STAFF COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
April 14, 2021 @9am


ABSENT: Meredith Hamilton, Web Pierce, Michelle Rinehart, Heidi Kessell

GUESTS: Colleen Dutton, Dr. Richard Scotch, Sara Brennan, Dr. Rafael Martin

CALL TO ORDER
Staff Council President Naomi Emmett called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

GUEST SPEAKERS
Dr. Rafael Martin – Chief of Staff and Vice President

Return to Campus and COVID-19 Vaccinations

April HR Forum has in depth presentation on the Return to Campus effort – see recording for detail.

In person graduation ceremonies second week in August for those that had virtual graduations.

Primary consideration is the health and safety of our faculty, staff and students as we return to campus. We expect CDC recommendations to ease allowing the return to campus and UTD will continue to follow CDC guidelines.
Email from UT Southwestern should have been received. All staff, faculty and students have been registered with UT Southwestern to be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. All are encouraged to be vaccinated.

UTD sent all of UTD staff, faculty and student emails to UT Southwestern. It is only an opportunity to receive the vaccination.

What are the sanitation steps being taken to accommodate the higher number of individuals on campus? Facilities has been sanitizing and is increasing staff, as for distancing, if you have been vaccinated there is a low risk of transmission, we will not be able to ensure social distancing on campus long term. Expectation is that over the course of the summer that as individuals are vaccinated there will be a loosening of social distancing guidelines. The social distancing guidelines will be kept in place through the summer.

If vaccinated why do we need to wear a mask? We are following CDC guidelines. The CDC guidance has changed a bit and will continue to change. The governor has prohibited us from requiring vaccination or asking if someone is vaccinated. We don’t know who is vaccinated and out of an abundance of caution we ask that you be masked. If you are alone in your office with the door closed you can remove your mask.

If you have not purchased a parking pass can passes be purchased now? Parking passes purchased now will be prorated and can be purchased through payroll deduction.

What measures are in place to address conflict between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals? The normal conflict resolution resources through supervisor and HR. Cautions everyone that vaccination status is not to be done. It is considered health information. The message from Austin is that we are not to require or restricting anyone’s access to perform their job based upon their vaccination status. All are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as those most at risk are the unvaccinated. If you choose to not be vaccinated, you are taking the risk to get ill. It is unlikely that unvaccinated individuals will pose a risk to vaccinated individuals.

The UTD website still has expanded essential staff as the status with not more that 25%. The department and schools are setting their return to campus numbers. Can you address this difference? The plan is to operating under expanded essential workers until June 1st. After June 1st it will be up to each area for the return to campus. Individuals returning before June 1st will still need to go through the registration process and adhere to current guidelines and reporting. After June 1st, it will be up to each unit who and how fast to bring individuals back to campus.
Kids cannot be vaccinated. Will UTD work with parents that are concerned about their children being exposed to the coronavirus and do not want them in after-school care? Yes, we are encouraging all supervisors to exercise the maximum amount of flexibility with employees that have those types of concerns.

On April 27th, Dr. Martin will be moderating a panel of two UT Southwestern physicians that will speak about the coronavirus vaccines. This is sponsored by the Office of Research. See their site for the registration link.

**Colleen Dutton** – Chief Human Resources Officer

- Remote work is up to the Deans and VPs for what they wish to allow for their school or division. The new guidelines for remote work have been posted and available for everyone.
- Annual appraisals due to HR by May 31st.
- Classified salary ranges increase 3% on September 1st.
- Benefits fair will be remote again this year. No information yet regarding any changes to health insurance premiums.
- Assuming the holiday list remains the same, we will not have a really long Winter break because so many holidays land on a weekend this FY. Don’t expect a full two weeks this Winter break that we have had in recent years.

**ROLL CALL**

A quorum was met.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Motion to approve the March 2021 meeting minutes was made by Charles Vincent with the addition of David Richardson as present in the meeting minutes and was seconded by Richey Innis. Vote was unanimous to approve. Minutes for March were approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **EXECUTIVE BOARD (Naomi Emmett)**
  Executive Board meets in two weeks for the regular monthly meeting.

  HOP Committee
  - UTDBP1037 – Student Fee Advisory policy, key change was to clarify that the staff representatives are nominated by Staff Council.

- **ATTENDANCE REPORT (Debbie Greszler)**

  Attendance is good – keep up the good work. We are coming up on the elections cycle and would like a volunteer from each standing committee to represent on the elections ad hoc meeting. Fund Raising has provided their volunteer.
• BENEFITS COMMITTEE (Jennifer Klunk)
  Rescheduled meeting to next week.
  In the middle of Spring scholarship review.

• COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (Melanie O’Brien)
  Putting together a new issue of the SUN. Provide content to the
  Communications Committee.
  We have created an Instagram account for Staff Council.
  Creating a content calendar for Staff Council communications.

• FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE (Joey White-Swift)
  We need you and your recipes. Please submit recipes for the Staff Council cookbook.

• STAFF DEVELOPMENT (Fatema Syeda)
  Spring event – Resume and networking event on May 13th.
  Tom Kim from JSOM will lead us through this talk.

