



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - SAN ANTONIO

Staff Council

Executive Staff Council Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2020 Webex

In attendance from Staff Council:

President – Miriam Magdaleno

President-Elect – Jarrick Brown

Historian/Parliamentarian – Jess Burnett

Treasurer – Cristina Dominguez

Secretary – Liz Chavez

Others in attendance:

A&M-San Antonio President – Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson

Chief Human Resources Officer - Martha Gonzalez

1. Review Minutes
2. Shared Governance Hot Topics
 - **New Suggestion Topic Items -**
 - i. Minimum communication (Anonymous, 5/22) --- “I believe that staff have been very accommodating during the COVID-19 pandemic, however they have not been kept as informed as their academic counterparts. The provost has sent emails with pertinent information that has not been shared with staff, unless you are a staff member who is also faculty and included on those emails. Communication has been lacking on the staff side.”---
 - ✓ At the “Return to Campus” taskforce meeting, Miriam suggested reminding managers to share information with their staff.
 - ✓ Staff Council sent an email to all staff regarding return to work concerns or summer hours.
 - ✓ Martha shared the slide show that was presented at the most recent managers meeting and a slide was included as a reminder.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson appreciated this being brought up since it is new territory for everyone. Since staff might be missing information regarding technology enhancements, she agreed to speak with Bill Griffenburg about a return to campus toolkit to share with staff. She encouraged us to continue to work with Martha and the Communications Team to combine communication efforts and help bridge the gap about this.
 - i. Last minute deadlines (Anonymous, 5/22): Report regarding communication about purchase requests deadlines being last minute.
 - ✓ Shared with VP Kathryn Funk-Baxter.
 - ✓ Response: “I will take full responsibility for the year end memo going out and having too short of a timeframe for action on department responsibilities. I had several versions of this that I went over with Exec Director of Operations and in fact I told him that we needed to give 2 weeks notice to be mindful of workloads of our departments. Obviously, the date for completion was from one of the first drafts and was not changed to allow for 2 weeks and an oversight on my part to not change it. Thanks for bring this up, as I believe in getting feedback as a way to create a



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culture of continuous improvement! We will make sure next year memo will go out with at least 2 weeks or more notice.”

- ii. Modified summer hours (Caitie Garza, 6/1): “Hello Staff Council Members, I am reaching out to inquire about the modified summer work schedule to see if you all are still considering advocating for us to have a half day of work on Friday throughout the summer months? I know that we are all dealing with uncertainty during this time, and that expecting normal operations during this unprecedented pandemic is perhaps a moot point, but I would like to suggest that in times such as these the modified work schedule for the summer months is perhaps needed more than ever. I think that we have all collectively been through hardships in the past few months, and I think that the modified summer work schedule is a great way to show faculty and staff that our leadership cares about our personal wellbeing. I think that a modified summer schedule will be a welcome change that allows people a small, but perhaps impactful, reprieve from the current challenges we are all facing. I understand if the modified summer works schedule is not an option, but I hope that my suggestion to continue this program is taken in to consideration. “
 - ✓ Nancy responded to Caitie on 6/1 explaining that given the uncertainty brought on with the health crisis the summer hour request was not a priority. She was encouraged to work with her supervisor to determine schedule flexibility.
 - ✓ Miriam also shared this staff question with Jessica Loudermilk on 6/4 in case there were any updates from the Cabinet or the Return to Campus taskforce.
 - ✓ Message was sent to staff about this and return to campus on 7/10.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson confirmed that some departments are able to participate in flexible summer schedules. She reiterated that, like last year, summer hours depend on each department’s ability to do so, on a case by case basis. It is encouraged for staff to speak with managers about whether it is feasible in their departments.
 - ✓ Request for modified summer hours will be submitted next year.

