



The University of Georgia

Staff Council

Making a great place to work even better!

April 6, 2016
Miller Learning Center Room 250
2:30PM

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 pm by Staff Council Chair, Michael Lewis.

Roll Call

Members in attendance: Devin Arnold, Deborah Baker, Jason Bedgood, Teri Berryman, Kaelin Broaddus, Kelly Cona, Anjali Dougherty, Melinda Eades (via sub), Elmer Gray, Stefani Hilley, Norma Holliday, Pattie Holly, Holly Ivy, Stuart Ivy, Melissa Jackson, Kevin James, Christine Jepsen, Jenna Jones, Brenda Keen, Laura Kelley, Kristin Lawrence (via sub), Roswell Lawrence, Michael Lewis, Marie Mize, Maggie O'Brien, Maureen O'Brien, Michelle Parkos, Laquita Phillips (via sub), Laura Rhicard, Carly Surratt, Kristi Wall, Shialoh Wilson

Members absent: Debi Chandler, Victoria Cooper, Kat Farlowe, Michele Griffin, Mary Moore, Sherri Stephens, Kyla Sterling, Willie Thorton

A quorum was present.

Minutes: Michael asked for a motion to approve the March minutes. They were approved unanimously.

Guest Speaker:

Michael introduced UGA President, Jere Morehead, who expressed his appreciation for Michael's leadership of Staff Council, and the collaborative approach Staff Council takes in working with the university on a variety of difficult and challenging issues. President Morehead said that this is an unusual time in higher education. We face a number of unique challenges, and if we continue to work together looking for solutions to these challenges, not only will the institution benefit, but so will its students and employees.

He thanked this staff council in particular for its collaborative and engaging approach to addressing issues that currently face UGA. He invited questions after his remarks, and noted that representatives from Human Resources were in attendance in case any issues raised needed clarification that he could not provide.

President began with these updates:

There will be a three percent salary pool for merit raises this year, the third year in a row. The pool is not as large as the past two years, due to the tuition freeze this year. The administration

will know within a week or two the exact amount of state appropriations earmarked for raises, and will also redirect other internal funds toward meeting that three percent threshold. The three percent is an average, so raises will be above, at, or below that amount.

President Morehead also shared that while he has made a compelling case to the General Assembly about UGA salaries compared to those of our peer institutions, we still exist in the reality of a being a state funded institution. Salaries are and will continue to be President Morehead's highest priority at the General Assembly every year because we lost so much ground during the recession years. It will take a long period of time and a sustained period of merit raises for UGA to get back to where it ought be concerning staff and faculty compensation. He asked Staff Council to lend any support they could in that regard any time they talk to members of the local legislative delegation. We shouldn't assume that after three consecutive years of merit raises that we will be guaranteed a fourth. We need to continue to make the case that it's important to close the compensation gap between UGA and the institutions around us.

In addition to funds that have been appropriated for merit raises, the General Assembly also funded through their capital budget outlays several projects important to UGA (pending Governor approval):

- Clark Howell Hall renovation that will begin probably this summer, no later than the fall.
- Renovation of more cabins at Rock Eagle 4-H Center.
- A research project at Skidaway.
- Equipment funds for the second phase of the Terry College Learning Community.
- Design funds for the final phase of the Business Learning Community.

UGA Human Resources is piloting a Work Life Balance initiative to support staff and faculty in gaining maximum productivity and job satisfaction. Many resources will be available online. [I realized this was a separate item since the initiative is already going and not waiting on funding.]

The following big initiatives will be launched at UGA this fall:

- Experiential Learning Initiative will affect every school and college on campus and will ensure that every undergraduate student receives a real world experience while at UGA. This initiative has been in the planning process for over a year.
- An Exploratory Center will be located in the Tate Center to help undecided undergrads find a major.
- A Strategic Branding Initiative will help UGA have a common brand, and will allow UGA to tell stories that will reach and resonate with the outside public, especially sources of funding.
- G-Day is coming Saturday, April 16. The football game starts at 4 p.m. and will be televised by ESPNU. Many other events will make it a busy weekend.
- The second Staff Appreciation Day will be held May 25th from 10 am to 2 pm.

President Morehead opened the floor for questions.

