

Vanderbilt University Staff Advisory Council

OPERATIONS PLAN

Last Update: September, 2012

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What is the University Staff Advisory Council?

The University Staff Advisory Council is an advisory group to administration and staff on issues, policies and practices that affect the University.

Staff Council is more than 90 elected individuals, who in turn represent nearly 4,000 full- and part-time, exempt and non-exempt Vanderbilt University staff members.

The University Staff Advisory Council's purpose is

- *To act as a channel of communication between administration and staff on problems and policies that affect the University and its employees.*
- *To provide representatives to all University committees on which the staff is represented.*
- *To promote collegiality among staff and dedication to the University by providing information on the activities and opportunities offered at Vanderbilt and the unique mission of each of the various areas and departments of the University.*
- *To promote the welfare of staff.*

What is the Operations Plan?

The Operations Plan is a manual to guide and inform members of Staff Council on responsibilities, procedures and policies. The guidelines in this plan are not part of the by-laws, but rather represent what operations are currently in place, how things have been done in the past, key characters to make Staff Council run smoothly, and responses to situations that have arisen in the previous year.

The Rules and Administration Committee has created this document to be a continuous template for each new year of Staff Council, serving as a reference guide and a help for Council procedures.

The Operations Plan is a living document, unlike the by-laws, that gives the history of accomplishments, a recommended timeline, and thorough explanations of the members' responsibilities and policy guidelines. We hope it will continue to be altered and amended to reflect the changing nature of Staff Council and its leadership.

This Operations Plan was created to assist with the overall checks and balances of the Staff Council. At the twice annually, the Operations Plan will be adjusted and altered to add new changes made throughout the year. These changes may be made by both officers and the Rules and Administration Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Procedure for updating the Operations Plan

Each April and November, the Rules and Administration committee will gather submissions from other committees (via formal submission or Executive Committee input), notes from changes in the Council, and other applicable alterations to the plan. The Rules and Administration committee will also look over the past 6 months of minutes from monthly meetings. The co-chairs of Rules and Administration will present a summary of the changes at the May and December Executive Committee meetings. They will then -- within a month of the Executive Committee summary -- update the Operations Plan on applicable platforms (ie: shared drive, Staff Council website, Staff Council intranet).

Responsibilities

President

Broad responsibilities

- Preside over all regular meetings of the Council.
- Serve as *ex officio* member of all Council Committees.
- Organize the agenda for each regular Council meeting.
- Represent the University staff when requested at various University functions.
- Act as official spokesperson for the Council.
- Promote communication within the University at large, including all advisory, governing, and social organizations.
- Have a clear understanding and working knowledge of the purpose, mission and by-laws of the Staff Council.
- Represent staff issues to administration.

Specific responsibilities

- Communicate with University leadership and administration on Staff Council issues, progress, and requests, where appropriate.
- Speak to the Board of Trust each year.
- Oversee Committee work for its alignment with Staff Council goals.
- Create, maintain, and promote morale of Council.
- Develop yearly goals with the help of the Executive Committee.
- Continue partnership with Medical Center Staff Advisory Council President and Faculty Senate Chair.
- Work with treasurer to determine how to allocate annual budget.
- Work with Membership Committee should communicate to constituents who their representatives are and vice versa.
- Compile end of the year report.
- President must approve/facilitate all conversations held on behalf of Staff Council.

Responsibilities for Monthly Council Meetings

- Email RSVP and meeting reminder to all of Staff Council
- Lead approval of past month's meeting minutes.
- Request Committee reports from each Committee Chair
- Follow meeting agenda outlined in Policies/Procedures.

Responsibilities for monthly Executive Committee Meetings

- Request Committee reports from each Committee Chair.
- Seek input from Executive Committee regarding proposed agenda for upcoming Staff Council meeting.

Vice-President/President-Elect

Broad responsibilities

- Execute the duties of the President in the President's absence.
- Serve as *ex officio* member of all Council Committees.
- Conduct elections and supervise counting of ballots and notification of elected representatives, spearheading the efforts with the Membership Committee.
- Certify that the required quorum exists in various voting matters.
- Conduct all details of the end-of-the-year awards.

Specific responsibilities

- Serve as the Staff Council representative to the Medical Center Staff Council meetings.
- Coordinates all end-of-the-year awards including, but not limited to:
 - Arrangements for awards of outgoing President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Karen Dolan Award
 - Takes nominations for Karen Dolan Award (see Karen Dolan Award in "Policies and Procedures")
- Attend at least one meeting for each standing Committee throughout the year, to better understand how the Council functions.
- Ensure that each standing Committee meets at least twice a year.
- Manage access to the Staff Council archive server with coordination with the Membership Committee.
- Continue strong relationship with Membership Committee so that bi-annual and mid-year representative elections are easily conducted.
- Coordinate elections for Vice-President/President Elect, Treasurer and Secretary during May meeting. Take nominations for these positions during April meeting.

