

UAS Staff Council Meeting Notes

Wednesday March 4, 9:00-10:30AM

[March Agenda](#)

[March Meeting Items](#)

[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

1. Roll Called

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|-----------------|----------------------|
| a. David Felts | e. Kate Govaars |
| b. John Ingman | f. Members of public |
| c. Cody Bennett | Chancellor Caulfield |
| d. Denise Carl | Kiwana Affatato |

2. Adopted Agenda: Motioned by John, unopposed

3. Approve February Minutes: Motion: John, 2nd: Denise

- a. John asked a question about the Morale Committee report absence; David indicated that there were upcoming meetings of this group and at the time of the February meeting, there was no additional information available.

4. Guests and Public Comments:

- a. Chancellor Caulfield Updates:
 - i. COVID-19 Concerns: Notifications about the COVID-19 have gone out, there is attention globally. Pulling together incident management team on 3/5 to refine a preparedness plan. No sign of illness in Alaska, but it is expected to just be a matter of time. Plan will be public for folks to look at. The focus is on protection (hand washing, self-quarantine, coughing). Some travel limitations. Will be anticipating worst case scenarios (outbreak in residence halls, if students/staff impacted would we restructure to online, etc). Additional guidance will come from HR regarding administrative support (leaves, etc). Practice with higher order issues is to rally the IMT. Has been working with Ryan Sand to craft this plan.
 - ii. Budget Update: Related to budget reductions. Looking towards FY21 and the expectation is that it will likely be about the same as this year (2.5m), but may be slightly less (2.0m). As noted in Chancellor's comments, looking to SPBAC to discuss proposals for reductions in detail. SPBAC went through an exercise about central identity programs, and has also looked at completion/graduation rates. Deans/Directors have put forward ideas of how to achieve reductions. 3 meetings via SPBAC over the next month to invite feedback from various groups. Academic programs have had a program review and additional detail about productivity, consolidations and efficiency. An example of the outcome was to reduce

the masters of education in math program - had started with grant funding, and dwindled to 3 and then 1 student. ENVS/GEOG has also had a review. We have 5 BS/BA degrees dealing with different ENVS topics, and giving thought of consolidation and refinement into BA in ENV Studies, etc. Could lead to reductions in cost. Beyond ED and ENVS, we're not looking at others at this time. Any reductions in programs will be more modest than UAA/UAF. Likely strategy will include holding positions open. The focus has been on trying to minimize impact on students. Reductions likely to be pursuant to administrative areas.

- iii. Staffing Levels concern: Accreditation had recommendation to not burden staff further. As we look at programs and minimize impact to students, we want to hold onto degree programs. But being mindful to the pressures put onto staff. Pay increases (1% in FY21) are still in the budget. It still remains in our thinking. If we see areas where we are at a single point of failure, we may be cautious and aware of needing support of staffing. Example of Financial Aid office getting additional staff to give more depth.
- iv. Staff Development Day: Staff Development Day, thanks to Denise for leading. Looking forward to a refined budget to moving forward. Lori Klein has been identified as an executive cabinet participant in this effort.
- v. Commencement: Commencement planning underway. One honorary doctorate, 2 meritorious service awards. Awards are still being committed and could be brought forward through Robin Walz, chair of awards committee. There is no target number, but love to have representation across the region for either award. Informally, regents have shown resistance to large numbers presented at other campuses, so likely keeping recipients to 1-2 seems like a right number, but worthy to queue additional candidates.
- vi. HR Update: HR is still very keen to have a senior business partner for UAS. Currently in conversation with a potential candidate, that individual should act as a portal for UAS to HR. James Yauney(?) (anchorage) and Sarah Belmont (fairbanks) have helped fill in gaps. There is concern about uas staff taking up the slack and doing the additional work of normal HR services. David noted appreciation for Exec cabinet, especially VC Ciri, supporting the concerns brought forward by staff who were being assigned additional duties. Sitka/Ketchikan continue to have their centralized HR Tech model
- vii. Professional Development: Professional development from HR? In response to concerns brought forward, we have tried to take advantage of opportunities. Benefits 101, google training, deer oaks webinars and discussions. Steve Patin highlighted those post-event roundtables to UAA/UAF.
- viii. Staff Development Day, continued: HR has committed \$2k. Planning meeting scheduled 3/11 to get better ideas of what direction we would like

to go. Denise had looked at past SDD evals and positives were that folks appreciated the food, but did not feel that there was meaningful professional development. The chancellor noted that he was concerned about “meaningful”, and would like to be open to considering things that impact users. Clearly we’ll have food and costs. Longevity awards will be covered, but could do those during SDD or convocation times. It is anticipated that the committee will be mindful of “this is the best I’ve gone to, and this will help me in my job” would be a fantastic outcome.

- ix. Campus Winter Closure: Winter closure question resurfaced. The academic calendar has been approved for 20/21, and will show when classes start/end. It may be up on the web, but the holiday closures within that period are not noted. The chancellor will follow up again with HR.
 - x. Reminder of Chancellor Search: It is still the Chancellor’s plan to retire at the end of June. The search committee has received several applicants, and of course there continues to be Staff Council representation.
- b. Other members: No comments offered.

