

**UVM Staff Council Meeting Minutes**  
**January 7, 2020**  
**12:05-1:30 p.m.**  
**Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building**

**Members Present:**

Brendan Andrews, Tatiana Andrievskaya, Barbara Asiimwe, Laura Clayton, Aimee Gale, Caleb Gilbert, Katherine Hall, Nick Hall, Nichole Hathaway, Cheryl Herrick, Alex Howe, Mindy Kear, Jay LaShombe, Cindy Lee, Stephanie Loscalzo, Stephen Lunna, Claire McCollough, Jennifer O'Donnell, Michael O'Sullivan, Holly Pedrini, Shirley Pine, Katrina Preiss, Jon Reisenweaver, Allison Spain, Donna Stevens, Bridget Tully, Ken Viglucci, Bethany Wolfe

**Members Absent:**

Heather Allard, Bob Bolyard, Kristen Cella, Miriam Harrison, Deb McAdoo, Lacey Ure, Erin Wertlieb,

**Staff:**

Elisabeth Blair, Alan Shashok

**Guest:**

Paul Yoon, Gary Derr, Lila Sullivan

**Call to Order**

President Stephen Lunna called the meeting to order at 12:05.

**Guest Speaker - Paul Yoon: Climate Survey**

Paul began with a review of the purpose of the Survey, then answered questions.

**Q:** How do we access the data?

**A:** Go to [uvm.edu/OIR/diversity](http://uvm.edu/OIR/diversity) → Catamount Data → Diversity. Anyone with a UVM ID can look at the results. There are two dashboards to separate identifying information. Also on that webpage, scroll down and you will find the response rates, summary, and survey instruments. These can be very helpful in figuring out what survey questions a given unit finds especially compelling - they could choose the question and investigate the data specifically for that.

**Q:** Will any findings and good practices based on units' innovative and deep-looking responses to the data be shared with other units across campus?

**A:** It is in the plan to share any analyses with the wider university community, but the timeline for doing this has not been formalized yet.

Paul then demonstrated how to access the data and navigate the dashboard. He noted that for a future survey they are considering separating Faculty and Staff more intuitively, but currently it is still able to be disaggregated. He emphasized the importance of following the instructions on the dashboards, and filling in the choices from left to right.

**Q:** Were there any units for whom the responses were a surprise (good or bad)?

**A:** That is a challenging question because things are so context dependent. There was a large number of respondents who chose not to answer some or most of the demographic questions. Were they fatigued by

the end of the survey? Were they afraid of outing themselves, or of reprisal? The theory right now is that there was a potential lack of trust from survey respondents, and also that it was too long and many demographic questions came at the end.

**Q:** Is there any rhyme or reason to how often the Climate Survey is administered?

**A:** There are many reasons that UVM did not administer a survey between 2011 and 2018, but the hope is that going forward we will perform two surveys during 4 years, to catch students at the beginning and the end of their degree programs. This also helps allow time to analyze the data and implement changes, so that change could be measured.

**Q:** Looking through the responses, things seemed just okay - not terribly low or terribly high. But wouldn't UVM want to excel in some areas?

**A:** The overall data was remarkably similar to the data from 2011, which is interesting since the student body has likely completely turned over. But to answer the question, it isn't clear if there is any particular area UVM wants to especially excel in, but generally the lowest performing areas are those which will receive first priority.

**Q:** Is there any way to access answers to open-ended questions?

**A:** Probably not, but reach out to the Office of Institutional Research and ask them; they are doing a qualitative analysis of those open-ended responses which is not yet complete.

**Q:** When a unit's data mirrors the overall mean, the unit probably won't seek to make improvements. What encouragement is being given to units to continue working with the data in this case?

**A:** All the units have been asked to go through all their data. In performance reviews for unit leaders, they'll be going over how each individual leader has translated the data results into some kind of action plan, strategy, and so forth. Also, all units should have already either a team or a leader who is going through the data - and if you don't know who those individuals are, ask your unit leaders.

### **Approve Draft Minutes**

December draft minutes were approved upon correction of some minor edits.

### **FY21 Non-Represented Staff Compensation and Merit Recommendation - CBB**

The recommendation letter has gone out to everyone on Staff Council, as well as President Garimella, Gary Derr, Richard Cate, Wanda Heading-Grant, Provost Patricia Prelock. A Council member requested clarification on the tiered recommendation and possible bonus, and it was given thusly by a Committee representative:

Last year the Staff Council Recommendation letter for a tiered bonus significantly impacted leadership's final decision. Because we are looking at the continued increases in costs, including that of healthcare, we looked at affordable living wages for Chittenden County, and we also looked at where in the tier of wages the preponderance of UVM staff members are. With regards to the tiered bonus: We've had discussions about how merit pay has and has not worked, and there were many opinions on the committee about how to tackle this. What ultimately the Committee was able to agree on was a merit-based bonus, which would hopefully give supervisors an impetus to award their staff without significant budget concerns.