Secretary

Broad responsibilities

- Be responsible for the minutes of each Staff Council monthly meeting and for their distribution. (See “Minutes” section.)
- Serve as *ex officio* member of all Committees.
- Maintain a record of attendance at Council meetings.
- Assist in preparing and sending Council election and other correspondence to representatives.

Specific responsibilities

- Create and maintain nametags for each meeting, including new nametags for new members who enter midyear.
- Prepare all documents for meeting review, if necessary.
- Keep record of meeting documents in minutes (flyers and handouts for each meeting scanned and attached with meeting minutes) and on website.
- Work with Membership Committee to fulfill Meeting Minutes policy.
- Be responsible for minutes of each Staff Council Executive Committee meeting.

Treasurer

Broad responsibilities

- Maintain all council funds and keep accurate financial records.
- Serve as *ex officio* member of all Council Committees.
- Deposit funds into University account and disburse funds in accordance with the University practices.
- Deliver financial reports at Executive Committee meetings and as needed at full Council meetings.

Specific responsibilities

- Monitor Staff Council finances and maintain a budget.
- Make journal entries for the money the Staff Council gives to the Hardship Fund.
- Give reports as needed at full Council meetings.
- Facilitate with Event Coordination Committee booking rooms for meetings as well as refreshments for monthly council meetings.
- Maintain good communication with Committees, Executive Committee, and officers regarding the budget, etc.
- Send monthly financial reports/receipts to HR budget officers.

Other notes

- When giving money to the Hardship Fund (from Kroger cards, for example), the account number to use is: [REDACTED].
- The HR account for monthly meeting room rentals and other Staff Council expenses is: [REDACTED].
- eDog is a way to reconcile the above budgets. (*Diane Banks can see these reports, and it is currently under Jason Hunt's name... should be updated!*)
- Treasurer must make journal entries to move account numbers, like in instances of the Kroger cards money to the Hardship Fund.
- Treasurer regulates Kroger card system, distribution, and bookkeeping/reporting to HR budget officers.

Executive Committee Member

The Executive Committee shall include current officers, past presidents of the Council, and chairs of standing council committees, and shall serve as a planning committee. The Executive Committee may serve as a nominating committee for council appointments and elections. The Executive Committee may meet with the officers of the University upon their request, or upon request of a majority of the Executive Committee, or by direction of the Council. No formal votes shall be taken at such consultations nor shall the Executive Committee take any action without Council approval.

Broad responsibilities

- Be a distinct voice within Committee meetings, but be a united front before the Council. Show dissent when appropriate but not in a way that undermines the leadership and the goals of the Council.
- Be available and supportive of representatives.
- Use “Constituency Leadership:” make decisions while thinking of the whole membership and looking out for their best interests.

Specific responsibilities

- Communicate to the Executive Committee and the larger group about progress and general update of Committees.
- Executive Committee members are expected to be at all monthly meetings and Executive Committee meetings unless it is an excused absence.
- Review Staff Council President’s monthly meeting agenda.

Representative

Eligibility

"Staff" shall be:

- All University Central
- Full-time or part-time
- Non-exempt and exempt staff, as defined by their home departments
- Not in union-eligible job classifications

Broad responsibilities

- Know and understand the purpose and mission of the Staff Council and its by-laws.
- Participate and attend Staff Council monthly meetings. Representatives should attend all monthly meetings, unless absence is excused.
- Join and participate on a standing committee.

Specific responsibilities

- Have list of all constituents they represent in their group. (President and Membership Committee to send out this list to the representatives.) To the greatest extent possible, be familiar with who constituents are.
- Two representatives from each group must fulfill the following roles:
 - **Group Communicator**
 - Each month, the Group Communicator sends an email to their constituents with the meeting minutes of the last general Staff Council Meeting.
 - Sends emails to constituents on an as-needed basis when president submits announcements or other information he or she would like to disseminate.
 - **Group Listserv Moderator**
 - The Group Listserv Administrator will communicate with both the Membership Committee and the Communication Committee to regulate the integrity of the Group Listserv. Manages membership of Listserv group. In practice, multiple people will be involved in this role.

