



**UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA**  
**STAFF SENATE**

**Minutes from Staff Senate Monthly Meeting of April 13, 2017**

Location: Newcomb Hall, South Meeting Room

Time: 11:00 AM–1:00 PM

**Meeting Summary**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Maggie Stein, Co-Chair**

**Committee Updates:**

**Advocacy, Membership, Election Working Group, University Partnerships**

**Results from Staff Senate Survey**

**Discussion about Staff Senate Structure**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Maggie Stein and Jess Wenger, Co-Chairs**

- Diane Ober was present with attendance sheet so those in attendance could sign in.
- Parking passes for Central Grounds Garage were made available.
- Guests checking out SS for the first time; thanks to those who recruited them
- This will be an interactive meeting; committee updates and group discussion
- Official announcements:
  - See slide 1 – Facilities Management Girls Day – sign up by April 21
  - See slide 2 – SCPC – Open House on April 25 from 9 am to 6 p.m.
  - See slide 3 – Earth Week is April 17 – 23; activities; farmers market; solar ribbon cutting, Governor will be here.
    - Details: [www.sustainability.virginia.edu](http://www.sustainability.virginia.edu)

**Senate Business**

**Brandy Amos, Chris Doran, et al., Melissa Goldman and Andrea Johnson, James Weissman**

- **Advocacy Committee Update – Brandy Amos**
  - Three main focuses:  
**Education Benefit**
- Pilot is in full swing. Overall, has been positive. Issues will be addressed before pilot ends; suggestions will be made to UHR.
- Changes to management of program. Allison Miller left; now managed by Joe Esposito.
- Call center is where you can tell constituents to call with issues: 982 -0123.

- Advocacy was provided funding comparison from 2005 to 2016. Now able to give a breakdown which includes how pot of money is broken down and divided to employees.
  - Central tuition, professional development and departmental funding is included. Don't have full breakdowns yet; hope to have by the end of the year.
- Plan is to stay in contact with them. Meet back at end of year; review plan as well as concerns we've heard and those they've faced.
- Would like to get an email address or drop box to funnel concerns.
  - Unsure of how concerns are being tracked. Brandy meeting with Joe Esposito to address

#### **Maternity and Parental Leave**

- Committee provided info for top 25 in VA peers
- Includes adoption assistance and child care assistance
- Joanne Hoagland stated that parental leave is part of strategy and initiative.
- Maternity leave is not part of the plan for now. Is in the 2017 work plan for 2018; confirmed that they will come back to Advocacy Committee to get suggestions and guidelines.
- Trying to push for paternity leave as well. Want to see if we can mimic what faculty receives, at least in part.
  - Has to be funded by the individual departments. Aiming for at least part of what faculty gets.

#### **Health and Wellness**

- Partnership with IM Rec – started talking about trying to make gym memberships less expensive for employees.
- Has been an extremely long process.
- We are trying now to involve HR, Parking and Transportation and Hoo's Well.
  - Trying to create a package that would include locker rental, parking, and gym membership, group exercise.
  - HR is involved because they will see if UVA can contribute more to the cost (through the fringe benefit.)
  - This will be a huge undertaking and will have to go through a lot of channels.
  - Monies will have to be moved from one fund to another. Will have to see how it will play out.
  - Brandy will talk with Joe to see what his goal is; follow-up meeting likely in October or November.

#### **Questions/Comments (please note that these are paraphrased)**

Q. It's difficult to use IM-Rec facilities because of parking. Also an issue because of location(s) of facilities; not having one near where I work. When Rick Shannon spoke

to Staff Senate, he mentioned having a new facility near the Health System. Has there been more discussion about this?

A: It was originally on the table to have an employee only facility. According to Jill at IM-Rec, that is not now being currently discussed. There is going to be big construction on Brandon Avenue where Student Health currently is. They are hoping to possibly get space in that building for an employee only gym. Students pay within their student fees for their gym membership. The facilities we have are mostly built with student funds, so we have to be careful labeling anything as employee only. Not aware of the specifics of the breakdown, though. We have suggested using underutilized areas, like Slaughter, but we have to take into consideration the student's use of those facilities.

