

Staff Council Officer's Report

May 2026

SC LEADERSHIP WITH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP

On May 7, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Adam White, Executive Director – University Communications and Alessandro Bertoni, Deputy Chief Communications & Marketing Officer. Items discussed included:

- Jennifer reviewed the Communication Matrix and addressed questions on impact as it relates to the process used for communication
- Adam expressed interest in feedback on how messages land
- Jennifer rose the continued difficulty with retiree communications even with the recent changes and improvements, this remains a challenge. This led to a lengthy conversation on communication best practices.
- The cadence of these meetings was discussed. It was agreed the current length as well as every 6 weeks is working well
- There were questions from Alessandro on the upcoming Lunch & Learn on communication tools. Alan will connect with PPD on additional details and get back to Alessandro.
- **Next meeting 6/9/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH HUMAN RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

On May 18, 2026, Samantha and Alan met with Lindsey Melo, Interim CHRO. Items discussed included:

- New CHRO transition. Molly Propst will begin on 5/26 and is now on the schedule for future HR/Staff Council leadership meetings.
 - Molly's office will be in the HR Suite in Waterman.
 - Additional discussion on topics for her first meeting in June
- Completion rate for Performance Reviews is good. Deadline was extended to gather in a few stragglers. They are being communicated with. There was a bit of conversation on 360 reviews and best practices. There is not currently an expectation of implementing process any time soon
- Alan offered CBB will be meeting this week on their Survey results and who to share the information with
- Lindsey will follow up on the onboarding survey

- Discussed best practice to on board fully remote staff
- **Next meeting 6/15/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT

On May 19, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Jonathan D'Amore, Chief of Staff to the President. Items discussed included:

- Discussed avenues for feedback for the University Townhall. Strategic Communications will be the preferred avenue, being sure Lauren Griswald is in attendance at that meeting. Some of the feedback already expressed will be addressed for the next Townhall such as longer lead-time notification of the event and avoiding as much as possible, any conflicting events already planned
- Staff Appreciation planning should speed up now with the new CHRO starting on 5/26 as Staff Appreciation planning is an HR function.
- Jennifer provided an update on OCG. Applications are now coming in. The OCG committee meets in May and June. There will be additional communication to the campus before the application deadline.
- **Next meeting 6/16/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH UVM PRESIDENT DR. MARLENE TROMP

On May 20, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Dr. Marlene Tromp, UVM President. Items discussed included:

- The primary focus of this meeting was finances, budget and enrollment. Samantha emphasized continued open communication to be important and noted the email from administration on the coming year before it came out in the press. Dr. Tromp also reiterated her stance of any us vs. them approaches that may have been in the past, simply make no sense and we are to all work together to be successful.
- Jennifer reviewed the Communication Matrix. Dr. Tromp was very supportive of the guideline. The levels of communication piece of the matrix were particularly appreciated. Dr. Tromp stated it was in perfect alignment with her goals.
- Jennifer gave an update on OCG to date. The run up to the opening of applications was discussed especially improved inclusivity in the process, the application being translated into 15 languages, is but one change which Dr. Tromp truly appreciated.
- Staff Council's engagement with the Strategic Plan rollout was discussed. Dr. Tromp believes Staff Council should continue to play a role.

- In other business, Dr. Tromp is very invested in reducing any kind of adversarial environment that may exist on campus. She asked to know if there are areas we see this continuing to help alleviate this stressor.
- **Next meeting 8/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH ALICIA ESTEY, VP FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION and HR

On May 21, 2026, Samantha and Alan met with Alicia Estey. Items discussed included:

- The primary focus of this meeting was finances, budget and enrollment. Alicia was very interested to learn, “How are people feeling?” Units/divisions/colleges have been asked to develop a plan which will still need final approval from senior administration. Jobs were discussed as the primary concern of people at this time. Areas are being asked to be very intentional about any staff changes. Past methods for budget tightening, including staffing changes, do not work long term. Administration is looking to sustainable methods to move forward. Alicia echoed Dr. Tromp’s message that this issue is not a one time, one-year concern, but demands longer term ideas and solutions.
- Samantha covered the Communication Matrix, reviewed it’s genesis and thought behind implementation. Alicia felt it would be good to discuss with senior leadership. We explained that she was the last for it to be delivered to and discussed.
- The working group for Tuition/Fees is completing some pre-work, being headed by Jay Jacobs in DEM. Once complete a more formal committee will be formed with a seat open to Staff Council.
- The Staff Council Professional Development Fund for Non-Represented Staff funding was discussed. Alicia has committed to increasing the funding available from the current \$12,000/yr, a final number yet to be determined.
- **Next meeting 7/16/26**

Upcoming Leadership Meetings

- See above