Committees

General Committee Procedures

- Each Committee must meet at least twice a year.
- Communication by Chairs and Co-chairs to Committee must be at least once every two months.
- In August/September, Chairs and Co-Chairs to welcome individual members to group, as well as discuss the goals, responsibilities and roles of their Committee.
- Report at Executive Committee and at general monthly meeting.
- Submit Committee agenda to President and Vice-President following each Committee meeting.
- Committee Chairs and Co-chairs should be fully engaged in the workings of the Council, attending all monthly and Executive Committee meetings, unless absence is excused.
- Chairs and Co-chairs should inform the President and, if appropriate, the Executive Committee, of possible controversial issues *prior* to investigating.

Leadership Roles and Titles within Committees:

- Chair – leads the Committee
or
- Co-Chair – two or more Chairs who lead the committee with equal authority

- Vice-Chair – fills in for Chair in his/her absence and assists Chair as needed but has no inherent authority

Rules and Administration Committee

Broad responsibilities:

- Maintenance and review of the bylaws.
- Recommending to the president when a revision and/or amendment to the bylaws is appropriate.
- Serving in Council matters as the official arbiters of the meaning of the bylaws.
- Acting as procedural arbitrators, following basic principles of *Robert's Rules of Order* in Council meetings.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Chairs to review Parliamentary Procedure with Committee.
- At least one member of the Rules and Administration Committee must be in attendance at each meeting to monitor basic rules of Parliamentary Procedure.
- Maintains and makes any edits to the Operations Plan with input from the Executive Committee.
- Communicates with the President and the Vice President regarding the adherence to the Operations Plan.
- Maintains calendar of year within Operations Plan.
- Monitors Staff Council Shared Drive documents (Shared Drive or Sharepoint). Membership Committee grants permissions and updates documents, and Rules and Administration reviews documents for accuracy.

Operations Plan Revision Process

- The Chair/Co-chairs are mainly responsible for any changes or revisions to the Operations Plan.
- Revisions are presented to and approved by the Rules and Administration Committee, and then presented to and approved by the Executive Committee. No formal voting process is needed, but rather a sharing of information and an informal approval.

Membership Committee

Broad responsibilities:

- Maintain the Council's membership roster.
- Maintain contact with representatives as to membership obligations.
- Review the composition of the Council's groups and notify the president when reapportionment is needed.
- Work with the officers to facilitate reapportionment when necessary.
- Maintain the current list of Standing Committee chairs and members and an archive thereof.
- Work with the Vice-president/President-Elect in facilitating membership elections.

Specific Responsibilities:

- In conjunction with the Staff Council's officers, the Membership Committee conveys to newly-elected representatives what their role is on the Staff Council, how they can help, why they are part of this group, why the Council is important, and who the key members are.
- Update the shared drive roster, attendance and website rosters. All rosters require access.
- Track membership attendance on monthly basis. Email attendance roster, including regrets and absences, to Secretary for inclusion in each month's meeting minutes. (See page 16.) Report attendance numbers, analyze monthly if variances, check with representatives on absences, and enforce attendance policies by communicating with members. (Membership has an email template for this.) For two absences without an RSVP in a row, the member is contacted. For four absences (with or without an RSVP), an email from the President comes to the member, asking about continued interest in being part of Staff Council.
- Handles morale of members of Staff Council using such instruments such as a survey of new members and exit survey of departing members. Improve membership morale when needed, eg: greeters, birthdays, member shout-outs, awards, etc.
- Maintain Staff Council website membership lists.
- The Membership Committee in collaboration with the President should communicate to constituents who their representatives are, and representatives should know who they represent.
- Maintains and grants permission of Staff Council Shared Drive documents (Shared Drive or Sharepoint). Membership Committee grants permissions and updates documents, and Rules and Administration reviews documents for accuracy.
- With a second unexcused absence, the Membership Committee sends the an email to the member to kindly request their attendance at the next meeting. (*Please see Appendix 1.*)

Staff Life Committee

Broad responsibilities:

- Determine issues of staff concern through a survey of membership and input from Executive Committee and approval of the President.
- Research issues of staff concern, including referring specific problems to the appropriate HR contact.
- Prioritize the issues of staff concern.
- Recommend for the Council's consideration a specific course of action when appropriate.
- Maintain contact with the Staff Council's representatives on University Standing Committees.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Survey University Staff or Staff Council representatives in July and January (at minimum once a year).
- Pass along issues of common interest and concern to the President for discussion with HR contact.
- Include reports from University Committee representatives at committee meetings.

Recommendations (See procedure under "Recommendations/Resolutions/Reports")

Staff Life Committee Chairs/Co-chairs perform the following steps to shepherd Staff Life concerns through to conclusion:

- Communicate/obtain status updates from subcommittee chairs monthly
- Facilitate meetings with key resources as needed
- Facilitate discussions of subcommittee's efforts at Staff Life Committee meetings

Communication Committee

Broad responsibilities:

- Communication amongst the membership.
- Facilitate communication with respective constituencies.
- Maintenance of the Council's email lists.
- Serve as our liaison with the Division of Public Affairs and other University advisory groups.
- Promote the Council's visibility to the University in general.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Create tutorial on how representatives convey information to their constituents.
- Listserv/access training for current and new Council members.

Additional Information:

- Communication with Public Affairs throughout is critical.
- Communication Committee members to receive specific permissions from ITS for access to maintain website and listserv management.
- Andy Richter and John Brassil have access to website administration. This role is critical to have checks and balances for website updating. Other members of Communication Committee should also monitor site.
- Website maintenance, completed by the Communication Committee, is detailed in the "Procedures" section of this document.
- At an early Staff Council meeting, the Communication Committee should conduct a "roll call" where present reps from each group can stand up and let the Committee know who will be sending out the group emails, or their "Group Communicator." This will establish accountability as well as clearly define the rep who has that role. This has yet to be done, and the process to clearly define each group's email communicator has not been successfully discovered.

Events Coordination Committee

Broad responsibilities:

- Coordinate volunteers when requests are made for Council participation.
- Facilitate Council-sponsored activities.
- Arrange with Treasurer for meeting spaces for the monthly Council and Executive Committee meetings, including refreshments, duplication of materials (when necessary), and arranging for technical support.
- Assist with the transition from Council president to Council president regarding room reservations and other needed information.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Fundraise for the Hardship Fund (ex: Kroger cards, bake sales, etc).
- Recruit and coordinate staff volunteers for University events, such as Employee Celebration Tailgate Party and Employee Blood Drive.
- Publicize partnership with Hands On Nashville and coordinates any related events.
- Notify Staff Council representatives of upcoming events where they can volunteer.
- Set up table in December at Turkey Toss event to share info on Staff Council. Coordinate through Midori Lockett.

Procedures/Policies

Meeting RSVP, Sign-in Sheet and Minutes

In the afternoon following the Executive Committee meeting (less than one week prior to the Staff Council monthly meeting), the President sends an electronic form (eg: Survey Monkey, RedCap or Sharepoint) to ask for RSVPs for the monthly Staff Council meeting attendance. Sending this email following the Executive Committee meeting allows for changes or additions to the RSVP prior to the submission by the President.

The Membership Committee Representative sends the Secretary an updated list of active Staff Council members one week prior to each meeting. The secretary then uses this information to create an up-to-date sign-in sheet and updated nametags (if needed).

During the meeting, minutes are recorded by the Secretary. Minutes should be not be in transcript-form nor a skeleton outline of the agenda, but rather summative with enough information to share to the constituents. The minutes are seen by all of the University on the Council's website, so the secretary should err on the side of elaborate versus slim.

The Secretary prepares the minutes for submission by the following Wednesday (giving the Secretary over a week to complete). (The Secretary downloads the online RSVP survey responses to add to the minutes after cross-checking the attendance sign-in sheet. The electronic responses are needed to record regrets.)

The Secretary submits a formal draft of the minutes to the Communication Committee along with the President. The Communication Committee will submit these to the Staff Council representatives by the next Friday. Staff Council group representatives will submit the formal draft of the month's minutes to their constituents by the following Monday. The constituents will be alerted that these are a draft of the minutes.

Minutes are then approved formally by the council-at-large via majority vote at the following month's meeting. (A suggestion is to print out the minutes for each table so that members can read them prior to approving them.) Minutes (including amendments, if applicable) are then added to the website by Communication Committee no longer than three days following the Staff Council monthly meeting's approval of the minutes.

Meeting Structure

The following is the general structure of a monthly council meeting. The list, not the order, is required by our By-Laws:

- Call to order
- Reading and approval of minutes
- Unfinished business
- Committee reports (Staff Council and Standing)
- New business
- Announcements
- Adjournment

Meeting Minutes Approval Process

During the meeting, the review and approval process is loosely structured by the President as follows:

Has everyone had an opportunity to read the meeting minutes for (fill in the month)?

Are there any changes?

May I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes?

OR (if the minutes were amended from the floor...)

May I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes, as amended?

May I have a second?

All in favor say Aye.

All opposed say Nay.

The motion is approved. These meeting minutes will be published on the Council website.

Training, Orientation/Transitions and Committee Sign-ups

New Officers

- President and Vice President should work in tandem to create agendas and set goals. This partnership should prove to be a training ground for the Vice President for the next year.