- **Membership Committee Update – James Weissman, Election Coordinator**
  - Elections – **(See slide 7)**
  - Should have received print copies or pdfs of the surveys. You can point folks to the website. Summarizes the information.
  - Recruitment – going well.
    - Interested folks do have to be at UVA for a year before being considered for Staff Senate.
  - Election timeline **(See slide 8)**
    - We are at call for nominations currently. Give us names. Now is the time to be recruiting.
  - Resources **(See slide 9)**
    - On Collab site, all forms, etc. are listed
  - Coordinator positions available **(See slide 10)**
    - Election Coordinator **(See slide 11)**
    - Membership Coordinator
      - Membership management is a big job. There are a lot of moving parts. There has been a significant focus on this; especially, in regard to the election.
  - Chris Doran – update about Membership Management
    - Diane Ober has taken all information and put into one master spreadsheet
      - This tracks who is a member, who is a Senator, who is an Alternate, how many members there are per department, how many years of service years.
      - Communicate with your Senator as to what positions are up for election, etc.
    - Spreadsheet is on Collab site – please do not make any changes to it.
    - Attendance at meeting is tracked so we can determine who is attending and
  - Michelle Busby and Sherry Morris - thank you for your help on elections
  - Amanda Crombie will coordinate the annual luncheon in July and new member orientation in August.
    - Luncheon takes place instead of the July meeting.

- July 20 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. – location TBA
- Working with Elizabeth Feola to set up food, room, paperless post
- New Senator Orientation
  - Takes place instead of August meeting
    - August 17 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. – location TBA
    - Amanda will send out new member welcome packet a week in advance
    - As we finish elections, she will need a list of who new senators are so she can send it out as well as the Outlook request for August orientation.
  - Membership committee is looking for guest speakers for 20-30 minutes. Ideas?
  - Or... if you were new last year and have feedback
  - Or...if you would like to help:
    - Email Amanda – [ajcrombie@virginia.edu](mailto:ajcrombie@virginia.edu)

Q: Do you have a topic or theme in mind?

A: How to be a leader within your organization. We are not being restrictive about it. If you have a speaker whom you think has an important message, you should consider them.

- **University Partners Committee Update-Melissa Goldman and Andrea Johnson (See Slide 13)**
  - Has a lot of balls in the air
  - Does anyone have relationships with these partners? Let us know to help with efficiency
  - New student council, as of middle of March,
    - Will be working with them – to create conversation between staff and students.
  - Andrea and Melissa met with group of students who want to start a series called “Bridging the Gap” – stemming from a writing class.
    - Talking about how we view organizational hierarchy.
    - May make some kind of presentation in the fall to us, perhaps?
    - If you are in an area that works closely with students, let us know
      - They would love mentors. Without students, we would have no university, without staff, they have no university to attend
  - Faculty Senate and General Faculty Council – have been very active in Presidential Search Committee. Preparing more with them this summer.
  - BOV – There have been a few folks who have been to the meetings.
    - Staff Senate has inquired about having time at a BOV meeting this fall. If we are given the opportunity, what would we want to present?
  - Should we invite BOV members to our meetings?
    - Not to put anyone in hot seat...but use it an opportunity to build a relationship with BOV. We don’t have an official seat on BOV.
  - Presidential Search Committee
    - There is a general confusion about what UVA Staff does.
    - Hope to flesh that out and give them some data about who staff are at UVA, what they do, how long they have been here, etc.

## Results of Staff Senate Survey

James Weissman

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- **Survey Results-(See slide 15)**
  - Survey sent out in late January
  - Excellent participation – about half of Senators responded
  - Get a pulse of what is happening. Good to get good things; even more important to get the bad.
  - Time Commitment and Satisfaction in Serving (**See slides 16-17**)
    - Incorporated survey results into election recruitment materials
    - Common theme is connection (**See slide 18**)
  - What should the Senate continue to do (**See slides 20-21**)
  - Additional Comments (**See slide 22**)
  - Possible Action Items (**See slide 23**)