- iii. Parking Fees (Hugo Cantero, 6/22): “Asking on behalf of colleagues. Are there any updates and/or parking fee adjustments or refunds for staff due to COVID-19? Certain staff have not been to campus in April, May, and now June. If so, is there a case-by-case review process for staff refunds? Should they submit their inquiries to the FeedBack Form - tamusa.edu/businessaffairs/parking-transportation/feedback.html?”
 - ✓ Shared with Martha and VP Funk-Baxter
 - ✓ Reply from Kathryn Funk-Baxter: “Thank you – I had not heard that Faculty and Staff were requesting refunds on parking. Need to pass this onto President and Cabinet for discussion, will get back to you.”
 - ✓ Update from VP Funk-Baxter on 7/9 “I understand that Parking has requested for refunds for those on Payroll deduction for pay dates of May 1, June 1, July 1 and to have them processed in August. At any time an employee may withdraw from the payroll deduction plan with notification to Parking so they can expire the permit and get with Payroll. For those that did not have payroll deduction, I will ask that they



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submit their request to the parking office directly and they will instruct them on the process. We will only refund for the same number of months as the others 3 months.“

- iv. Diversity Office on campus (Anonymous, 6/26): “There should be a cultural center, office of diversity and inclusion, something of that nature on campus. Just because our student demographic is highly Hispanic/Latinx does not mean that we have hit our diversity peak. We should be striving for me and also creating systemic measures in hiring at all levels that reinforces a stance of inclusivity. This is a necessity for students and staff.”
 - ✓ Dr. Matson emphasized that she takes this seriously and is working diligently with the PCOE committee. She explained that due to budget constraints, this is not planned for in the upcoming fiscal year. Dr. Matson expressed the importance of strengthening the PCOE. The PCOE meets this Thursday and Friday to examine work for the coming year. This year’s focus is on digital equity and visibility. Dr. Matson acknowledged that A&M-SA has very diverse faculty and staff (more staff than faculty) and confirmed that we line up with the national norms, with the exception of the Native American and African American community where “our numbers are lower within the whole A&M system and campus.”
 - ✓ Cristina Dominguez sits on the PCOE and offered to unofficially be staff council’s liaison about these topics.

- v. Thank you and training recommendation (LaDonna Harris, 6/26): “Firstly, thank you for the message of solidarity. As an African American member of the campus community for the last 9 months I appreciate the responsiveness of this campus to recent events. As a life-long resident of California, who moved to San Antonio almost 4 years ago, I was shocked and then acclimated to an extreme increase in my personal experience of racist remarks and interactions with residents of this city. I think many would be surprised to know how intolerant and antiquated SA is when it comes to race. I’ve been called the “n-word” to my face by strangers more in the last four years than throughout my entire life living in California. I trained myself to dismiss it as “the price of life in the south” but after recent events, I and many of my black family members and friends find a lot things we had become acclimated to unacceptable. Through it all, we still hope for change. With all that said my suggestions are; frank and open discussions specifically about race throughout the campus community, training on identifying and correcting racial-bias for students, staff and faculty, and the continued push toward unity and understanding that TAMUSA is currently displaying. Thank you.”–
 - ✓ Staff Council moved forward with a diversity and inclusion committee. This committee can assist with identifying potential events or activities for future lunch and learns or facilitated discussion/trainings.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson encouraged staff council to work with Communication department in combining efforts.

- vi. Salary Review (Anonymous, 6/26): “A comprehensive salary review is needed for staff on this campus, especially as it relates to self-identification based on race/ethnicity. and it



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should be done from an objective standpoint for those grade 9, how many have salaries in the bottom 25% based on the system-wide pay plan? is there a correlation between race/ethnicity and salary?"

- ✓ Forwarded to Martha in HR who will look into this and respond.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson explained that faculty had a salary review in 2015/16 during downward extension. She explained that it looked at how faculty were compensated, but it did not have to do with race and ethnicity. It evaluated faculty track, discipline, and how it compared to peers across the country for institution pay. Dr. Matson explained that since A&M-SA does not have the same Carnegie process as other universities and that there is a pay difference at each institution.
 - vii. Concerns with UPD on campus (Anonymous, 6/26):). "Anonymous reported observing difficult situations between fellow staff members and UPD. Also reported a colleague who was pulled over for speeding. The colleague reported that the UPD officer was rude and said do you even have a license? The person pulled over was Hispanic and felt discriminated against. Also reported a situation with a male student worker of color, UPD suspected him of stealing from the bookstore but could not provide evidence. Another report regarding insensitive comments during an active shooter training. The reporter hesitates going to Title IX."
 - ✓ Dr. Matson requested to examine this concern. She explained that constructive feedback is important.
- **Follow-up on Suggestion Topic Items**
 - i. Vending Machines in the Modulars (Michelle Anguiano, 8/15)
 - ✓ No new updates.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson will look more into this.
 - ii. Amazon Prime Free Shipping (Anonymous, 10/23)
 - ✓ No new updates.
 - ✓ Dr. Matson will circle back with VP Funk-Baxter.