Committee Chairmen/Co-Chairmen

- As written in By-Laws, members of each standing Committee will elect one of their Committee to serve a one-year term as Chair/Co-Chair. Standing Committee chairs will be elected yearly.
- By May 31, the Committee should meet to elect their Chair/Co-Chairs for the next year.
- Before the July orientation, outgoing and incoming Chair/Co-Chairs should meet to talk of transitions.
- If elected committee chair is not re-elected as a Staff Council representative by their group in general elections, that individual will step down and another chair will be elected.

Representatives

- The officers and the Executive Committee must convey to representatives prior to the start of each term the range of time and the expectations of a member. This includes one monthly meeting and one hour of Committee work each month (as needed). The minimum anticipation of a representative is 2-5 hours per month.
- As stated in the by-laws, if a council member resigns or transfers, the person in that group who received the next highest number of votes in the most recent general election shall become representative for that group. Should there be no one left on the most recent ballot, no one who received a simple majority of the votes on the ballot, or if those persons remaining are unable to serve, the group in question shall be requested to conduct another election to replace the representative if a year or more remains in the term; otherwise the President, with approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint a replacement from the group in question.
- If it is an election year of a specific group and a member of that group leaves prior to March, that person will not be replaced.
- When groups do not have a staff member to voluntarily sign up to be a member, the Membership and Executive Committees will try to recruit and appoint someone for that position. Recruitment usually begins with soliciting a department chair.

New Year Kickoff/Orientation

- Orientation, generally held in July, should cover the following topics:
 - Representatives' obligations
 - Committee descriptions and sign-up
 - Update from the past president on past year's accomplishments
 - Boosting morale/setting tone for upcoming year
 - Team-building, exploration of staff life issues, yearly planning, etc.

Committee Sign-up

- The first sign-up time for Committees is orientation, where new members learn the responsibilities of Committees.
- Regardless of the procedure for Committee sign-ups (paper at meetings or electronic surveys sent via email), the end result is to ensure representatives are exposed easily to volunteering for the Committees of their choice.
- Representatives choose at least two Committees where they would want to serve. Then the Membership Committee Co-Chairs collect the requests and sort the representatives so that there is a balance and enough representatives on each Committee. Membership Committee Co-chairs communicate to members which Committee they are assigned to. If the representative is given their second choice. Membership Committee clarifies that they have

been given their second choice and, in courtesy, asks if this is ok with the representative rather than not serving on any committee at all.

- The Membership Committee Co-Chairs also reach out to each person who did not sign up for a Committee to encourage them to sign up.
- During an off-cycle period when new representatives join the Staff Council, the Membership Committee shares info about Committee sign-ups and encourages the new representative to join a Committee in the “welcome” email.
- Committee signups are not required.

Elections and Reapportionment

Reapportionment

- As stated in the By-Laws, the composition of the council is determined through apportionment which shall be reviewed every five years, or earlier as needed, determined by the President.
 - Reapportionment tasks to be recorded in the Operations Plan and a history of when it is done to be recorded in this document.
 - Membership Committee, with the inclusion and communication of the Vice-President, is responsible for procedure of reapportionment, outlined below:
1. In October, obtain the following data from Human Resource Services (currently, Karen Rohling and/or Travis Sawyer):
 - A list by home department of:
 - Full-time and part-time, exempt and non-exempt, non-faculty, non-union, non-student employees.
 - This list should exclude Housestaff and Research Associates
 - This list should exclude temporary and term employees
 - This list should exclude Medical Center employees
 - The “count” needed for each home department is FTE’s, not body count
 2. Review the data to determine if new home departments have been added (since the last reapportionment) that need to be assigned to a Staff Council group.
 3. Review the data to determine if home departments included on the last list obtained for reapportionment are not included on the new list. Determine if the department no longer exists or if these employees have been assigned to a new home department.
 4. Compare the new list with the previous list obtained for reapportionment and resolve any significant differences in the number of FTE’s for each area.
 5. Determine if there are enough Staff Council representatives for each group. There should be one representative for every group of 1-30 people.
 6. Report findings to the Executive Committee in December.
 7. First reading of the report on the reapportionment process to the full Council in March.
 8. Second reading (and approval) of the reapportionment process to the full Council in April.
 9. Hold elections in May.

Elections

- Members are elected by staff members from constituent groups.
- Each group has at least two representatives with apportioned representation of one representative for approximately every 35 employees. If there are 18 or more employees in the group beyond the highest multiple of 35, another representative shall be assigned to that group.
- **Election procedure**
 1. Email is submitted to whole group of staff members on their election cycle year. *(Please see Appendix 2.)*
 2. After nominations are gathered for each group’s elections, an email and voting screen are submitted to our reps in the Law School to be sent out to the group members. *(Please see Appendix 3.)*

3. Runoffs are completed if needed. Vice President sends congratulatory emails to those who win election, as well as messages to those who did not win, informing them that they are alternates in case a rep cannot serve his/her full term.
4. Election of representatives shall be completed no later than the end of May. The results shall be made known by the June meeting. Newly-elected members may attend council meetings in advance of their assuming office, so as to acquaint themselves with the Council's work. They shall attend as observers, without voting privileges.