## Discussion about Staff Senate Structure

Jess Wenger and Maggie Stein

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- **Co-Chair Updates – Maggie Stein and Jess Wenger**
  - Proposed Changes to Staff Senate. Why? (**See slide 24**)
  - Reduce time commitment
    - We all have different capacities and perhaps seasonally
  - May be interested in specific topic in a committee, but already locked into another committee
    - Simplify things – if you want to work on it, go work on it
    - Allow for more short-term, focused projects.
      - Allows you to be invested in something, but know there is an end to it
  - All changes are proposed. Nothing is finalized.
    - General changes (**See slide 25**)
      - Eliminate committees
      - Create work group as needs arise
      - Volunteers to serve as Directors and Coordinators with specific Senate roles
      - Directors = current Committee Chairs
        - See detail (**Slide 26**)
        - Hoping to have 2 directors per area
      - Coordinators = have a Senate “job”
        - See detail (**Slide 27**)
        - May be Senator, Alumni or Alternate
        - Membership, Elections, Sustainability
      - Working Groups (**See slide 28**)

- Create as need arises
- May be led by any Senator or Alternate
- Exist for a finite period of time – exists to address a specific interest or concern
- Hoping this will allow Senators to be involved in things that are of importance to you.
- Staff Senate is not discontinuing any current efforts or committees (**See slides 29-34**)
  - University Partnerships
  - Advocacy
  - Membership
  - Co-chairs (**See slide 35**)
  - Structure? (**See slide 36**)
  - How does this work? (**See slide 37**)
  - By-laws will be updated if this is approved.
- Reported this to Advisory Board on April 12.
  - Proposed Staff Senate structure change
    - They agreed it was a great idea
    - Crafting communication guidelines
      - Got feedback to define communication standards, going forward; doesn't affect everyone but does impact co-chairs
    - We will share communication guidelines in the future
  - Blog working group still exists
    - Hoping to get the blog up and running soon
    - Anything shared there will probably come from co-chairs

### Group Discussion

- Time to chat with others (5 min). Came back together for group discussions, questions, concerns.
  - Questions or concerns?
  - What Projects need to continue from your committee?

### Questions/Comments (please note that these are paraphrased)

**Q:** With the whole Ufirst project and the HR representation structure is going to look very different. Next year is when I will need to recruit. So, what does that rep look like? We are doing to be more specified and work in the field. We are not centralized. More broadly as a senator, the membership and the partnership fees. To me, that's a business function within the Staff Senate. We don't have a committee for that. My purpose is here is to advocate for the staff employees and what do we need to address for them. What recruitment would they like to see? I'm not here to recruit. Do we really need to have a committee devoted to that if there is already a routine process set up dedicated to that?

**A:** Membership will continue and someone has to run it. If you are a group coordinator and there is a working group coming up you are interested in, you can go join it. The new proposed structure adds a little more flexibility. Also, it allows folks to work from their desk instead of coming to meetings. The hope is that this structure supports the ability to support staff and respond quickly. In regard to HR changes, we are aware changes are coming that will impact HR membership in Staff Senate and will address that when the HR restructuring is completed.

The Membership committee created programs, like speakers that came in and gave training. Partnerships could sound operational. The reality is to have a better voice to advocate. While committees are assigned to certain topics, there is more overlapping purpose. We want to keep what we do in the realm of the mission of Staff Senate and that is to advocate for staff. Eventually, if we can get these other things established, we may not need all the groups that we have. But, when they are established, it gives them other ways in which to work. A lot of this is relationship building to accomplish what we want to in the best way possible.

There is an operational/business piece that is vital and important. Within the work groups and proposal out there, there are good ideas. Gives Senators an opportunity to branch out. Distinction between partnerships and the difference between advocacy and membership: one is operational for Staff Senate; the other is delving into the minutia about what is an issue for Staff. A lot of the work and a lot of the energy will be focused in the work groups.

**Q:** As far as who should come up with the issues that each group will be working on, this is a good bit of what we are doing in Advocacy: I heard about this, what have you heard about that, etc. Having a meeting just to have a meeting doesn't really make sense, but for some groups, a brainstorming meeting does make sense. Does it that make sense to fold that concept into regular Staff Senate meetings?

**A:** Our desire is to allow more people to step in. We want everyone to be brainstorming and coming up with ideas. Currently, Advocacy – we have the people in those key areas. For our area, it is needed, because that way we're all on the same page when we come together. We're a little different.