• TREASURER’S REPORT (Naomi Emmett)
  No spending this past month.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT (Sara Brennen)
  Last Student Government meeting for this year occurred. Passed
  resolutions such as Freshman elections, support of Trans students, and
  donate funds to Comet Cupboard.
  Blood drive coming up on April 22nd on campus.
  New Student Government President is Ryan Short and the Vice President
  is Imaan Razak.

FACULTY SENATE (Dr. Richard Scotch)
  Addressed how transfer credits work especially with community colleges.
  Routine catalog changes. There is a new Bachelors of Science degree in Analytics and
  new certificate in Applied Machine Learning.
  Voted to approve the semester’s graduates.
  There were some dismissals of faculty Collin College while participating in academic
  conversations about response to COVID. The UTD Academic Senate voted in support of
  the dismissed faculty.
Elections completed with the new senate beginning in June. Dr. Ravi Prakash will continue as President.

RETIREE ASSOCIATION (Sandee Goertzen)

Had our first Zoom meeting with a good turnout. Another Zoom meeting is scheduled for June.

Hope to resume first Monday luncheons in September.

Membership has dropped a little. They expect it to increase once the in-person meetings resume.

UNIVERSITY WIDE COMMITTEES

- Police Oversight Committee – Debra Greszler
  Initial meeting which was mostly baselining the members on information about the UTD Police Department.
  Meeting monthly until we feel the frequency can be decreased.
- Information Technology Planning and Policy Committee - Dennis Guten
  Gathering information for licensed software to determine if university wide licenses would be beneficial.
  Doubling wireless access points to 3,500 campus wide to WIFI 6. Will get some coverage for outside areas.
  Library will be fully open beginning June 1st.
- Campus Facilities Committee - Jeannie Knott
  UTD DART site will be breaking ground soon with completion in 2023. There may be some power disruption due to the construction.
  Space reassignments are occurring.
  Housing reported 900-1,000 students staying on campus for the summer. There will be summer camps but no overnight camps.
  Asking for patience with facilities during the return to campus.
- Student Fee Advisory Committee - Edgar Miranda
  Update lighting for the Student Services Building to have generator power instead of just battery.
  E-Sports requested to have more student wages to provide more job opportunities.
- VP DEI Search – Fatema Syed
  There are four final candidates.
  There is a public panel that anyone can attend.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Proposals:
- **2020-028p**: District rep distribution needs to be monitored closely each year and staggering terms should be rebalanced as needed. (Executive Board)
Committee put forward a proposal to the Executive Board. The proposal is ambitious and may need to be rolled out in increments. Waiting for feedback from the Executive Board.

Suggestions:

- **2021-002s**: Staff Could should do all meetings remotely indefinitely.

Joey White-Swift motions to delay decision to adopt until September. Charles Vincent seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Motion to adopt and assign it to the Executive Committee made by Charles Vincent. Richey Innis seconded the motion.

**2021-003s**: Hello, I am having an issue where I believe that eviCore, as contracted with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas to review requests for certain services, is failing to properly administer my employee health benefits. I was wondering if other employees are dealing with this type of issue (or other issues) related to eviCore? There seems to be some issue with communication that could lead to a solution, and I know that if we don't voice an issue it won't get fixed. If I am not the only one with this issue, do we need to take this to UT System as a bigger issue that needs resolution? Thank you for your consideration.

Debra Greszler motions to table the suggestion until contacting the submitter. Joey White-Swift seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**2021-004s**: Faculty are sent an Evaluation of Academic Administrators. Why is this not also sent to Staff for review? It seems that the all staff email list is not being included on pertinent email communications.

Motion to adopt and assign it to the Executive Committee made by Charles Vincent. Richey Innis seconded the motion.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Discussion on Staff morale.
- Staff not feeling valued.
- Seems more and more staff are exiting the institution.
- Feeling burn with heavy work loads and no incentives and encouragement.
- Feelings of isolation and disconnect.
- Feeling siloed.
- Difficulty to separate home life and work.
- Staff are anxious and tired.
- Burnout is very real.
- Broad brush of staff taking advantage of not attending to work duties because they are not visible. Kudos given to those that show up on campus but those not seen are assumed to not
working hard. 
RIFs have had an effect. 
Advocate for staff to take vacation time. 
Vacation time being disrupted by work. Can’t fully disconnect due to be contacted while on vacation. 
Staff feeling very unappreciated. Faculty don’t appreciate staff. More obvious which faculty appreciate staff and those that don’t during the pandemic. Encourage supervisors to show appreciation for the staff. 
Colleen says there is not an increase in people leaving. 
Colleen encourages everyone to use vacation time to relax even if you don’t go anywhere. 
You need to set the parameters as to when you are working. Assumption is that someone working at home is more available. Leadership is not to expect employees to work 24x7. It is not fair to the employee and burns them out. Just because people are working from home does not mean that they are not working hard. Need to respect people’s personal time. 
No way to carry over more vacation time beyond the maximum limits. 
It has been a tough year. 

