

UMCES Staff Council
Open Forum Meeting Agenda
February 13, 2019 at 10:00 AM

Staff Council Members Present: Katie Kline, Amy Griffin, Kurt Florez, Juliana Brush, Jeanette Connors, Lisa Ross, Stacy Hutchinson, Lori Stepp, Julia Bliss, April Lewis, Brian Duke, Michelle Prentice, John Piasecki

Absent: Molly Pickel, Jenna Clark

Non-council Members Present: Gerri Moore, Barb Higgins, Curtis Henry, Jeff Miley, Ray Cho, Amy Pelsinsky, Sarah Brzezinski, Trish Stebbing, Mike Allen

Amy Griffin (chair) convened the meeting. Introductions of members and non-members were made for each unit. Amy briefly outlined the group's history, some of our accomplishments, and noted that the council meets every other month.

- Approval of December 2018 Meeting Minutes

It was decided that additional time would be needed to review the minutes from the December meeting. Amy will be in contact over email with staff council members to verify and approve the minutes from the December meeting.

19 February 2019: UMCES Staff Council approved of December 2018 meeting minutes via email.

- CUSS Shared Governance Survey

A survey was sent out to all USM groups through CUSS to gauge each institution's participation in shared governance. Survey results have been released and could provide some ideas on how to innovate our shared governance process. Results will be distributed soon to Staff Council members. The 2018 CUSS Shared Governance Survey is underway and staff council members will be asked to fill it out.

- Elections (CA, AL, MDSG)

Elections for CA, AL, and MDSG are coming this spring for two year terms that will begin in August of 2019. Please consider participating if you haven't done so already.

- Committee Updates
 - BoR Staff Award/UMCES Staff Award - Michelle Prentice - UMCES submitted BOR nomination packet for one employee. Committee is looking ahead to UMCES staff award. Submissions/nominations will be opening in May with expectation to give award at the next Staff Appreciation day in September.

- Communications - Kurt Florez - Committee is working on latest newsletter and working with other committees to assist with Staff Award communications and Staff Appreciation day promotions. Kurt invited ideas/suggestions for better/innovative ways to communicate with staff.
- Staff Appreciation Day - Juli Brush - Committee appreciates everyone who attended last September. They also appreciated everyone's feedback and are busy planning the next one, which has a tentative date of Tuesday, 9/24/19.
- HR Updates - Lisa Ross - UMCES is transitioning over to Workday, a new statewide personnel system. April Lewis has been involved with multiple calls per week with other USM institutions to work out the glitches/issues that everyone is having. There have also been delays in getting new hires enrolled. Kurt Florez mentioned that information administrators have noted to be careful with the new W numbers. They discourage the distribution of master lists of the W numbers. Our employee assistance provider contract with Inova will expire at end of 2019. There will be a workgroup for USM generating an RFP for a new employee assistance provider contract. It could turn out to be Inova or another vendor who submit an approved proposals. The system office has been running a pilot project for online tuition remission for all USM institutions and will be ready to be rolled out in Fall 2019. Maryland passed a law (effective 10/1/18) requiring sexual harassment training within 6 months of new hire and every 2 years for existing employees. We were waiting for guidance. Lisa is working on options for new hires. The training must be in person and be at least 2 hours long. There is also a new MD law requiring ethics training. All employees at a certain staff level must undergo ethics training, which can be online/remote. People who will need it should be hearing something soon. It will be less than one hour
- CUSS Updates

Council of University System Staff - There are four members from UMCES on CUSS. Amy Griffin is on Communications Committee, Lori Stepp is on Legislative Affairs committee. Lori mentioned HB98, which was to repeal of prescription drug benefits for retirees. It is currently under a court injunction that allowed current retirees to maintain their coverage. There will be a hearing soon. Lori also saw a demonstration of the tuition remission system rollout. She also mentioned the upcoming Advocacy Day in Annapolis to meet with various delegates to enlist support for USM budget; Dave Nemazie helps. If you're interested in participating, let Lori Stepp know. Julia Bliss is on Benefits Committee, which also discussed HB98 and touched on universities that have 3rd shift workers and how they are affected by weather delays/closings and compensation. The new tuition remission system rollout was discussed and they elected a new vice chair of committee. Michelle Prentice is on BoR Staff Award Committee. The deadline for the BoR award just passed (2/8/19). They received 33 applications across USM. The committee will be evaluating applications to determine winner for several different categories.

- Lab Updates

AL - none

CA - Lori Stepp noted that CA is without a general admin person following Dottie's retirement, so CA is spread a little thin at the moment.

CBL - Stacy Hutchinson noted that CBL is also experiencing staff shortages at the moment. Their HR representative is on an extended leave, so Stacy is filling in for HR-related issues. They also have a position open in business office. Theresa Holloway recently started as manager of business operations. CBL's Science for Citizens lecture series is ramping up for end of March and will run for 5 weeks. CBL faculty will be giving the presentations.

HPL - Julia Bliss mentioned that a new faculty member will be starting about July 1st.

IMET - Michelle said that IMET has announced a new AD - Nina Lamba (replacing Nick Hammond) and she will be starting on March 4th.

MDSG - Jeannette Connors mentioned that MDSG has two new positions currently being advertised - an Assistant Director for communications and a science writer/editor. REU program is gearing up. The deadline for applications is 2/14/19.

- Open Q&A session

April Lewis received an anonymous email. This person said that staff appreciation day was wonderful - very nice and that the Staff Award process was clear. They appreciated open forum meeting but were unable to attend today. They asked if it was possible to put newsletter and minutes on staff council webpage? They also asked about a leave pool. Lisa mentioned that there is a USM Leave Reserve Fund. One would complete an application along with FMLA application. There are limitations. It is made up of unused/surrendered leave personal and annual leave. Lisa also added some clarifications about new parental leave. In the past, new mothers had to have been with USM for at least 12 months and had to exhaust all of their leave - sick, annual, and personal before getting parental leave. A new bill was passed for state employees. USM has decided to mirror state's policy. New mothers now only have to exhaust annual and personal leave, so that they can reserve sick leave for later. The new policy would allow for up to 12 weeks of leave and the employee would only have to be here 6 months instead of 12 months. There is approval process through HR. The final comment was respect to UMCES-branded swag. They noted that there isn't much UMCES-only swag. They suggested that some of these items could be sold as fundraiser at Open Houses or other events. Ray Cho suggested a poll to assess interest/demand for employee-purchased swag items.

Curtis Henry asked about challenges to Staff Council. Amy Griffin noted that the distributed campus is a challenge and that engaging staff across staff and within labs has also been a

challenge. The numbers of eligible staff at some of the smaller units poses sustainability challenges, too.

Ray Cho asked if staff council includes research staff. FRA's are represented on Faculty Senate.

Curtis Henry noted that the group has been working collectively to benefit UMCES as a whole - not to the benefit of one lab and/or the detriment of another lab. Representatives discuss and think about issues as a whole - not specific to their own lab.

Barb Higgins asked if there have been issues getting representatives to consider more than their individual units, which no one has noted being an issue. Barb also asked if there is administrative support of Staff Council? Lori Stepp mentioned the annual meeting with Staff Council and most members mentioned that administration at individual labs have been supportive.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2019 with Dr. Goodwin in Annapolis