3. New Business- introductions.

- Nominations and Elections for Staff Council
 - i. Nominations began May 20
 - ii. Voting was held from May 28th through June 4th (one week)
 - iii. Officer elections were held on June 18th
 - iv. New Staff Council executive members were announced June 16th
 - v. No change to Constitution needed regarding EEO categories without
- Solidarity Statement from Staff Council was released on Friday, June 26. Since this message, several staff have made suggestions.
- Faculty Senate Resolution RE: Diversity Office on campus. Are there any updates?
 - i. Dr. Matson asked if Dr. Simpson sent anything updated after the Faculty Senate meeting. Miriam confirmed only a draft was sent, not the formal resolution.
- Holiday party planning: Monday before commencement worked well last year.



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- i. Promote and coordinate the Adopt-A-Family initiative.
 - ii. Continue with the fun Christmas sweater fundraiser for the Staff Emergency fund.
 - iii. Brainstorm other virtual opportunities to keep staff engaged.
 - iv. Send Dr. Matson the date when final.
- Staff Survey regarding staff COVID-19 emergency needs or concerns.
 - i. Dr. Matson liked this idea to better understand if there are staff emergency needs that we are not aware of.
 - ii. Staff Council will recruit Reed from Student Success and Engagement for feedback on survey questions.
 - iii. Survey needs to be intentional in what, why, or how the questions or information will be used.
 - Recognition for outgoing staff council members
 - i. Recognize and thank outgoing members at upcoming all staff meeting.
 - ii. Staff Council members were asked to sign an e-gift card for outgoing staff.
 - iii. Liz will create certificates and Cristina will provide frames.

4. Staff Council Committee Reports

- **All Staff Meeting – updates from July 1**

- i. First All Staff meeting for 20/21 academic year scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 8:30 a.m.
- ii. Auditorium (reserved for 55) in person, Vista Room, and Ceremony Room will be reserved to watch via Webex.
 - ✓ Staff can stream in either the vista or ceremony room. This will allow colleagues to view together, while adhering to CDC guidelines.
 - ✓ Committee will request volunteers to assist with check in at each location.
 - ✓ Staff council members will split up to represent at each site.
 - ✓ Staff may RSVP via JagSync to their preferred location. Once capacity is reached, staff will be redirected to find alternative location to join meeting.
- iii. Speaker recommendations:
 - ✓ Miriam as Staff Council president. Recognize and thank out-going staff council members.
 - ✓ Jessica Loudermilk/Rita Arredondo as members of the University Covid-19 Taskforce.
 - ✓ Dr. Mike O'Brien to speak about how the Fall semester will look like academically. Academic changes.
 - ✓ Dr. Mari Fuentes-Martin & Mrs. Kathryn Funk-Baxter to be introduced to the campus and their vision for each departments.
 - ✓ Alternative speakers: Darnell Smith regarding Athletics or Todd Mocabee to speak about space and other limitations around campus due to COVID-19.
*Dr. Matson suggested Kathryn Funk-Baxter to speak about space limitations instead of Todd. She also suggested Dr. De Diemar.
- iv. Catered food by Chartwells- breakfast.



