

Staff Senate Meeting and Orientation

Date: July 18, 2024, 1-5 p.m.

Location: East Campus Union, Great Plains B

Present:

District 1: Beth Barry, Eileen Bergt, Jolene Deinert, Sara Haake, Erica Radach, Valerie Sutton, Rhonda Zugmier

District 2: Jill Flagel, Jordan Gonzales, Jerri Harner, Jena Johnson

District 3: Tony Lazarowicz, Jaime Mastera, Sara Mattson, Doug Pellatz, Andrea Peterson, Mikki Sandin, Casey Seger,

District 4: Sharity Czolgog, Annalisa Davenport, Jamil Funnah, Morgan Green McConnell, Carrie Jackson, Derek McConnell, Sharleen Roth, Julia Stubblefield

District 5: Ian Edgington, Regina Flowers, Greg Fritz, Jay Omar, Katelyn Rife

District 6: Jessie Brophy, Scott Evans, Jenna Hanson, Stephanie Hanson, Alisa Kushner, Andrew Loseke, Lisa Vonfeldt

District 7: Kate Carlin, Jennifer Rutt, Jaclyn Tan, Ashley Washburn

NUCA: Blake France, Quinn Harouff, Colleen Huls, Andrew Rose

Excused: Hilary Butler, Spencer Hall, Joan Kunzman, Amy Ort, Alisa Smith, Celeste Spier,

Absent: Letty Garcia, Meg Kester

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the full Staff Senate meeting as corrected by those participating. These are provisional and subject to change until approved at the September meeting.

Meeting called to order at 1:05 p.m.

President's welcome, Sara Haake, District 1

Chancellor Bennett is home sick today. We hope he will provide follow-up comments either in person or as a written document at a future time.

Opening remarks: Thanked the returning members and welcomed the new senators. We can accomplish together what we cannot do individually.

Jessie Brophy will provide details on our accomplishments from 2023-2024 and goals for the coming year.

The path forward is ours. Lean in and participate. Lead with curiosity and ask questions.

Let's remain firm in our commitment to advocate, serve and engage staff. Alone we can do so little and together we can do so much.

Leaders create change and we promote those changes. We engage with internal and external stakeholders and staff at UNL and the NU System. Members will have the opportunity to serve on a committee or serve on a university committee, as well as talking with new student employees and district constituents.

Voting for new officers will happen later today. Change is a normal part of organizations. They may require an adjustment period, but we can weather any changes that come.

Be intentional with your strengths and your weaknesses. Be brave and ask questions. Work hard and help the Staff Senate advocate for all staff.

Teams use by the Staff Senate, Joann Ross, Staff Senate Coordinator

New members have been added to Teams. Designation is (member or guest) depending on what email you used, i.e. Alumni Association, NU Central who have different email accounts are in as Guests. There is concern Guest roles will miss notifications. If you'd like to submit a different email address, contact Joann.

We use Teams as a repository for documents we create, to share information, to chat with others, and for committee work.

Channels for each committee and a selection of other channels. Elections and Exec team channels are private. The general channel is for staff senate related announcements. Each channel has file storage associated with it.

Motions & Resolutions Channel is used to provide members information on upcoming motions and resolutions that will be discussed and voted on. This access provides members the opportunity to review those items in advance of staff senate meetings.

Teams does allow for virtual meetings, but for clarity of sound and images, use Zoom

VC for External Affairs, Jessie Brophy, District 6

Staff Senate Annual Report for year 1 will be available on the Staff Senate Website.

Showcase successes, acknowledge challenges, and sets goals.

Accomplishments: Page 6 addresses the 3 aims from our strategic plan, 4 strategic initiative, and 13 action items that we completed.

