

**STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Retreat Minutes**

December 9, 2015 | 11:30AM-3:00PM  
Anderson Academic Commons, Room 290

**ATTENDANCE: 27 Members**

|   |           |          |  |
|---|-----------|----------|--|
|   | Ahmad     | Deana    | Josef Korbel School of International Studies |
| ✓ | Aliaga    | Kathy    | Facilities Planning and Management           |
|   | Anderson  | Lindsay  | Graduate School of Professional Psychology   |
| ✓ | Arnold    | Marlene  | Internationalization                         |
| ✓ | Belstock  | Sarah    | Student Life/HCC                             |
| ✓ | Bernstein | Sam      | Lamont School of Music                       |
| ✓ | Blagg     | Garrett  | University Libraries                         |
|   | Bokenkamp | Gloria   | Daniels College of Business                  |
| ✓ | Brown     | Mary Sue | UTS  |
|   | Buckley   | Jon      | Engineering and Computer Science             |
| ✓ | Carlson   | Tamra    | Center for World Languages and Cultures      |
|   | Carver    | Mary     | UTS  |
|   | Cederberg | Emily    | Sturm College of Law                         |
|   | Chen      | Michael  | HR   |
|   | Coccia    | Kristina | Morgridge College of Education               |
| ✓ | Colburn   | Renee    | Campus Safety                                |
|   | Dietrich  | Erin     | AHSS/Social Sciences                         |
| ✓ | Escobar   | Karen    | Natural Sciences and Math (NSM)              |
| ✓ | Feldman   | Amy      | University College                           |

|   |                |          |  |
|---|----------------|----------|--|
|   | Field          | Angel    | Athletics & Recreation                                       |
| ✓ | Giesen         | Greg     | HR   |
|   | Glasgow        | Greg     | MarComm  |
| ✓ | Grimm          | Kendra   | Josef Korbel School of International Studies                 |
| ✓ | Harris         | Amy      | Bursar's   |
| ✓ | Hefty          | Tina     | University Libraries   |
| ✓ | Hernandez      | Theresa  | University Libraries   |
|   | Hill           | Amy      | Morgridge College of Education                               |
|   | Ingarfield     | Lisa     | Graduate School of Social Work                               |
| ✓ | Jackson        | Cheryl   | Center for Teaching and Learning                             |
|   | Kahl           | Brittany | GSPP   |
| ✓ | Kaufman        | Cathy    | Newman Center  |
|   | Kitta          | Jan      | MarComm  |
| ✓ | Le             | Linda    | English Language Center                                      |
| ✓ | Martella       | Jessica  | University Advancement                                       |
| ✓ | Michel         | Richard  | Conference, Events and Special Programs                      |
|   | Milnes Chester | Elise    | Student Life   |
| ✓ | Nierling       | Ulli     | Controller   |
| ✓ | Ramirez        | Liza     | Registrar  |
| ✓ | Ryan           | Joe      | Research and Scholarship - Center for Data and Visualization |
| ✓ | Schellman      | Julie    | Graduate School of Professional Psychology                   |
| ✓ | Smith          | Molly    | University College   |
| ✓ | Steele         | Leann    | Sturm College of Law   |
|   | Supplee        | Lydia    | Colorado Women's College                                     |
|   | Tankersley     | Rebecca  | Fisher Early Learning Center                                 |
| ✓ | Westendorf     | Lisa     | Financial Aid  |

## Introductions

- ❖ Welcome
  - Jenna Brown, DU Ombuds, will facilitate.
  - Nothing talked about will be new. We want next steps, outcomes, and recommendations for concrete decisions.
  - Really share your thoughts. We need everyone's opinions.
- ❖ Review Agenda & Ground Rules
  - Our meeting is confidential. Jenna will refer others interested in our meeting to the executive committee.

## A History of SAC

- ❖ Mary Sue Brown presented on SAC's history as a means of helping us move forward.
- ❖ Formation
  - SAC was formed in 1978 by the VC for Business Affairs. Eleven members focused on unity, cooperation, and exchange.
- ❖ Focus & Accomplishments
  - Some of the first tasks included being on search committees and serving on Faculty Senate.
  - SAC pushed for EcoPasses, the tuition waiver, disability insurance, and accessible child care.
  - The first staff appreciation event was held in 1995 and was not free. Five employees were recognized.
  - The Staff Benevolent Fund was established in 1997 to help staff in need. In the initial years, SAC fundraised via concession stands at hockey games, sold gift certificates, made a cookbook, etc.
    - Note: We do not fundraise anymore. We have \$1000 in budget for the benevolent fund and have funded 3 staff members so far this year.
  - The Community & Events committee coordinated staff nights in Central City, trick or treat on campus, take your child to work day, and food donation.