In the meeting on December 9th with HRDMA leadership, the topic of a response or some feedback was covered, as last year we did not get a response. Accordingly, this year we have received several email

responses indicating receipt of the letter, and also an indication that Wanda Heading-Grant would like to meet with CBB.

### **Vote on Bylaw Change**

The Community Engagement Committee will take over the management of the Community Service Award from the Social Committee - both committees have approved the change. The Staff Council was asked to vote on this change, and it was approved.

It was noted that both committees have “community service” in their descriptions and it could be helpful to examine that and consider another revision.

### **Standing Committee Updates**

**PPD** - During the last meeting, a mentoring and coaching program was discussed, including what the goals would be for such a program, who would do the mentoring, and what it would look like. This program is still a work in progress and more information is needed. Also discussed was tuition remission; more information on the financial ins and outs is needed. And finally, Staff Awards were discussed - the Committee is gathering more information on what already exists within the university, and identifying which areas do not have awards. They plan to reach out to any such units or areas and encourage the creation of such awards.

**Social Committee** - The Committee discussed using electronic payments in the future for more efficiency. Alan Shashok reported on the income and expenses for the Bazaar, which included \$2961 total revenue after expenses. The vendors gave mostly positive feedback. A cooking class on 12/12 had lower attendance than hoped for but it was well received. The shopping bus trip to N. Conway had fewer attendees than desired, but 20 people went and loved it. The discounted athletic ticket sales were lower than usual, which may be due to a late start with ticket sales. There is a tentative date of Friday March 6th for the annual Skate Night; it depends on the hockey team schedule. The Committee is looking at new ideas for Spring, including a trip to Boston for a Red Sox game or time to spend downtown. It is hoped that a trip having dual purposes will increase registration. Discounted tickets for *Matilda* at the Lyric Theatre are coming soon. It was suggested that a note be put into *Staffline* about how to apply for the Community Service Award.

**Community Engagement** - At their last meeting, they hosted guests Connie Beal and Sarah Allerton from United Way Working Bridges - an employer collaborative. Currently only Custodial Services uses this program on campus. The Committee has resources and contact information for them, should anyone want it. The Committee’s subcommittee on Volunteer Opportunities has begun posting an “opportunity of the month” in *Staffline* and is putting together a list. The food committee is doing ongoing work and analysis on gaps and lacks in translation services.

**CBB** - In December the salary recommendation letter was discussed, as was the need for more transparency around some of the class & compensation processes. The Committee is working on preparing a request to present to HRDMA.

### **Officers’ Update**

At the monthly meeting with HRDMA, the pay adjustment announcement and the timing of it were discussed, as were concerns about the proper administering of pay adjustments by supervisors. During a discussion of a potential bonus program, Jes Kraus indicated there may be some good reasons to support a

bonus structure vs. a raise structure.

At the monthly meeting with Gary Derr, the Staff Council salary recommendation was discussed, as well as the Staff Council Survey (to be released within a month or so). They also discussed the ongoing efforts to create a program or service similar to the old Peer Advisor program. Additionally, they talked about a request from Professor Paul Bierman, who has created a website concerned with bringing about more diversity on the Board of Trustees. Gary Derr explained how the Trustees are assigned/appointed, because it is important to realize that UVM has very little to do with the process:

There are 26 board members. The state governor, by right of office, is a member of the board, until he is no longer governor. The governor has the capacity to appoint 3 people for 6 year terms. The UVM president is a member of the board. A group made up of Student Government Organization, the Graduate Student Association, and the Residence Hall Association appoint 2 students for a 2 year term, staggered. The Vermont State Agriculture Board - 9 members serving 6 year terms, staggered, elected by a joint session of State House and Senate. They can choose to elect people inside or outside of the House and Senate but have only done so once; they tend to choose people inside those bodies. The remaining 9 members are the UVM board or “private board”, who self-select.

It was suggested that Staff Council might send a letter to the State House asking for them to consider more diverse representation, and also that the Council might address the UVM private board who self-select.

At the quarterly meeting with President Garimella in December, the salary recommendation letter was the main topic of discussion. He was impressed, and he didn't have any questions as he had been prepped beforehand with material. He was noncommittal, and will be discussing it with his leadership team before moving forward with any decisions.

### **Other Business**

An upcoming training session for staff was announced, on intersectionality and identity in the workplace, featuring Leeva Chung, PhD, Professor of Communication Studies. It will take place on Friday, January 10, from 8:30-12:00, and staff may register through PeopleSoft.

Thanks were expressed for the quality of information in the recent *Staffline*, the tasteful and professional apology (regarding the manner in which the free Highlights badges were dispensed), and the “beautiful” photos of the Holiday Bazaar.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.