Support Committee

Charlie offered an invitation to Councilors to consider joining the Staff Council Peer Support Group. There will be three vacancies beginning April 1st. Charlie mentioned a couple of situations that current members of the committee have helped with. He also described the application process. Sue Buckley said that HR provides orientation.

9. Revised plan for Staff Celebration Day—Nancy Noyer

Nancy said that this year we are considering a departure from previous events. She asked Councilors to contemplate "the power of fruit." The plan would be to deliver fruit baskets to all departments and all staff. Nancy said that this could be considered a pilot program for UI Wellness and Central HR. Nancy asked Councilors what they thought of the idea. There were many favorable comments and some suggestions for implementation. Nancy thanked everyone for their ideas and encouraged them to contact her with any additional thoughts.

10. Discussion of GEF Task Force—Charlie Eastham

Charlie explained that the group is expected to review current expenditures and offer recommendations for reducing expenditures over the next two years. He said there is a web site available to the public where one can find the charge of the committee, the membership of the committee, and the time line for the committee's work. There also is a mechanism for offering ideas and suggestions via the web site. It was asked if the committee's primary goal is to find new sources of revenue or ways to cut more than \$12 million from the current budget. Charlie and Cheryl Reardon said that both are goals. Cheryl said that the committee might also consider changing existing policies.

11. Nominations for Council officers

Charlie explained that we would take nominations for officers at this meeting and then election by ballot would take place at the March Staff Council meeting. Charlie also said that nominations for Executive Committee begin at the March meeting with election at the April meeting. Charlie opened the floor to nominations for Vice President/President Elect (VP/PE). Michelle Wichman was nominated for VP/PE. Charlie asked if there were any other nominations and seeing none, closed nominations for VP/PE. He then opened nominations for Secretary of Council. Jan Waterhouse was nominated to be Secretary. Charlie asked if there were any other nominations for Secretary and seeing none, closed nominations for Secretary.

12. Bylaws revision allowing closed Council meetings—Michelle Wichman

Michelle distributed a handout entitled "Holding Closed Sessions at the Monthly SC Meetings" and dated February 2004. The handout listed the current Article XI of Staff Council Bylaws regarding meetings and the suggested revisions to this Article. Michelle mentioned that the odds are slim that we would ever need to hold a closed session. Currently if we wanted to, however, we couldn't have a closed session because it is not in the Bylaws. Michelle went through the proposed revisions. Charlie mentioned that Sue Buckley said the state open meetings law does not apply to Staff Council. Some Councilors had a few questions. Charlie said there would be a chance for discussion at the next Staff Council meeting before a vote is taken to accept this proposal.

13. Adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ella Born, Staff Council Secretary