**A:** Advocacy already has working groups – sort of functions in that way already. Think we would still have to have monthly meetings. I think we connect better; that's how we gauge what our focus is.

**Q:** I worry that after the new structure, advocacy won't know that they have 20 members. To me, it seems like the participation level will change. I have found that the same 10 people at the top do all the work and the other members are there for whatever reason. My concern is that people will be attending but they will not do the work.

**A:** If we're opening up partnerships, we have to be better about communicating it.

None of restructuring is intended to diminish the work we are already doing; it is designed to support and enhance it. Transition support will be important. We don't feel the advocacy conversations will be diluted if they take place at the Staff Senate Meetings.

If more Senators hear the conversation, they will get more excited. The hope is that if these meetings are more engaging and interactive, people will become more involved. And, that if they do miss meetings, they will have opportunities to get involved when they are here.

**Q:** What can we do about people who aren't being involved? What are we doing to recruit?

**A:** Lessen the load by restructuring. If you are excited about what you are working on; you show up. We are trying to lessen the amount of speakers at Staff Senate meetings. We want to talk about building relationships, our connections; want to have more meetings like that. We can't force people to come to meetings. We want to give people information for the first part and give them great discussion for the second part.

We are open to having a discussion about what happens if people don't show up to Staff Senate meetings. If we had a waiting list, would things be different? If someone drops, do we have someone waiting to take their place?

**Q:** What about using Skype or Zoom for meetings?

**A:** We can look into that. Newcomb has that capability. However, if we make it electronically easy, some people who could come won't come. But, we can't not try. Those who have back-to-back meetings, can't get here. We are talking about people who don't show up at all. Maybe they would like to come but they can't. The more we build community and the more people know each other and we have projects that we are working on, people will get excited and come to the meetings. Not having a committee meeting you must go to is an advantage. We don't want to make this a burden and make it more of an opportunity to have your work heard.

Maybe this is a goal we can address next year: make membership more about reaching out to those people who aren't coming – obtain data as to why they aren't coming, instead of making assumptions.

**Q:** Is there are consensus/thumbs' up on moving forward with the new Staff Senate structure?

We are hearing some things we need to be thoughtful of, but not hearing any really hard no's. We will need to recruit folks to be a working group to rewrite the by-laws. If you're interested in this, let Jess and Maggie know. We will have more conversations about this.

**Q:** What if five different people have five different project ideas?

**A:** We hope we will have that problem! We hope we will have a lot of great ideas for projects to tackle. We would hope that the person who brought the idea forward would be the person who owns the idea and helps directs the project. The project would need a sponsor from Exec, a co-chair or director, to move forward.

**Q:** Can you define what a work group leader means – what is their role? And a consideration; do we need that extra layer? Do we need a leader?

**A:** Yes. If we have 10 working groups, the co-chairs cannot manage 10 working groups, they each need a leader. Ideas get bounced off of Executive group. Supports co-chairs, and give leaders support they need. The main concern is with all the moving parts, we just want to have one person who is not a co-chair who is in charge.

**Q:** Could the directors have more flexibility?

**A:** You mean like not assigning them to specific areas? Yes, we could consider letting them choose what working groups and assignments they wanted to oversee instead of asking them to sign up for advocacy, membership, or UP. We'd have to think about how that could work, logistically.

**Q:** Is there a way to have some sort of way to communicate to everyone what dates and times each committee and work group is meeting, so that you know when you can attend. Could it be on the Collab site or in the minutes?

**A:** Yes, the intention would be, under the new structure, to announce any upcoming working group meetings at the Senate meeting. That way, Senators who are interested can attend, even if they haven't been previously involved.

If you have questions, send them to Jess or Maggie. If you want to do it anonymously, send feedback through the Staff Senate webpage.

Two projects need help:

- BOV presentation (tentatively in September) – talk to Andrea or Melissa - not a group to present, only to design and collect data
- Bylaw revision/talk about this structure – talk to Jess or Maggie

Next Meeting:

- **Thursday, May 11, 2017**  
**South Meeting Room, Newcomb Hall**  
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM