

System Office Staff Council

Thursday, November 17th, 2022

10:00am-12:00pm

Zoom link: <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/83814118773>

Representatives:

Lauren Hartman (2021-2023) FY23 President

Monique Musick (2021-2023) FY23 Vice President

Austin Somaduroff (2022-2024) FY23 Secretary

Genevieve Bright (2021-2023)

Scott Fronzuto (2021-2023)

Chelsey Okonek (2022-2024)

Heather Swanson (2022-2024)

Alternates:

VACANT

Governance Support:

Noel Romanovsky

Guests:

Mary Gower, Senior Institutional Compliance Liaison

Bryan Hoppough, HR Business Partner for UAF/System Office

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
 - a. Review and Adopt Agenda
Moved the System Office Mission statement out of old business and into the Board meeting Review. Moniques moves to adopt the agenda. Scott seconds.
 - b. Approve [October minutes](#)
Austin moves to approve. Monique seconds.

2. [Public Comment](#)

Three public comments were submitted.

First Comment: I wanted to write about my concerns on the practice of recognizing certain limited employees at Board of Regents meetings for longevity and excellent service, as those individuals retire. While there is no doubt that these individuals are worthy of such a practice, I find it to be exclusionary and lacking equity. Every year numerous employees who have made gigantic contributions to the university system. Clearly, some people have more visible contributions than others, but that should not diminish the contributions of everyone. All employees who have contributed decades of their life in service to a should be worthy of being recognized by the Board. The current practice seems to be limited to those individuals who have senior executive titles, and whose role frequently puts them in a spotlight. Again, These individuals are certainly worthy, however, they are not exclusive, and how much they have advanced the university. The current practice seems to the detriment of lower paid employees for

those not the higher managerial levels, even though they may have sacrificed more in their career at UA.

Second Comment: Transparency between leadership and staff are at a low. It feels like there are changes taking place in Ua Hr. Without a real plan. I do not feel like my job is secure. There has been an increase of distrust between the CHRO office and UA HR.

Third Comment: Regarding the educational attainment incentive program. This program has been a long time coming, and is a step in the right direction to encourage learning and strengthen retention. That said, as a built in program based on the UA Salary schedule pay inequities are further enforced, and incentives are higher for those in higher pay grades. For example, if two employees, one at grade seventy-eight, and another at eighty four attain the same degree. The employee at grade eighty-four receives a higher pay increase, although the same degree was attained the incentive places higher value on the employee who's already compensated at a higher rate. This is due to the differences and steps between different pay grades. This program also opens up vulnerabilities to salary compression. As employees who have received advanced degrees prior to the academic year are not eligible to apply for the program. A solution could be a one-time flat-rate bonus or a flat pay increase, adjusted to the respective in-grade step. This program is fine, but has the potential to be great only if fairness and equity are further considered.

Dawn Humenik, with Staff Alliance, started a spreadsheet of comments about the education incentive program as well which will be shared with HR.

The Board of Regents conferred this and they generally focus on people that they've actually interacted with. It is debatable whether the Board of Regents would ever be able to adequately recognize staff that they've never interacted with. It is a great point that we can do more to recognize employees but the Board of Regents probably isn't the place to do that.

3. **Mary Gower** - Compliance at UA

- a. [Link to recording of Nov. 15th training](#): Internal Controls and Compliance: Why they Matter!

In a University setting compliance programs are more about developing a compliance consciousness understanding applicable regulations and requirements and ensuring that the University is meeting them. One hundred percent compliance is the ideal, although the reality particularly in this time of reduced staffing and other challenges, is not realistic. There are a wide number of Federal and State Laws. There is policy and regulation which is distributed how compliance is managed across the system. The institutional compliance program can help with coordinating the universities. Compliance efforts support those looking for best practices at other institutions. The consequences for universities' non compliance at the federal level can be significant with steep fines and jail time. The Regents, the Chancellors and the President can be liable for the universities compliance infractions. Under the Board's direction each Chancellor holds responsibility and authority over their universities. There are so

many different departments at the university that are responsible for monitoring all of these applicable laws and regulations. We do have standards of ethical conduct that are subject to the Executive Branch Ethics Act. There will be Compliance Chats created that are 10 minutes in length each month of how compliance applies to each employee. If anyone has a good topic for the chat videos, please let Mary Gower know. The intent is to keep them brief and meaningful.

4. HR Updates - **Bryan Hoppough**

HR has been looking to expedite the student hiring process. The Family Medical Leave had updates in eliminating some of the earning codes. A new program that came out from the talent acquisition side was the educational attainment incentive program.

5. Reports

a. President's Report (Lauren)

- i. Monthly meeting with VP Paul Layer Nov. 9th (next meeting Dec. 14th)
- ii. Staff Alliance (Lauren, Monique)
 1. [Oct 21 minutes](#) and [recording](#) (passcode: JwjciS2!)
 2. Next meeting Friday Nov. 18th
 3. [Recording for meeting with Regents on Oct. 12th](#) (Passcode: 30Tz=@08) Regents Perdue, Seekins, Buretta
- iii. Monthly meeting with CHRO Memry Dahl Nov. 8th (next meeting Dec. 13th)
- iv. President Pitney Meeting

b. SOSC Committees

- i. Morale/Events Committee (Genevieve)
 1. November Blood Drive
We were going to do a mobile drive but there were Blood Bank staff issues which they did not have the ability to do a mobile drive. It's possible we could look into doing that next year.
 2. [Fall Potluck Monday Nov. 21st](#)
A huge thank you to everyone that signed up to contribute to the potluck and for setting up and cleaning up afterwards.
Any requests for music or decorations, please message Genevieve.
 3. Holiday Cookies with the President
 - a. Dec. 9th 2:00pm in Fairbanks
 - b. Dec. 16th 2:00pm in Anchorage
 4. Giving opportunities:
 - a. Adopt-a-family in Anchorage
 - b. Denali Center in Fairbanks (not organized by SOSC)
 - c. Other?
- ii. Awards Committee (Genevieve) - not yet active, will start in the Spring
- iii. Nominations Committee (Lauren)
We currently have 7 members. Our constitution says we are supposed to

have 11 pulse two alternantes. Spread the word how great it is to be part of SOSC. There is a nomination form on our website.

iv. Staff Development Day (Austin)

1. April 26th 2023

Planning will start at the end of the year.

c. Staff Alliance Committees

i. [Compensation Committee](#) (Austin)

1. First Meeting on Oct. 28th (next meeting Jan. 27th, 2023)

It was an excellent kick off meeting with a great group of people in the Compensation ad hoc Committee. Present were Glenn Gambrell, Memry Dahl, and a representative from each of the universities. A good group of people who ask excellent questions about compensation and are willing to ask challenging questions with the people who can answer those questions. We went over the educational attainment incentive program as well as the in grade step increase process. We brought up a few places where there might be shortcomings there as well as within our reclassification versus promotion. We incentivize moving to a different department more than we do staying in your own department to get an increase. If you reclass in your own department it's a five percent increase. If you go to a different department to get a ten percent increase. Maybe that isn't the culture we'd like to set. The fact that this subject came up during the first meeting is a great sign of hope.

ii. Ombuds Committee (Lauren)

1. Last met Nov. 7th

We are making good progress on a draft proposal. We have collected a lot of information from various sources on the International Ombudsman Association, and different materials from different universities that have an ombudsman office. The main focus is building up our case for support and to show a good variety of options for implementation.

iii. Staff Development Fund (Lauren, Monique)

Lauren met with each member of the University bursar's office to discuss how to implement tuition fee stipends. There are three ways to utilize the Staff Development fund; funds that cover fees the Tuition fee waiver does not cover, mini grants for professional development, membership in a professional society, and continuing linkedin learning licenses. Improving communication and possibly starting a book club for people who are taking classes with linkedin learning.

iv. Staff Healthcare Committee (Monique, Heather)

1. Last met at the Premera offices in anchorage. A team assembled of University staff, Pharmacy experts, clinical nurse experts and contracting people were in attendance. A lot of information was

covered on specialty pharmacy drugs that increase the overall expenses, the barriers of receiving quality care, and the driving factors that impact the plan performance.

d. Other Committees

- i. Joint Healthcare Committee (Monique)
 1. Last met Nov. 9 - Knowledge Management Meeting
- ii. HR Customer Service Experience (Scott)

Continuing working on making changes to the HR website. There is a survey out asking for input to make the website work better for everyone.
- iii. Staff Engagement Survey (Heather, Genevieve)

Considering Including faculty for the staff engagement survey and how that might change the survey results.
- iv. [Working group on communications pathways](#) (Monique, Lauren)
 1. Meeting Nov. 28th
 2. [Communication pathways group document](#)
 - a. A document was put together and shared with the group. It will take some time to answer these important questions. The next meeting November 28 will be moderated. It was decided to schedule a an extra meeting to discuss these topics in depth on Monday November 21, 2022.

6. New Business

- a. Systemwide Town Hall Review

November 8, 2022 There were 269 attendees in the zoom and 231 on the livestream. How do we better prepare people for the difference between the President and the Chancellor. There are types of topics that the President can address at a system level versus what really is a local university issue. It would be good to have the President talking on topics that are within her realm. We want to do these Town Hall Reviews fairly regularly in conjunction with the upcoming Board of Regents meeting to be able to preview the topics that are coming up at the board of Regents and to give some general updates.
- b. [BOR Meeting](#) Review

Dawn Humenik, the Staff Alliance Chair, gave her testimony. The Faculty Alliance Chair and the Student Leader also gave their testimonies. We went through the FY 24 budget and talked about the potential changes to tuition policy. There were some changes to future Board of Regents schedules. There were four Regents whose terms were ending; Regent Davies, Parker, Jepson and the current Chair Regent Burretta.

 - i. System Office Mission Statement

We had the first reading of the system office Mission Statement. There was a request to include a more direct reference to the community campuses and the board themselves. The second reading will be at the Board of Regents meeting in February. Usually public testimony is the week before the week of the meetings. Now it will be condensed into one

week in which the public testimony will be the Monday of the same week that the board meeting is happening. If there is Monday Holiday, the public testimony would then be on a Tuesday. There is a new service for closed captioning to make sure we are ADA compliant.

- c. [Disability Services Conference](#) recap
There was a week long Disability conference last week. Most of the sessions are recorded and available. There were 350 people registered for different sessions. They ranged in attendance from 45 to over 100. The OCR Office for Civil Rights was the most highly attended because it was the one that was not recorded. There were sessions on an introduction to disability, services and accommodations from the student side and the employee side. There was a session on accommodating mental health and not losing your own mental health in the process which was a powerful session. There was a session on assistive technology and digital compliance. There was an accessibility tutorial. There was someone from the Alaska Center for the blind and visually impaired present. Thank you for all the hard work that went into the conferences.
 - d. [Web accessibility VRA](#)
We have entered a web accessibility voluntary resolution agreement with the office of Civil Rights to make sure that all of our websites and all of the attached documents are ADA compliant.
 - e. Compensation update
There is a 2.5% increase for staff. There is also the contract with faculty with UNAC where it would be a retroactive 3% increase since they didn't get an increase for FY 23. If it gets approved by the legislature it would also include an extra one percent increase for staff.
 - f. [Educational Attainment Incentive Program](#)
Please send any comments you have as we are collecting feedback on that.
 - g. [Family Medical Leave/Unum Update](#)
 - h. Empower Alaska campaign launch
7. Ongoing Business
- a. CFO Recruitment
They are continuing to meet for semi-finalists.
 - b. [UAS Chancellor Search](#) - view live Nov. 17
Keni Campbell of UAS informed that it will be an executive session for the UAS Chancellor search, so the live view may not be as informative.
8. Old Business
- a. [Recruitment for a new Sr. Director of Alaska Native Success](#)
 - b. [Response to System Office Mission Statement](#)
 - c. [Tuition policy draft changes](#)
 - i. [Current policy](#)
 - ii. [Clean copy of draft changes](#)
9. General Updates and Reminders

- a. [UA News Center](#)
- b. [System Office Bulletin](#)
- c. [Upcoming HR Trainings](#)

10. Local Issues

- a. COVID / Remote work status

11. Department Updates, Issues, and Kudos

12. Agenda items for next meeting

13. Closing Comments

Empower Alaska is doing a tik tok campaign which is being done in conjunction with the Alaska travel industry. It is an ad campaign as we don't have a tik tok channel. It is a day in the life of some students. Very soon Empower Alaska edu marketing advertising spend will start. On the website are the first four of our docuseries which are beautifully done. They are 8 minute videos on mericulture and the blue economy, drone research, critical mineral development, teacher education and Alaska Natuve Success Initiative which are all part of the public awareness campaign. A reputational campaign. We aren't trying to get people to enroll, we are addressing the gaps in understanding of Alaskans about the value of the University.

14. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned.

RESOURCES:

- [SOSC Meeting Recordings](#)
- [SOSC FY23 Goals](#)
- [Constitution and bylaws](#)
- [Regents' policy and university regulation](#)
 - [03.01 - Faculty, Staff and Student Governance](#)
- [System Office org chart](#)
- [Governance basics presentation](#)
- [Chairing a meeting](#)
- [System Office staff numbers](#)
- [UA News Center](#)
- [System Office Bulletin](#)