

**Staff Council  
Meeting Minutes  
April 14, 2004, 2:30-4:30 p.m.  
21271 PFP UIHC**

**Present:** Nadira Ahmad, Christine Annicella, Cheri Arneson, David Bergeon, Linda Bergquist, Ella Born, Lori Cranston, Julee Darner, Charlie Eastham, Nancy Fick, David Fitzgerald, John Forys, Julie Gilmore, Mary Greer, Lisa James, Hazel Kerr, Kathy Klein, Deborah Kohler, Mark Long, Steven Long, David Martin, Mary Lee Neuberger, Sara Nichols, Deb Pfab, Cheryl Reardon, Sandra Reed, Heather Schnoebelen, Keri Semrau, Julie Sexton, Sheri Sojka, Barbara Spence, Rebecca Stamy, Jennifer Tucker, Jan Waterhouse, Rhonda Weaver, Michelle Wichman, Kathryn Wynes, Al Young

**Absent:** Matthew Anderson, Kimberly Chamberlin, Jo Ann Franklin, Kristy Johnson, Bonnie McIntosh, Duncan Stewart, Rachelle Stewart, Jeffrey Wasson

**Administrative Liaisons:** Sue Buckley, AVP of Finance and University Services and Director of Human Resources; Kevin Ward, Senior Associate Director of Human Resources and Director of Employee and Labor Relations

1. **The meeting was called to order at 2:31 p.m.**
2. **Introductions.** Newly elected councilors were welcomed and all councilors briefly introduced themselves. Cheryl announced that she would be sending a thank-you note to President Skorton to thank him for hosting the Staff Council reception on April 8, 2004.
3. **Review/Approval of minutes.**
  - Staff Council March meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as written.
  - Executive Committee March meeting minutes were reviewed, with no comments.
  - Executive Committee March meeting with President Skorton minutes were reviewed, with no comments.
4. **Elections.**
  - a. **Executive Committee.** Nominations had been made during the March meeting. The floor was opened for continued nominations and the following additional nominations were made: Barb Spence, David Fitzgerald, Sheri Sojka, David Bergeon. All nominees made brief statements. The Elections Committee distributed, collected, and counted the ballots, and indicated that the following councilors were elected to the Executive Committee: Christine Annicella, Hazel Kerr, Ella Born, Sheri Sojka.

- b. **Vacant Staff Council positions.** The Executive Committee will select new members to fill several vacancies, from the nominations made.
    - i. **Professional/Research (one opening).** The floor was opened for nominations. No nominations were made. Nominations will remain open until the May meeting. Councilors are invited to solicit interest and nominate individuals during the May meeting.
    - ii. **Special Services (two openings).** The floor was opened for nominations. The following nominations were made: James Bradley, Janet Duncan, Barb Jaeger, Janice Baughman.
    - iii. **Academic/Administrative (one opening).** The floor was opened for nominations. The following nominations were made: Donna Hirst, Michael Venzon, Phil Jordan, Brett Gothe, Lori Bassler, Kathy Renquist, Lois Burkett.
5. **Staff Council Business**
- a. **Staff Appreciation Day,** Nancy Noyer. Nancy described the annual event, taking place on May 25, 2004, which this year for the first time will involve distribution of fruit baskets so that all staff may have some fruit. Sign-up sheets were passed around for councilors to volunteer to distribute the fruit. The IMU will be making the fruit baskets. In the UIHC, the Department of Food & Nutrition Services will have the fruit available in the staff cafeteria and the Atrium Dining Room.
  - b. **Committee on Committees recommendations for charter committee membership.** The list of recommendations to fill vacancies on the charter committees was reviewed. One correction to the list was noted, in that Amy Schoon's name had been misspelled. There was a motion and second to approve the list of recommendations. The motion passed.
  - c. **Report on the GEF Task Force.** Cheryl announced that the GEF Task Force will be holding open meetings to provide information about the Task Force's work and to solicit feedback from UI community members about their charge. The Task Force continues to meet often. President Skorton extended the deadline for the Task Force report from April 15, 2004 to April 30, 2004. Councilors were invited to submit comments through the Task Force web site and/or via email. It was recommended that each councilor attend at least one of the open meetings. There was a suggestion to the Task Force to schedule another open forum earlier in the day since both meetings are late afternoon or evening times. Cheryl will provide that feedback to the Task Force Chair.
  - d. **Ad Hoc Committee on emeritus status proposal.** The Ad Hoc Committee members are Charlie Eastham, Kathryn Wynes, Julie Gilmore, and Sara Nichols. The committee has not met yet but plans to meet in the near future. Cheryl met with the Research Council to discuss the proposal and reports that

the Research Council is not ready to move forward with a recommendation at this point.