## Why SAC: Purpose & Mission

- ❖ Each table was tasked with coming up with a new mission statement and posting it in the front of the room. Then the other groups would get a chance to highlight what they like about each team's statement.
- ❖ The original mission statements provided were:
  - Represent staff and promote a sense of community at DU and beyond. Other phrases to consider: neutral, voice of, advocate, unify.
  - To build community to unite and support staff through advocacy, collaboration, and education.
  - The purpose of SAC is to promote a positive work environment for all employees and ensure that the staff voice is heard and addressed while supporting the University's mission and vision.
  - SAC enables all staff to communicate collaboratively, not top down.
- ❖ After reviewing everyone else's ideas, each group was able to rewrite their proposed mission statement. The Council then voted on their preferred statement. The votes and statements are below. Note that wordsmithing may still be needed after the retreat.

- 3 Votes: The purpose of SAC is to build community and influence policies and processes through advocacy and collaboration.
- 4 Votes: The purpose of SAC is to represent all staff to promote a positive work environment through advocacy, support, and collaboration.
- 9 Votes: The purpose of SAC is to promote a positive and collaborative work environment, and to advocate for the staff voice to be heard and addressed, while supporting the University's mission and vision.
- 10 Votes: SAC seeks to create "one DU" by uniting and supporting staff through advocacy, collaboration and education.

### What does SAC do and how?

#### ❖ SAC Priorities

- Each group wrote what they thought or wished SAC would do or should do on yellow sticky notes and put them on an easel. The most important 3 things went above the red line on the easel, the others below. Then the groups rotated to the other easels and shifted their sticky notes based on the priorities to that group.
- Top priorities from the exercise:
  - Outreach to new and current staff x3
  - Sit at the table/integrated into key conversations x3
  - Sponsor events that support community x2
  - Support/advocate for staff x2
  - Promote public good
  - Suggest possible solutions
- Other ideas, not mentioned above, not identified as priority:
  - Child care initiatives
  - Acknowledge staff successes
  - Conduit of info
  - Manage benevolent fund
  - Educate

#### ❖ SAC Structure

- Do we have the structure to do what we've listed above?
- The Council broke into teams based on the 5 standing committees of SAC and decided if their committee was one they wanted to keep, and if so, how it should be organized. The groups took yellow stickies from the easel that applied to their committee--if a sticky wasn't taken, the task listed on it wouldn't get done. After discussion, each group reported out.
- Staff Issues Committee
  - The title of the committee is accurate. However, we want to represent a greater part of the DU community vs. individual problems or issues of policy.
  - We should refer individual problems to the Ombuds office or other departments.
  - Ways to do this:
    - The Staff Issues Committee and Executive Committee will disseminate the issues to appropriate sub-committees.
    - SAC representatives should be involved on committees so that we can be involved in decision-making processes.

- Put a suggestion box on the website to report any buzz heard on campus that might affect a lot of people. If someone provides feedback on an individual problem, they can be directed to the right person.
- Staff Awards Committee
  - Based on the yellow sticky exercise, this isn't a key priority of SAC.
  - We should continue to acknowledge staff and hold the awards ceremony, but dissolve the committee. Instead, staff awards could go under the Community Events Committee.
  - Another idea proposed was to turn this committee into a Staff Recognition Committee that would focus on new ways to recognize staff. However, since this didn't emerge as a priority, we should leave it as "food for thought" for another time.
- Outreach Committee
  - We should keep the committee. Its purpose is to let new and current SAC members know what we do and how we do it. It should also convey the role of SAC to staff members on campus.
  - Ways to do this:
    - This can be done through orientation and the benefits fair by marketing who we are.
    - We can personally welcome new members.
- Community Events Committee
  - We should keep the committee. Its purpose is to sponsor or participate in events that promote community at DU.
  - We should have separate sub-committees for the coat drive, staff lunch & dinner, and Springfest.
  - Everyone on SAC should participate, even if they aren't on the committee.
    - Ex) Coat drive – SAC members can check on boxes near their offices.
  - There will be some overlap with the Outreach Committee.
    - Ex) Crimson Classic – We can participate in the 5K as a group.
  - We could also focus more on co-sponsorship. We can become more involved but not run events from the ground up.
- Election Committee
  - We propose an ad-hoc committee responsible for running elections for the executive committee members. This committee would be chaired by the past president, who will have organizational familiarity but not be running again.
  - The ad-hoc committee would be responsible for soliciting nominations, running elections, tallying votes and reporting out.
  - We should transition away from general member elections (they don't seem to take place right now anyways).

