



## **STAFF SENATE**

**Thursday, February 13, 2025**

**GAC 401**

**Minutes**

Senators Attending: Frank Bowen, Shannon James, Joe Benyish, Steven Blankenship, Tabitha Pilchard, Candace Henry, Isabella Chow, Heather Kidd, Kelly Cowger, Lisa Gray, Tony Sampson

Guests Attending: Princely Muro, Terri Stuck, Tina Boyd, Aurora Edenhart-Pepe, Nadalyne Campbell, Jamie Parker

- I. Call to Order - 10:03am
- II. Approval of January Meeting Minutes – Frank Motioned, Candace Seconded, Approved.
- III. Staff Senate Reports
  - a. Staff Senate Chair – Joe
    - i. Middle States Meeting – Don't have agenda/topics yet, but meeting scheduled.
    - ii. SU Only Advocacy Day – Separate from USM advocacy day, Staff Senate will help and provide some volunteers to work on Advocacy Day. Volunteers – Kelly Cowger, Shannon James, Joe Benyish
    - iii. Consortium Committees – Government Relations – Need volunteer → Shannon James
      1. Need more support from SU for advocacy efforts in Annapolis
    - iv. March Meeting – Joe out of town that meeting, Candace will be running it. Will need a zoom link. Bylaws will finally be discussed.
  - b. CUSS Update
    - i. CUSS mostly focused on planning the USM advocacy day
    - ii. BOR Awards Process Update – Lisa – Completed five packets and submitted to President's Office for review.
  - c. Staff Senate Liaison Report – Aurora Edenhart-Pepe
    - i. HR Ticketing System – Now available for campus to use for all HR requests to improve visibility/accountability/tracking. Serves as audit trail of issues that come in and keep on top of them. Using the same ticketing system as IT/Marketing/Web/IDD
- IV. Old Business
  - a. Staff Senate By-Laws - Will be discussed at March Meeting – Steve
- V. New Business
  - a. Staff Senate Website Discussion – Joe/Heather
    - i. Send any ideas for website to Heather/Joe by EoD 2/14
  - b. Employee Appreciation Day – Candace
    - i. EAD Committee met yesterday, will share more updates in March Meeting.
  - c. Staff Town Hall – Joe
    - i. March 31 10:30am-12noon
  - d. Research Survey – Kelly
    - i. Kelly sending out survey to fulltime staff members asking for leadership style and job satisfaction to determine if a correlation between the two. Let Joe know if ok w using Staff Senate Email or any concerns.
- VI. Staff Concerns & Staff Senate Suggestion Box – None received.

VII. 11am - Special Guests

a. President's Office Report

- i. Outreach Discussion – Sharing feedback from listening sessions with campus divisions.
  1. Positives – The helpfulness and collaboration/sense of community
  2. Need telework policy that isn't one size fits all
  3. Workday pain points with contracts
  4. Employee Recognition redesign ideas, people want to be able to recognize teams rather than individuals because so much is done collaboratively. Also more transparency in process.
  5. Wanting to give praise/recognition to peers not just a supervisor recognizing their employees. More informal ways to celebrate each other.
  6. Morale is low at the moment across campus
  7. Supervisors don't know how to recognize or appreciate employees, another topic for manager training.
  8. Professional development opportunities needed for staff, no good mechanism to track if/here/when it's occurring on staff side to be able to use data to encourage equitability and more access to professional development on campus.
  9. Professional development day for staff on the Tuesday of Fall Break to provide some opportunities for professional development.
  10. Safety on campus – lack of fire drills. Active shooter training? How to deal with violent/disruptive incidents that aren't "Shootings" – Kelly has contacts at GSU we can share/borrow training materials with. Departments can request training from Chief
  11. Morale – we need to seek out more specific examples of both what low morale means, identify any causes that we can as well as suggestions on how to improve.
- ii. Hiring Freeze – not a hard freeze we have to fill positions that are essential or that were already in process. VP can make case that any position is essential to cabinet for approval. Freeze helps protect people in existing jobs by slowing hiring.
- iii. Exec Orders – working closely with USM on how to interpret and understand impact of various executive orders as they come out/are challenged/retracted. Immigration/federal funding/diversity/epa. Have put up a website to help people dive into the information themselves, it's not our translation but the direct wording of the exec orders to share information. We do receive federal funds so we have to watch that, financial aid & grants. Exec orders can't violate federal or state law, we have to figure out what law we are required to follow when they conflict. Putting together a rapid response team to help coordinate communication similar to rapid response team during covid. We will not waver in our commitment to our mission and values. We will hold fast to that while adapting to what we need to as it comes down from the federal government.
  1. <https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/public-affairs/federal-executive-orders.aspx>
- iv. Legislative session – state facing 3 billion dollar budget deficit, proposed budget from Jan did include 2 billion in cuts including 111 million cut to USM, our percentage of which would be about 5 million. Looking for both additional revenue streams as well as places where we can cut. Chancellor advocated for USM and the efficiencies and prior cuts to emphasize how painful the cuts will be to schools.

- v. Advocacy day & Posters on the Bay coming up. Continuing to advocate for capital funding for projects, Blackwell, Performing Arts, and Maggs/CHHS. Capital funds are separate from operational funding and not part of the 3bil budget shortfall. Healthcare initiatives to bring in outside funding to support Delmarva region. FY27 might be worse budget situation.
  - vi. Athletics updates – Lacrosse mens & womens doing well, both basketball teams playing in conference tournaments, hosting tournament on campus. Swimming doing really well this year, competing this weekend in conf championship.
  - vii. Strategic Planning Updates – Steering committee meeting today, will be sharing dates for signups for faculty/staff/students to participate in strategic planning process. Focus groups this spring with work over summer to create first draft for Fall launch of new strategic plan.
  - viii. Centennial fast approaching, formal announcement including website/branding/theme and various celebrations starting in April. Great opportunity to both celebrate past and position our brand for the future. Making new SU branded ice cream flavor with Island Creamery, will have open contest to choose the flavor combination and name. Finalists who participate will also get a gift card.
  - b. Human Resources Report
    - i. Wellness Initiatives – Nadalyne
      - 1. Planning wellness activities for spring, walking sessions, lunch and learns monthly, stretching sessions that can be done at your desk. Participation will enter employees into a raffle. Need volunteer walking captains for after spring break. About .8 mile path 3 routes depending where you start from on campus Tues/Wed/Thurs. Reach out to Nadalyne if interested in volunteering.
      - 2. Website of free/low cost activities available for employees.
- VIII. Other Topics
- IX. Adjournment – 12:17