- e. **Regents' Meeting.** The Board of Regents has asked Cheryl and Michelle to make a 5 minute presentation about salary policy at the April 21, 2004 Board of Regents meeting in Vinton, Iowa. Cheryl plans to focus on the following issues: 1) P&S salary increases have not kept pace with merit pay increases, 2) demonstrating that staff plays a key role in fulfilling the University's missions of teaching, research, and service. Margaret Raymond will provide a 5 minute presentation on behalf of Faculty Senate. Iowa State University faculty and staff representatives and University of Northern Iowa staff representatives will also make presentations. There will be an institutional representative to discuss salary issues of merit exempt staff. This presentation is done each year according to Sue Buckley. This is an important opportunity for Staff Council leadership to interact with the Regents. There was a suggestion to discuss the plans for this presentation with the representatives from the other institutions to see if there would be a common theme to bring to Regents.
  - f. **Staff Council Retreat.** The Retreat is planned for April 30, 2004, at the IMU. Activities will include community building, goal setting, and a keynote speaker. The Retreat provides an opportunity for councilors to connect and decide what the Council wants to accomplish in the following year. Cheryl will formulate an email to all staff constituents to find out what issues they would like Staff Council to focus on.
6. **Comments/Regents Report, Sue Buckley.**
- a. **The P&S Salary Compensation Report** has been postponed until May.
  - b. **FY05 Salary Policy.** The Regents will not be meeting in July this year which accelerated and compressed the UI's schedule for discussing and formulating salary policy. Sue asked for input about the following salary policy issues:
    - i. **P&S Pay Scales.** The Regents required the UI to provide the new pay scales so they were sent even before the salary policy was determined. Sue recognized two key and interrelated issues: compression and overlap with merit scales. The overlap with merit scales has become larger in the last couple of years. During the last two years the UI has been aggressive at raising P&S minimums to reduce that overlap. The result has been that people fell back within the scale even though they were making more money. Sue recognized the importance of this issue to staff members. Therefore, the UI administration has recommended to the Regents a range of 0% increase at the bottom of the scale and a 2% increase at the top of the scale, to reduce the perception that staff members are falling back within their grade. A councilor commented that research staff is most concerned with the compression issue and suggested that there seems to be little reward for longevity. Sue explained that the P&S pay scale is performance-based, not a seniority or step system.

ii. **Variability.** Sue asked for the councilors' opinions about what degree of variability in the range of average increases between colleges is fair. Last year's letters to the colleges set the range for the average increases in each college. If the college average fell outside that range, the college was required to obtain approval. This process resulted in varied average raises among the colleges. Some colleges have access to external funds and so can give higher raises than colleges operating solely on General Education Funds. Sue posed the question that if salary policy is 2%, what level of variability between colleges is appropriate? A councilor asked whether this type of variability has been allowed historically, before the last few years. Sue believes that we have become more flexible over time. The following comments were offered from the councilors:

- More variability is favored to allow discretion in each college because increases in the last few years have been small which does not allow for recognition of merit.
- Increases should be allowed only if it can be done across the board regardless of access to external funds or grants.
- Increases and the variability in increases affect recruitment and retention.
- Flexibility allows poor departments to remain poor and rich departments to remain rich. Flexibility may also affect staff's willingness to take a job in a particular department because they do/don't give good raises.
- The UI should allow the same degree of variability as last year.
- There was a question about status the bonus/flex pay plan. Sue explained that the goal of such a plan is to motivate employees by allowing lump sum payments to reward outstanding work. She indicates that it probably will not happen in the near future.

Sue explained that the FY04 average for merit increase was 6.126%, which was an abnormal year because of restructuring of the merit pay grades. She pointed out that merit increases do not occur until January. A salary freeze is still not out of the question. She recognizes that salary increases are supposed to be performance based but with a small range there is not much leeway to recognize performance.

- iii. **Coupling**, comparing average increases in staff and faculty.
- iv. **Emphasis on employees at lower ends of pay scale.** Last year's letter to colleges encouraged allocating funds to people who make less money.
- v. **Permitting more flexibility for RA salaries.** HR has looked at RA salaries compared to other employees in the same pay grades. It appears that flexibility for RA salaries is warranted. The vast majority of RAs are on external funds.

Sue invites comments within next week about any salary policy issue.

7. **PI Website**, Maureen McCormick and Kathryn Wynes. Maureen and Kathryn explained and demonstrated the functions of the newly created PI website. The goal of the website is to create a central source of information for PIs and other research administrators on topics such as human resources practices, purchasing, and accounting. A councilor commented that this information would also be useful to many others in the UI in addition to PIs.
8. **Diversity Presentations**
  - a. **African American Council**, Melissa Payne, Felisa Daniels. Representatives from the AAC discussed the mission of the organization and shared some of the organization's current goals which include 1) developing a strategy to assist with recruitment and retention of faculty and staff, 2) compiling historical records about the organization, and 3) hosting a 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The AAC expressed a desire to build a relationship with Staff Council so that the two organizations can work together towards common goals. Membership is open to all, and anyone can sign up for the AAC listserv.
  - b. **Council on the Status of Women**, Susan Beckett, Mickey Eliason. CSW activities include conducting studies and making recommendations for changes in UI policies. In the past, CSW has been involved in issues such as sexual harassment, child care, campus climate, and comparable worth. Currently, the CSW is pursuing 1) a new sexual harassment survey instrument that can be used for a longitudinal study (CSW will request Staff Council endorsement of this survey), 2) developing a mentoring program for faculty, and 3) developing a proposal for an external review of the merger of men's and women's athletics.
9. **Homecoming 2004**, Erin Pipkin. Erin enthusiastically indicated that the homecoming committee would like to get faculty and staff involved in this year's homecoming activities. Some ideas included a banner contest, volleyball, and parade float-building contests (including a "Float-building 101" course for those who need a refresher). There was a suggestion from the floor for a Staff Council vs. Faculty Senate volleyball match. More to come; stay tuned.
10. **Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by  
Jan Waterhouse, Secretary