### Who is SAC?

- ❖ This part of the discussion was around who is on SAC, their specific characteristics & skills, and what expectations we have for them.
- ❖ Eligibility debate/dialogue (ongoing)

- All departments with full and part time staff should be represented, if possible.
- There are some units that can't send a representative. How do we make sure their voice is heard? Do they pair up with someone at SAC?
- Should participation be mandatory, or just be a group of passionate people? When the passion burns out, what do you do? How do we balance that? There are so many passionate people who want to be involved.
- Are you here to represent your unit or all DU staff and employees? It'd be good if they represented their unit and everyone who is a staff member at the University. There's no pure solution to this problem. We need to wear more than one hat and think of the good of our department and the University.
- ❖ Traits of an effective SAC representative:
  - Communication, listening, people skills
  - 360 approach
  - Dedication, willingness to contribute
  - Leadership
  - Collaborative
  - Passionate
  - Optimistic
  - Organized
  - Visionary, strategic
  - Self-aware
  - Remember that everyone has a unique ability and personal strengths.
- ❖ SAC Member Job Descriptions
  - Let's write up job descriptions for new recruits. Give a description to people about what it means to be a representative and a clear outline of what is expected of them. Regardless of how they come into SAC, they should remember they are representing all employee interests.
  - Agreed-upon expectations
    - Attend meetings
    - Serve on at least one committee
    - Commit to volunteering
    - Make it a priority. There are many who would like to be on this committee.
  - Supporting thoughts
    - Deans and managers need to know that this is important and support their staff.
    - Some faculty are evaluated on their service to the University. We don't have that piece for staff. That would put more value on what we do and whether others would want to be involved. Is there value placed on service?

## **Decision Making**

- ❖ This phase of the retreat focused on establishing agreements based on the day's conversations.
- ❖ Mission Statement
  - We are very close to finalizing a mission statement. There will be some editing done after the retreat. The mission statement will pull from the two most popular statements offered at the retreat:

- SAC seeks to create “one DU” by uniting and supporting staff through advocacy, collaboration and education.
  - The purpose of SAC is to promote a positive and collaborative work environment, and to advocate for the staff voice to be heard and addressed, while supporting the University’s mission and vision.
- ❖ Committees
  - The overall structure of SAC will need to be changed after the retreat.
  - Elections will continue as an ad hoc committee.
  - The Council agreed that the Staff Awards Committee should be absorbed into the Community Events Committee, as its current structure is based on one annual event.
  - If we approached “staff recognition” separately, that would be from a larger perspective. We could consider discussing this in the future as an ad hoc committee. Human Resources would need to be involved.
  - Jenna asked everyone in the room to sign up for a particular committee.
- ❖ SAC Membership – Ongoing Dialogue/Debate
  - One big conversation remaining relates to the “who.” Who is on SAC? We need to know who we are and how we got here before we can represent.
  - Are we a representational body?
    - If this is a representational body, then all employees would have a SAC rep in their division.
    - Does every unit need to provide a rep, or could your rep be someone from another division? Would representation be based on division or clusters of departments?
    - If information dissemination is less central to SAC’s mission than before, is a representational body really needed?
    - Unequal voting across units would be a non-issue if folks voted with the understanding that they are voting for both their unit and the broader university.
  - How are folks elected?
    - We are different than Faculty Senate, because they have to have one person per area and they have a rotation. We’ve never established anything like that.
    - The culture is different between units. Right now, however we can get representatives is best: nominations, volunteers, etc.
    - We need to be realistic. There is a small executive committee. If we are talking about standardizing procedures, that will create a huge task for SAC leaders and may be unrealistic.
  - If the current structure were refined and implemented, would we have one representative from each division?
    - We would need to make sure there was representation from every unit.
    - Would this type of work be distracting us from our mission? Should this remain on the back burner until the organization has momentum?
  - Meetings - Open or Closed?
    - We could invite interested staff to participate in different activities, but keep meetings closed.
    - We meet over the lunch hour and thus feed all attendees. Should we continue this practice?

***What Happens Next?***

Staff Advisory Council's next meeting is on **Wednesday, January 13, 2016**, 11:30AM-1:00PM, AAC Room 290. At this meeting, we will officially vote on what we discussed at the retreat, including the mission statement, committee structure, expectations, and membership. The next step will be to revise the bylaws.