Charles Vincent motioned to extend the meeting for 10 minutes. 

Want to validate staff. 
Leverage HR if needing guidance to resources. 
Need to be mindful of what our colleagues are experiencing. 
Can take the observation of staff state to President and Chief of Staff. 
At times those without children feel they are expected to carry a heavier work load. 

Resources provided in the meeting chat: 
Can use Teams "Quiet Days" feature to prevent Teams notifications on my phone - helps me disconnect.  https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/manage-notifications-on-the-go-de42104f-10e1-4b05-9be7-4b078b8bc94f  
https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdbp3054#annual-vacation-leave  
https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdbp3054#sick-leave-pool-administration  
Email to contact HR: hr@utdallas.edu

REMINDERS 
Next Staff Council meeting is May 12, 2021. 
Guest presenters for April: TBD. 
Blood drive coming up. 
Elections are around the corner. 
Consider running for Staff Council President and Vice President 
Diversity awards are tomorrow. 

ADJOURNMENT 
Motion to adjourn was made by Charles Vincent and seconded
by Jennifer Klunk, with no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 11:11am.

Recording of meeting located at https://www.utdallas.edu/staffcouncil/news-and-events/meetings/meeting-videos-archive/

Committee Reports:

Benefits Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 21, 2021 11:00 am
Attending: Jennifer Klunk, Aaron Simpson, Jacqueline Schmitz, Marita Yancey, Michelle Rinehart, Zahra Nourani, Jasmine Johnson, Joy Camp
Absent: Meredith Hamilton, Harrison Angel
I. Spring 2021 Scholarship Applications – Process and timeline review
Review deadline of May 7
Discussed what to do if none of the applicants meet Dempsey scholarship preferences
II. Benefits topics for this FY
Retirement project for benefits fair
III. HR Updates – UT System and UTD topics
IV. Did You Know suggestions – status and additional suggestions
V. Reminders

Office of Sustainability Updates – April 2021

- Earth Week
  - April 19 – 23
  - Collecting Digital Earth Day videos
    - 10 videos submitted! (Thanks, Dorian. 😊)
  - Engage OoS Panel
    - 4/21 2pm – 3pm
  - Green Convene Part 2
    - 4/22 5pm – 6:30pm
  - Partner Programming
    - Learning About Sustainability Through the Core Curriculum
      - 4/19 10am – 11am
    - Virtual Garden Workshop
      - 4/20 10am – 11:30am
    - Virtual Volunteering with OSV
      - 4/22 2:30pm – 4pm
    - MEAG (Menstrual Equity Advocacy Group) Panel Discussion
      - 4/22 3:30pm – 4:30pm
• RCE 2021 Annual Summit recording: https://sustainability.uta.edu/rce/2021-annual-summit/
• OoS is looking for a Bee Campus USA Eco Rep and a Bike Friendly University Eco Rep! Please send any interested students our way.
• Gary is leading UNIV 3310 in the spring. Flyer below. Share with interested students!
• Real momentum to sustainability presence at DART stop on campus.
• Sustainability Videos was delivered from Communications this week.
• Pursuing dumpster sensor tech. Working through proposals for pilot programs now.
• Gary expects e-waste recycling for small personal electronics open to all students, faculty, and staff for fall. Pursuing move out collection.
• Food Waste Service is Active – flyer to all Northside residents!
• Project GREEN Grant seeding complete – over 5 acres. Look for blooms in April
• Workdays at community garden and harvests for Comet Cupboard continue.
• Look for new Pollinator Habitat signs with UTD Bee Campus.
• Paulina Hruskoci’s application to Udall foundation and Archer Foundation was accepted! She also earned an internship with the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality in their GIS Department for the summer. Last day as an Eco Rep May 14.
• Caitlin has accepted admission to the UT Austin Master of Public Affairs program for fall 2021.

The Information Security Advisory Committee met on April 21, 2021 and discussed the following topics.

- Phishing challenges: there is a failure rate of ~18%; simulations are not accomplishing expected improvement goals.
- Code42 crash plan: cloud backup of UTD computers and backs up attached external hard drives.
- Annual training for HR3834 compliance: discussion of the platform and the content.
- Email phishing incident response tools: one solution is ISO automatically removes potential phishing emails from inbox but this would defeat the purpose of the monthly phishing tests.
- Return to campus computer maintenance: discussion of issues with needed software and security updates on computers when employees return to campus from remote work.
- DUO authentication: are there additional systems that need DUO authentication? Recommended eLearning to protect faculty intellectual property.
Fall 2021
UNIV 3310 –
Intersectional Environmentalism
Through Habitat Restoration
and Service Learning

Course offered in partnership with
Trinity River Audubon Center

Thursdays 10-12:45pm at
Trinity River Audubon Center

Students will learn habitat restoration from
TRAC experts while providing stewardship of
an acre of the facility

Lectures, guest lectures, and reflections will
highlight the intersectionality of
environmentalism, social justice, and economies

Reflections and Discussions will allow for a
personal exploration of interests related to
sustainability and environmentalism

Register now!