

Staff Council: Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, 8 March 2023, 2:00pm

Attendees: J. Cluett, A. Curran, D. DuBois, R. Gardner, C. Keller, S. Miles, T. Scola, W. Battelle, J. deLeon
Joined late: K. Hollan

Guest Attendees: Kyle Siegel, Lauren Turner, Rachel LeBlanc (joined at 2:30pm)

1. Chair called meeting to order at 2:04pm.
2. Lauren Turner presented Strategic Plan Updates: Incoming President Grace Wang has been actively engaged with Management Council/Cabinet to keep the Strategic Plan work moving. Many conversations in Strategic Plan groups have come to the conclusion that we need to focus on specific goals. From that, the Strategic Plan Priorities were developed by Leadership. These are aligned with the current Strategic Plan and provide focus for Years 3-5 of implementation. At this point, 5 Priorities have been established. Leadership is starting to socialize these Priorities and they are still being edited based on feedback from groups. The next steps include discussions with departments/divisions to share the Priorities and work on evaluating what we're already doing that aligns and identifying what doesn't align that may be discontinued or pivoted. President Wang wants the process to be transparent and is looking to have divisions develop goals that align for broader buy-in and implementation.
 - a. SC shared initial reactions, including concerns over implications for divisions that do not seem to align well with the Priorities as they are written. Lauren Turner commented on the intersectionality of the Priorities and the necessity of underlying foundational functions of the university to allow work to focus on the Priorities.
 - b. There are concerns about the ongoing struggle to allocate resources to support these goals. It is noted that this is necessary to success but may require shutting down/scaling down other initiatives to reallocate resources (time, money, personnel).
 - c. It was encouraged that previous initiatives (Project Inclusion, SIE, WPI Forward, etc.) be evaluated and leveraged. There is likely a ton of raw data from other initiatives that would align well.
 - d. It was clarified that the Strategic Plan Priorities was created by Management Councils at the Leadership level solely. Information gathered from Strategic Plan subcommittees was used to inform the Priorities.
3. Lauren Turner requested that Staff Council assist in getting participation from the community in open forum/public sessions to help garner feedback on the Strategic Plan Priorities.
4. Staff Council voiced concerns from the WPI community regarding the communication about the inclement weather on 3/13/23. Many individuals across campus were confused about what the messaging meant for their specific role and decisions varied between managers based on their interpretation. Lauren Turner stated that feedback had already reached the Emergency Team who wrote the message. Staff Council brought up the lack of equity in switching to remote in emergency situations and pushed for more clear expectations communicated to managers.
5. Staff Council requested a more substantive conversation regarding remote work policies with Talent & Inclusion in the coming months. Lauren Turner agreed to revisit this issue, adding that productive work policies require flexibility both on the part of the employer and on the employees.

6. Guest attendees left the meeting at 2:52pm.
7. Meeting Minutes from 3/8/2023 were approved.
8. Election Sub-committee Report: Met last week and created a clean document with everything Staff Council has discussed thus far regarding election procedures. Functions that need to happen and will be fleshed out in more detail: nominations, meet & greets of candidates, election, appointments, new council members onboarding.
 - a. Meet & greets were ineffective last year. It was proposed that we piggyback a meet & greet on another event if possible. Hold a single event to draw people into attending.
 - b. ACTION ITEM – get the document to a point where it can be shared publicly
9. A finalized version of the Constitution and Bylaws will be posted on the website and will be communicated in WPI Today.
10. Discussion of organizing what committees and/or groups that Staff Council should have representation on began. A document will be created within our Teams page to identify representatives and where we may have gaps.
 - a. Campus Wellness Coalition requested Staff Council rep. Amy Curran is already part of this group so it was agreed that was enough coverage for now. We may add another representative after elections.
11. It was brought to SC's attention that there is an adhoc child & elder care benefit being explored by FBC. EAP benefits have been underutilized and many staff likely don't know how extensive the benefits are. Staff Council will revisit this in the future to explore ways to make these benefits more visible and accessible to staff employees.
12. Meeting was adjourned by Vice Chair at 3:33pm.