Election Timeline Example:

2011 Staff Council Odd Numbered Groups Election Timeline

March 11: Email text for solicitation finalized

March 18: Email sent to all odd groups to solicit nominations

April 1: Nominations Due

April 5: Second Call for candidates (if needed) and personal outreach to group lacking sufficient candidates

April 7: Voting email and screen text finalized

April 25: All data sent to Chris Bransford in the Law School to begin elections

May 2: Voting emails should be sent by this point

May 16: Voting deadline

May 20: Results in hand to assess for run-off needs

May 23: Nominees notified

May 25: Run Off elections commence

June 1: Run Off elections complete

June 3: New member list finalized and runoff nominees notified so that they may attend June meeting

June 14: New members attend June meeting

Early July: New Member Orientation

Listserv Development and Maintenance

- The President in collaboration with the Membership Committee should communicate to constituents who their representatives are, and the Representatives should be informed of who they represent, who their constituents are. This should happen at the beginning of the representative cycle (June/July).
- In July, each representative group will designate a:
 1. Group Listserv Moderator
 2. Group Communicator

These roles will help the Membership and Communication Committee better carry out their mission. Roles to be explained thoroughly to Staff Council representatives at the beginning of the cycle.

- The co-chair of technology on the Communication committee is in charge of updating the email lists, which need to be updated regularly (recommended every two months). Refer to Andy Richter who is the email lists guru.
- When the President emails an announcement to Staff Council representatives that needs to be passed along to their constituents in their group, the Group Communicator sends out the announcement within a day of receiving the president's email.
- The email template for the Group Communicator to use is listed in *Appendix 4*.

Website Update Procedure

Please see Appendix 5 for full Website Update Procedure.

Update Frequency

- The Staff Council website is updated on the 1st and 15th of the month and by request.

Recommendations/Resolutions/Reports

According to the by-laws, any group of Staff Council members can work on an issue to create recommendations, but these recommendations must be communicated to the Staff Life Committee Chairs and be approved by the Executive Committee.

The Staff Life Committee polls staff members and/or Staff Council reps twice yearly to discover issues that affect staff quality of life. This is done through an email from the President. *See email from Staff Council President in Appendix 6.*

After the survey is completed, action is taken within Staff Life Committee to focus on issues that are most popular and of substance. Staff Life Committee leadership, in cooperation with the President, compiles all submissions of staff concerns and uses their judgment regarding which ones to address. Most issues of a general or broad nature should be addressed. Most issues that are particular to one individual or a small group should probably not be addressed by Staff Council.

For issues that are to be addressed, a subcommittee of one or more Staff Life members is appointed and charged to investigate the issue. Subcommittee chairs are elected by the subcommittee or are appointed by Staff Life Chairs/Co-Chairs.

Throughout this process, contact should be made with Human Resources (current Traci Nordberg and Jerry Fife) to update them on the status and the goals of the year's Staff Life concerns. This is not a requirement but rather a recommendation to be a good steward of our campus relationships. The Staff Council president should also be involved in this process with Human Resources.

A subcommittee's efforts should result in one of the following: a Recommendation, Resolution, or Report (either to the Staff Council or the Staff Life Committee). The three of these terms are defined below:

Recommendation: made to improve and enhance the procedures and policies of the University. Recommendations may be presented for approval by the full council either by an individual council member or through an appointed council committee. All recommendations presented must clearly define the issue(s) at hand and articulate the action needed to address the issues(s) adequately. (Procedural information to follow.)

Resolution: similar to that of a Recommendation, but it only needs one meeting to vote, there is no need for a Committee, but it still must be presented to the Executive Committee.

Report: begins with an issue, the Staff Life Committee finds no further action is needed because the issue may already be addressed or has not been properly publicized, and the Staff Life Committee reports back the research they have found.

A great Recommendation and Resolution should have the following information to support the cause:

- **What?** Brief overview of the issue, including the hoped, positive outcome/result
- **Impact?** Impact and scope of issue, including how many people it affects, how often, and how much, as well as data to support these findings.
- **Why?** What are the root causes of this issue? 2-4 causes
- **Sufficiency?** What is currently in place, and why is it not good enough?
- **Who has been involved?** What campus experts/process program owners were communicated with?
- **Recommendation** Include the pros/cons, range of options, and why a particular one is preferred.
- **Result** What would the result of this recommendation be?
- **Resources** What resources may have to be utilized and considered before this Recommendation can be approved?