5. Agenda Item 1: Update on Goals Progress

a. Goal: Professional Development

- i. The G Suite training by Traci Taylor & Martin Carter was successful. There were ~35 attendees, and a few that asked to view the recording. Additional G Suite sessions are being considered by the Helpdesk due to feedback received.
- ii. Much training is available (banner, toad, g suite, etc, etc), but requires end users to ask for it; this is partially attributed to unawareness that options are available.
- iii. Noted some concern about Staff Council being sure to request Prof Dev through Exec/HR. Discussion about how to bring ideas forward in a way that does not rely on specific members of the Staff Council.
- iv. The group discussed that the term “Professional Development” may be misunderstood. One example from Sitka, faculty had wanted “training on blackboard”, the trainer flew to Sitka and nobody attended the training. The trainer attempted more specific training, and again nobody attended. A note was sent soliciting specifics of training needs, only one response of “I want to know what I don’t know in Blackboard”. It will be important to define it further. For John, he would like to know what he doesn’t know (about his job specifically).
- v. Re-evaluation of what professional development means and what might benefit the entire campus. There is not always a full understanding of the tools that are needed (ex: onboarding is “you’ll need banner training, and need X & Y”). The campus would benefit from articulation of when a particular job family grade is hired, they will need a specific type of training. An example of dysfunction was pointing to Skillsoft online training

as a development channel, but there was no oversight of whether or not it happened. It was noted that we don't know our learners. Supervisors could be an avenue to articulate these things. It was proposed by David that we move this topic to our SC weekly meeting to get on the same page about how to promote this.

b. Goal: Communication Plan

- i. Multiple newsletters have been sent. Kate indicated that it was fine for composing these, and hasn't gotten feedback from the most recent one.
- ii. Of note, if trying to get traction on a specific topic, the newsletter is not the most effective tool for this. Ex: mission survey sent out to faculty by Anita - 20 faculty replied. In the newsletter, only a handful of staff replied. Need to be sure we're sending out direct emails from time to time.
- iii. Feedback for the newsletter is filtered based on various constraints.
- iv. People are happy about the newsletter, and that we have "upped our communication game this year".
- v. No next steps identified.

c. Goal: Successful Staff Council Activities (SDD, SMSC, SE)

i. Staff Development Day (SDD):

1. Lots of updates were covered in chancellor's remarks above. Frankly, we're in a difficult spot if we're anticipating having food but operating on a small budget, that is a concern. It seems that the chancellor is prepared to feed staff. There has not been any clear information on the budget from past events. .
2. A request was submitted on Spoke by Denise to get our longevity award info. That information has also been requested from the Staff Alliance level for all Universities. John Moore (SA Vice Chair and UAA SC President) routed the request for all of UA through Staff Alliance.

ii. Staff Make Students Count Awards (SMSC)

1. SMSC routes through Chancellor's office and Morgan Dufseth at statewide. There is no need for the UAS Staff Council to do more at this time than advertise.

iii. Staff Excellence Awards (SE)

1. SE will come through the Staff Council, please encourage peers to submit nominations.
2. It was noted that faculty excellence award comes from provost office rather than from their governance group. Not all staff are covered under governance. SE on UAA/UAF go through chancellor's office and can include these other groups. There was a proposal to have SE come from the chancellor's office in future years to include other staff and allow for active Staff Council members to be nominated. Currently, administering the award and receiving a nomination or winning the award has uncomfortable

optics. It was determined that this would be placed into the “parking lot” to keep on the radar for future pursuit.

3. Perhaps consider sharing more information about nominations - sharing with nominees, potentially shared broadly. Recognizing the work put into it. Consider incentivizing the nomination process.
4. If we are considering sharing this information, it may be worthy to make note that the sharing of the information could be made public.
5. No decisions on incentivizing nominations.
6. Historically SE awards, nominations were not shared. It would be valuable to share nominations (along with a small gift like a chocolate bar) so that staff are aware that their peers have found their work valuable.

d. Other

i. Morale Survey -

1. where are standardized questions?
 - a. John has these. Staff Alliance has a morale meeting to talk about the survey - John will join. Matthew Mund has asked for all to do morale survey at the same time. Our email list is automatically generated. Communications would be sent out by officers through this list.
2. Other actions?
 - a. John has agreed to be the point person for building the survey and for analyzing the results.

6. Written Report Quick Questions (3-5 minutes)

- a. [Committee Updates](#)
 - i. Question about AskUAS, discussion about streaming capacity.

7. Shout Outs

- a. David offered appreciation for our SC members being leaders in our own rights.

8. Other:

- a. A concern about meeting attendance was mentioned. What would be useful for future invitations? How do we create relevance? Perhaps have a small discretionary budget (\$100-500) to give back to staff in incentives (meeting coffee, chocolate, etc) .

9. Adjourned: Proposed by David and accepted without objection

10. Parking Lot

- a. Upcoming invites of leadership
- b. How to retain institutional knowledge of staff council/succession planning
- c. Updates on consolidation efforts - IT, back offices, - how to do this? GSD

- d. Formalizing feedback mechanism to chancellor/executive cabinet (and including in regular communication with membership)
- e. COVID-19 and effects on staff
- f. Suggestion that Chancellor's Office takes over staff excellence award administration (ask Kate for more info)
- g. Incentivize award nominations? Make sure that people know who has been nominated & by whom?
- h. Enhance attendance at our meeting(s)