

University Staff Council (USC) – Minutes

February 13, 2024

2:00-3:00 p.m.

UW-La Crosse, 325 Graff Main Hall

Call to Order – 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call – Introductions

Council Members in attendance – Karen DeSchepper, Erika Pfeiffer, Domingo Carrion, Ben Cornforth, John Eaton, Leslie Fell, Jerry Fogel, Mary Grattan, Bill Klein, Kimberly Schliebe, Terry Stika, Amy Ticknor

Absent – Jeanne Voss

Guests – Katie Olan, Lynne Smith, Andrea Matson, Sheri Craig, AJ Bierwirth, Krista Curler, Sandra Vinney, Karen Brandt, Jenna Greene

Approval of Minutes – Approved

Treasurer’s Report – Filed for audit

Committee Reports –

Bylaws - Mary Grattan/William Klein
No report

Committee on Committees – Jeanne Voss
No report

Elections – Terry Stika/William Klein
No report

Program, Grants and Fundraising (PGF) - Karen DeSchepper
Planning the next Building Showcase of Wimberly Hall in May, date TBD.
Karen will be picking up Rotary Lights involvement check sometime this spring, probably March.
Looking for new committee members.

Grants – Karen DeSchepper, Interim Chair
From 2/1/24 grant application deadline, all four grant applicants received full or partial funding of their requests (last grant cycle of fiscal year).
Next grant deadline is June 1 for events July 1-October 31, 2024.

Excellence Award - Karen Brandt
A follow-up email for nominations was sent out. A second Campus Connection announcement for nominations was submitted. The deadline for submitting nominations is March 1st.

Staff Recognition/Excellence Event - Janet Craig
The Recognition Event Committee met on January 10. There was discussion regarding:

1. Getting the letter signed by the Interim Chancellor (Janet will do)
2. Sending the list milestone recipient list to Halo (Janet will do)
3. Who will deliver the letters around campus (Not sure who will do this)
4. The lunch menu (will be Italiano + chicken)

This committee will meet again after spring break.

UW Shared Governance - Karen DeSchepper
See attached minutes and handouts.

Joint Academic Initiatives – Diane Bendel

No update

Joint Environmental Sustainability – Ben Cornforth

No update

Joint Free Speech Promotion - Nathan Zinn-Wirtz

No update

Joint Legislative & Regents – Kimberly Schliebe

No update

Joint Multicultural Affairs – Kimberly Schliebe

No update

Joint Parking Appeals – Mark Beckerjeck

No report

Joint Planning & Budget - Mary Grattan/Sandra Vinney

- Freshman applications are down @ 2%, other UW System schools are down anywhere between 4% to 30%. Admits are up @ 2%; these numbers fluctuate weekly. Cancellation rate is currently down @ 28%
- No update on tuition rates until after BOR meeting.
- No update on Prairie Spring, Interim Chancellor Morgan meeting with state legislators 2/7/24.
- Chancellor candidates on campus first week of March.
- CFO finalist on campus early May.
- HR director position posted, search and screen committee selected.
- Budget & Finance update from CFO Hetzel:
 - J-Term Tuition Revenue: The tuition pool target for J-Term is approximately \$1 million and UWL has billed \$1.259 million for January 2024. The budget surplus is considered one-time revenue and will be used for unfunded institutional obligations including the write-off of uncollectible student account balances, Soaring Eagle scholarships, ACCESS interpreters, and the Native American Remains audit.
 - 1% Lump Sum: UWL will be distributing a 1% one-time lump sum payment to faculty and staff on the March 21 payroll for employees hired before July 1.
 - Facilities:
 - CFA Parking Ramp: The bids for the project were received on December 20 and the contract awarded to Fowler & Hammer. Construction is slated to begin in May of 2024.
 - Mitchell Hall Renovation Planning: The university has initiated a planning process with Athletics and ESS for renovations in Mitchell Hall.

Joint Textbook Oversight - Sandra Vinney

No current updates, per November meeting, committee is planning to meet this semester to go over the student survey questions and would like to finalize the survey questions to send out this semester if possible.

Work-Life Taskforce – Ben Cornforth

No update

HR Advisory Committee - Kimberly Schliebe

No report. Meeting on Friday, February 16.

Old Business –

Pay Plan Distribution –

Finally!

Some people had problems with getting the retroactive and/or the 4% bump. This has caused frustration and ongoing issues. If anyone else has similar problems, please let us know.

New Business –

UGetConnected –

Lisa Klein would like us to log in to UGetConnected and log volunteer hours. Tip: You can log all your hours in one lump, rather than having to put in multiple entries for ongoing volunteering.

Good way to track what the UWL campus is doing for our community.

Food Pantry Donation –

Suggestion of donating half of the Rotary Lights check (typically around \$175) to the UWL Campus Food Pantry. This money typically goes into the SFO account, and we haven't touched it in years. We'd like to report back to Rotary Lights that half of the money from the check is going to pay it forward.

Lump Sum Payment –

1% lump sum will be on the March 21 paycheck. This is a one-time payment.

Open USC Seat –

After this week we will have an open seat, as Ben Cornforth is leaving us. Ben was in his first year of a three-year term and was in an At Large seat. If you are interested in serving, please reach out to someone on Exec.

Upcoming Elections –

Elections Committee: Bill Klein, Terry Stika, and Jerry Fogel

Reminder: We are going from 13 down to 11

Exec Update

Interim Chancellor Morgan –

We met with Betsy on January 23. We discussed Joyfest; all the current openings/searches; the Excellence Award (coming up); and having her come to a USC meeting. We also offered our assistance during this time of transition. She is very interested in taking action and getting things done!

Vice Chancellor Hetzel –

We had our first meeting with Bob this year. We thanked him for the FY23 carryover. We discussed the current openings/searches. He asked that we please promote and encourage attendance at the upcoming open forums and stressed the importance of providing feedback on the candidates. We asked if something could be sent out encouraging managers/supervisors to be flexible with scheduling and allow all university staff to attend. We also discussed the 1% lump sum (yay!). Also talked about the parking ramp; construction to start May 2024.

UWL Shared Governance –

Discussed the 4% pay plan, compression (a big issue with faculty), new campus minimum wage (\$16), the process it takes to revoke tenure (there has to be an outside investigation, then the findings are given to the current Chancellor, who then makes a recommendation and sends that on to the BoR. In between, the person can request a hearing. Only the BoR can revoke tenure).

Moving forward with Strategic Plan.

Also discussed the current statute that mandates that higher ed cannot start classes before Labor Day. In 2025, Labor Day is September 7, which is very late. Will attempt to have that amended so that we can start before Labor Day and potentially offer a fall break (the students really want a fall break, and we have had Wellness Weekend in the past, but cannot have a break with the current late start date)

Get Engaged – Please join us 15 minutes before our Council meeting for networking! The room will open at 1:45 p.m.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjourn – 2:42 p.m.