After this is completed, the following process occurs:

- Recommendations brought by a committee are distributed in writing to all members at least one week before the first official reading, including a presentation to the Executive Committee prior to the Monthly Meeting.
- There shall be two readings, during two consecutive meetings. Discussion follows the first reading. At one monthly meeting there is a first reading followed by discussion and then a vote to approve it for a second reading the following month.
- At the next monthly meeting there is a second reading followed by a discussion. Discussion and opportunity to make changes to the recommendation by majority vote of those present follow the second reading. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present is required in order to forward the recommendation to the appropriate official(s) at this second meeting.

Any Staff Council Officer, usually the President or Vice President, may handle the voting requirements, which would follow the reading and discussion steps found in *Appendix 7*.

Awards

Per the bylaws, the Council may develop awards that recognize its members, officers, or staff-at-large. Procedures and criteria for these awards shall be determined either through standing committees, ad hoc committees and/or the Executive Committee. Current examples are the Karen Dolan award and the annual awards presented to outgoing officers.

Karen Dolan Spirit Award

Established in 2008, the Karen Dolan Spirit Award (KDSA) recognizes a Staff Council member for his or her stewardship, devotion, and service to the Vanderbilt University Staff Advisory Council. This person embodies Karen Dolan's passion for assisting her Vanderbilt family. Nominations for this award will be solicited from the Staff Council membership. Nominations are due annually in April. The award winner will be selected by the Staff Council Executive Committee by a simple majority vote at the May Executive Committee meeting. The award winner will be recognized at the June Staff Council general meeting. Send nominations via email to the Staff Council Vice President.

A little about Karen Dolan, written by Gail Lance:

"Karen began working at Vanderbilt in 1979 after graduating from Tennessee State University. She started in the University Registrar's office, then went on to the Engineering registrar's office, then on to a program coordinator for radiology residents and fellows, and then on to the Graduate School registrar's office. In each office, she was the one that could solve a problem quickly and efficiently. She was known for having a big mouth and an even bigger heart.

"She absolutely loved the Vanderbilt students, talking to them, helping them. She volunteered to help at the tailgate celebration every September. She was an organizer and a hard worker. No one worked harder than Karen.

"It was devastating to get the diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS, (Lou Gehrig's disease) because there is no known cure yet, just the sad fact that somewhere between 18 months and 20 years after diagnosis, your muscles and organs begin shutting down and death will result. We hoped when Karen retired from Vanderbilt, she would have those 20 years to fund raise for ALS and play with her grandchildren. Alas, that was not to be. It became harder to talk and impossible to walk. On May 1, 2006, she died at her home. Her name is still mentioned frequently as she was a one-of-a-kind character, friend, co-worker, major Vanderbilt supporter, dedicated worker. She is unforgettable."

KDSA Award Winners: Andy Richter (2008), Faye Johnson (2009), Andrea Wall (2010), Sue King (2011).

- In March, the Vice President informs the Council at monthly meeting about the Karen Dolan Spirit Award, what it is, what the procedure will be.
- In April, the Vice President will begin accepting nominations from members for the Karen Dolan Spirit Award.
- In May, the Executive Committee votes on Karen Dolan Spirit Award by simple majority. (If someone on the Executive Committee has been nominated for the award, he or she must leave the room while discussion takes place. Voting by secret ballot and results are not announced.
- During the month of May, the Vice President selects a gift and presentation for Karen Dolan Spirit Award.
- At the June meeting, the new President presents the Karen Dolan Spirit Award.
- Past winners cannot win again.

Campus Partners and Council Representation on University-wide Standing Committees

There are several committees on which Staff Council members serve.

- The President makes decisions upon who to appoint when openings occur. These representatives do not necessarily have to be Staff Council members.
- The Chancellor asks the President to nominate representatives for three-year terms on committees.
- President announces Staff Council membership on various committees and partnerships to spread awareness to representatives.
- If needed, committee members report at monthly meeting if there are announcements.

Campus Partners

Medical Center Staff Advisory Council (MCSAC)

Campus Partner Liaison: TBD (2012)

- Anyone from MCSAC can attend University Staff Council meetings and vice-versa.
- Vice President serves as consistent representative at all MCSAC meetings and is included on all MCSAC emails.
- President requests a designated rep from MCSAC to attend all Staff Council meetings.

Faculty Senate

Campus Partner Liaison: TBD (2012)

- The President of the Staff Council reaches out to the Faculty Senate, depending on the President's preference/style.
- A member of the Faculty Senate is always invited to come to our monthly meetings.
- Staff Council invites the Faculty Senate to be included in our events and other applicable meetings that may interest them.