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- ✓ Hoyt will work with Chartwells for pre-packaged food options.
- ✓ Goal is to have Chartwells at all three check in stations. Could come up with a fourth, if needed.
 - *Dr. Matson asked us to be creative in food options when working with Chartwells. She provided examples of box decoration for pre-boxed food that will be served at convocation. She encouraged variety of food options such as power bars, fruit, etc to make it less bland.
- v. Promotional item to give out to all staff is currently pending.
- vi. Future all staff meeting dates:
 - ✓ November 10
 - ✓ January 12
 - ✓ April 14.
- **Social & Community Service**
 - i. Next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14.
 - ii. Social hours: Virtual lunch (WebEx) and social hours (Zoom) hosted by John, Jarrick, and Rose.
 - *After reviewing attendance numbers, Dr. Matson asked about other in-person opportunities to engage staff. She referenced a blanket party and concert hosted by the Botanical Gardens. She offered the campus grounds for this type of event in the future, when temperatures cool down. She asked Staff Council to continue to be creative in ways to keep staff connected.
 - ✓ Social Hours:
 - a. June 12: 4 staff members.
 - b. June 26: 4 staff members.
 - c. July 10. 3? staff members.
 - d. July 24.
 - ✓ Lunch Hours
 - a. 6/5: 4 staff members.
 - b. 6/18: 10 staff members.
 - c. 7/3 (cancelled)
 - d. 7/16.
 - e. 7/31.
 - iii. Professional Development: Cristina agreed to take the lead in consolidating a centralized list of webinars and trainings for staff.
 - ✓ Members from different departments can send Cristina trainings that are shareable and applicable to diversity, equity, civic engagement, social justice, wellness, etc.
 - ✓ Cristina mentioned a company who offers lunch and learn webinars either live or recorded, over a variety of topics.
 - ✓ We can pull from these webinars for potential lunch and learn opportunities.
- **Appreciation/Recognition**



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- i. Employee Spotlight Awards – Current program under reconstruction with different prizes and current nominations to be awarded in 1st quarter FY2020.
- ii. Administrative Professionals appreciation not implemented in April.

• **Communications/Marketing**

- i. Staff Council action calendar- still pending
- ii. Social Media: Instagram and Facebook activity will be tracked.
*Dr. Matson suggested Tik Tok social media videos to engage staff virtually.

August 2019 - July 2020

Platform	# of posts	# of likes	# of followers	Comments
Facebook	53	87	50	According to Facebook analytics, reached a total of 992 people through combined posts.
Instagram	40	308	101	no

• **New Suggested Committees**

- i. Welcome committee will reach out to new staff members to invite them to get to know staff council and provide a red t-shirt to wear on Fridays.
 - 1. This will involve collaboration from multiple committees (example: Communication/social media committee can create a document about staff council to provide to new staff, social/service can facilitate other welcoming touch points, etc.)
 - 2. Invite new staff to meet with staff council directly?
 - 3. Volunteer needed to assist with design of shirt and coordinating with vendors.
- ii. Diversity and inclusion committee to ensure we are intentional on addressing and promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity-themed activities and events.
- iii. SECC Staff Council was nominated to host the SECC campaign this upcoming year. Since this initiative also includes faculty, would like to request support from Faculty Senate to collaborate.

5. Other issues/concerns

- ✓ Dr. Matson said the goal is for the Fall reopening plan to be released by Friday. She said she would pull pieces of the documentation based on audience types (example: parent, faculty, student, staff, etc.)
- ✓ Dr. Matson also highlighted there is no intention of laying anybody off at A&M-SA. She referenced a faculty member who was interviewed by a newspaper reporting that the layoff is system wide, and that West Texas and A&M-SA were next. She assured us that this is not true and asked us to inform colleagues.
- ✓ Dr. Matson challenged Staff Council to think about the following:
 - a. What does diversity, equity, and inclusion look like in 2020 as we think about what is happening in the African American community?



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- b. How we can bridge the communication gaps? Dr. Matson encouraged us to inform Miriam about questions or concerns that arise to share with DR. Matson on either a weekly or daily basis via email.
- c. How can Staff Council identify and promote self-care strategies and togetherness? She acknowledged that everyone's hearts are filled with anxiety. She asked us to remember to be strong together and to collaborate on the Community.Safety.Together initiatives with MARCOM and Dr. De Diemar.

6. Adjourn