- Exec committee: APC meetings, Big 10 Collaboration on Staff Advocacy, NU Staff Advisory Board, Commencement, Search Committees, Leadership Connections, New Employee Orientation.
- Communications Committee: Website unveiled, newsletter created, worked on branding initiatives.
- Recognition Committee: identified current staff awards, proposed new awards, solicited nominations, notified winners and nominators, celebrated award recipients.
- Personnel Affairs: MP/OS position evaluations, Considered what would be needed in an anti-bullying policy for the workplace, supported the creation of a staff ombuds position, promotional equity, Shutdown leave policy.
- DEI Committee: Equity gaps embedded in the search committee process, represented Staff Senate on the Council for Inclusive Excellence & Diversity, Address and prevent workplace bullying and harassment.
- Elections Committee: Executive officer elections, VP for Internal Affairs election, Secretary election, worked with Communications committee, district nominations and elections.
- Bylaws Committee: 7 bylaw amendments highlighted in the Annual Report.
- Liaison Committee: Secured staff representatives on various campus committees, established regular communication between various campus entities, and created a reporting form for committees.
- Legislation Committee: followed 14 bills (LB1330 and LB1064 were the most closely watched),

Opportunities:

- Retention is having an impact on the staff at UNL. This turnover has been felt on Staff Senate – majority resigned because of their increased workload and a lack of capacity to maintain a presence on Staff Senate. Others left because they took jobs elsewhere or their jobs were eliminated.
- Gathering staff issues and concerns.
- Staff Senate recruitment and representation:
 - There were 89 nominations received to fill 27 positions during the recent election. Currently, 95% of the positions on Staff Senate are filled.
 - 52 M/P and 5 O/S are currently serving on the Senate. How can we be truly representative of the staff breakdown and those employees who do not work in Lincoln?
- Q: Senator Jennifer Rutt, District 7: Do we have demographic information on our affiliate members? That information was not represented in this report.
- Q: Senator Andrew Rose, NU Central Administration: What impact did the pandemic and low wages have on those leaving the university? Looking at the turnover and the data, these factors may not be the significant causes of employees leaving.
 - Pat Tetreault, District 4, different districts may have some of the data available and are starting to do exit interviews. 1, communication, 2,

salaries, 3, the ability to have promotions. There is a tremendous amount of turnover in student affairs nationwide.

- Do we know what percentage of staff are working at the director level? With 17 members having director in their titles, are they disproportionately represented on the Staff Senate?

Goals and Initiatives

- Listed by committee in the Annual Report

Break (returned at 2:25 p.m.)

VP for Internal Affairs, Jordan Gonzales, District 2, led a discussion “Chairing and Participating on Committees.” His PowerPoint will be made available.

- Committees help an organization run effectively and efficiently
 - Find the right people in the right place with the right knowledge to make the best decision for our staff.
- Committees should meet at least every other month, but can meet more frequently
- Rundown of each committee & announcement
- Meetings serve the following purposes
 - Decision-making as a group – multiple perspectives
 - Sharing information
 - Brainstorming to generate new ideas
 - Problem-solving challenges and organizational issues
 - Commitment to the group’s decisions and objectives
- Committees share updates/reports to the Liaison Committee two weeks before each full Senate meeting. Liaison committee shares on the Teams channel.
- Committee Assignments were unveiled
- How to run an effective and efficient meeting
 - Determine the objective
 - Prepare and share an agenda
 - Make sure the meeting is time-bounded
 - Get the right people there. Consider what their roles are.
 - Stay on topic and follow your agenda
 - Ensure that everyone who has a relevant point has the opportunity to talk
 - Choose healthy conflict over comfort
 - Time management is key
 - After the meeting, outline next steps, repeat key decisions, assign time-bound tasks and ownership to ensure accountability, repeat the why of the meeting.
- Ambiguity is the enemy of accountability.

Break (returned at 3:20 p.m.)

Elections for Executive Officers was overseen by Elections Committee Chair, Stephanie Hanson.

- Call for floor nominations – there were no additional nominations
- Suspended the bylaws that required vote by ballot.
- Candidates for all positions gave nomination speeches.
- Voting was done by affirmation.
- New Officers
 - President: Jordan Gonzales, District 2
 - VP for Internal Affairs: Jessie Brophy, District 6
 - VP for External Affairs: Jerri Harner, District 2
 - Secretary: Morgan Green McConnell, District 4

Meeting Adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 12 at 2:30 in the Nebraska Union Swanson Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Joann Ross, Coordinator and Executive Secretary, and Regina Flowers, Secretary.