University Standing Committees

Traffic and Parking

Committee Liaison: TBD (2012)

- Meets monthly with three Council representatives filling roles on that committee.
- Representation from faculty, staff and students (if appropriate).

Benefits

Committee Liaison: TBD (2012)

- Meets monthly with three Council representatives filling roles on that committee.
- Representation from faculty and staff.

Athletics

Committee Liaison: TBD (2012)

- Meets only twice a year with three Council representatives filling roles on that committee.
- Representation from faculty, staff and students.

University Ad Hoc Committees

Hardship Fund Committee

Committee Liaison: TBD (2012)

- A Staff Council member serves on the Hardship Fund Committee.

Checks and Balances

Although not yet in place, recommendations have been made regarding how to maintain checks and balances within the Council. The worthy suggestions are noted here:

- a year-end summary that focuses on the Staff Council yearly mission and quarterly reports.
- a historical timeline of accomplishments (ie: resolutions passed, reapportionment completed, events held).
- a grievance document to better empower representatives.

Staff Council Calendar of Events

JULY

- Orientation
- Photo of Officers and Executive Committee
- Staff Life poll from President of all VU Staff including concerns, ideas, etc.
- Committee signups begin, explanations on how process works at monthly general meeting.
- Possible separate orientation for Committee leaders and possibly the entire Staff Council Executive Committee.
- Push for awareness of the Staff Council to campus partners, including survey of staff issues that are a concern that the Council may be able to address throughout the year.
- Representative nametags created.
- Membership Committee updates Shared Drive documents.
- Volunteer opportunities: various Nashville activities provided by Hands on Nashville, Phone-a-thon

AUGUST

- Welcome and Thank You Reception at Chancellor's Residence.
- Review of Parliamentary Procedure.
- Committee signups continue. Committee chairs to welcome each member in their Committee.
- Pictures of new officers and Executive Committee posted to website.
- The President in collaboration with the Membership Committee should communicate to constituents who their representatives are, and representatives should find out who specifically they represent.
- Groups meet to decide their yearly Group Communicators and Group Listserv Moderators.
- Push for awareness of Staff Council to campus partners, including survey of staff issues that Staff Council would hope to address throughout the year.
- Volunteer opportunities: 12th Man Tailgate, First-Year Move-in, First Year Bag Stuffing.

SEPTEMBER

- Committee chairs welcome each member in their Committee.
- Benefits discussion, typically from HR.
- Volunteer opportunities: 9/11 Service Day.

OCTOBER

- Chancellor speaks sometime in the Fall or Spring. Try to schedule him at least once throughout the year.
- Officers meet with HR Director and VP of Business Administration to present Staff Council goals.
- Volunteer opportunities: Family Weekend, Reunion/Homecoming.

NOVEMBER

- Volunteer opportunities: Second Harvest Food Bank canned food drive.

DECEMBER

- Representative holiday-themed event (writing letters, a coat drive), Cards for Soldiers.
- ELF Program Collection/Awareness.
- Volunteer opportunities: Turkey Toss/Kroger Card distribution, Second Harvest Food Bank canned food drive.

JANUARY

- Staff Life issue poll of all VU Staff
- Volunteer opportunities: MLK Jr. Day.

FEBRUARY

- Volunteer opportunities: Blood Drive with Faculty Senate, MCSAC, and Red Cross.

MARCH

- Vice President informs the Council at monthly meeting about the Karen Dolan Spirit award, what it is, what the procedure will be.
- Begin preliminary work for member elections and officer elections.
- Representative recruitment begins.
- Rules and Administration Committee to review Operations Plan for edits or revisions.
- Volunteer opportunities: ASB.

APRIL

- Vice President will begin accepting nominations from members for the Karen Dolan Spirit award.
- Beginning of election of members.
- Call for nominations of Vice-President/President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer.
- Volunteer opportunities: Rites of Spring.

MAY

- Executive Committee votes on Karen Dolan Spirit award by simple majority.
- Vice-president prepares gift and presentation for Karen Dolan Spirit award.
- Election of members and committee chairs throughout this month.
- Rules and Administration Committee discuss proposed changes to the Operations Plan with the Executive Committee.
- Volunteer opportunities: Commencement.

JUNE

- Karen Dolan Spirit award is presented by Vice-President at the Council's general meeting.
- "Passing of the Gavel" to the Vice-President from the President to occur at the general meeting, prior to the Karen Dolan Spirit award presentation.
- Newly elected officers are announced.
- Outgoing officers receive service awards.
- Newly elected members invited to June meeting.
- Information about Committees and Committee sign-up explained.
- Volunteer opportunities: various Nashville activities provided by Hands on Nashville.