Laura Kelley asked if there were any changes President Morehead would like to see happen for UGA employees. President Morehead said that the most important issue right now is to get the salary structure where it needs to be. He's reluctant to get us off that topic because he feels it's very important that staff have more reasonable compensation levels. Other things that are being worked on in Human Resources are important, but his priority is to get a salary structure that makes UGA competitive in hiring and retaining faculty and staff. He noted that upcoming changes to FLSA regulations will affect salaries, but it's still in a state of flux. A representative

from HR said that the Department of Labor has submitted the regulations to the Office of Management and Budget, who has 60 to 90 days to review it.

On behalf of the College of Agriculture, Stefani Hilley asked why the new Shared Leave program only allows for donation of sick leave and not annual leave. President Morehead said that was a Board of Regents initiative. He went to a USG Presidents meeting on Monday and was told that the Board of Regents had adopted this initiative and was making it standard for every school in the system. Travis Jackson said that the program has been in place for years, but UGA had been allowed to have their own leave program, but as of fiscal year 2017 we will be compliant. President Morehead said that if he were on the Board of Regents he would be reluctant to have employees donating annual leave. Some departments are so small that they cannot afford to have employees on leave for an extended period unless it's a medical issue. Travis Jackson added that the new Shared Leave program will launch in the fall with benefits open enrollment, and participation requires 1) passing the probationary period, 2) a minimum donation of eight hours of sick leave while 3) maintaining a sick leave balance of at least 40 hours after the donation.

Marie Mize asked about TAP covering online classes. President Morehead said this issue also came up at the System Presidents meeting and the Chancellor said that they were trying to find a balance between the programs that are dependent upon tuition and fees (and would therefore be hampered by the reduction in tuition and fees because of TAP), and the desire to help more staff become better educated. But he didn't hear that the issue had been resolved. Marie said that employees are only allowed to register on the last day and only in classes that aren't already full of paying students. Laura Kelley shared her experience with being in Higher Education Policy Program and Law. Everyone in the program works for the university and pays different amounts. [She mentioned that two identical programs for degrees are available online. When one degree is coded as "hybrid" it is fully covered by TAP. That could be that the program meets once, twice, or even three times in-person each semester. The identical program coded "fully online" will barely have half of the tuition covered. She felt that financially it shouldn't hurt the program to fully cover TAP students who can only participate online.](#) President Morehead did say that he believes the Chancellor is going to make an announcement about this soon.

Elmer Gray asked if President Morehead would get behind the proposal coming out of University Council to allow for tuition assistance to employee spouses and dependents. President Morehead said the concern he has with the proposal is its scope. The administration asked for an economic analysis of the potential financial impact could be. He believes it would be \$16 to \$26 million in lost tuition. He thinks more work needs to be done on the proposal. President Morehead supports the idea, but is worried about the budgetary costs involved. He also believes that employee raises are a much more important issue. He also thinks it needs to be the start of a System dialog. Elmer said that over half of UGA's peer and aspirational institutions have such a program. President Morehead replied that that kind of argument isn't resonating as well for us anymore. He's used that argument on pay scales. He says it's a good argument, but it has to be within the context of how it will be fiscally responsible and how are we going to pay for it.

Stuart Ivy asked if the Move On When Ready Act has been added to requirements for UGA applicants. President Morehead said he knew about the Move On When Ready Act, but not if it was a requirement. He said that is in the Provost's bailiwick.

Stefani Hilley, again on behalf of the College of Agriculture, asked if insurance premiums or any other benefits were going to increase in 2017. President Morehead replied that he'd be surprised if anyone fully knew the answer to that question. Travis Jackson added that no details would be known until the August board meeting.

Kevin James shared some notes on the creation of the office of academic advisors on campus. He encouraged President Morehead's support of Judy Iakovou and her office because she is a real asset. Kevin shared that the Banner transition was really hard on advisors and caused low morale and high frustration. President Morehead shared that he supports greater resources for academic advising. He sees it as the lifeblood of a successful student experience and timely graduation. He asked Kevin to think about what the central administration could do (aside from salary increases) to better support academic advisors. President Morehead reminded Staff Council that a few years ago he set aside funds from the Athletic Association to help provide workshops for undergrad academic advisors. Kevin said there were two things already underway 1) a career ladder proposal that's being worked on, and 2) technology. Kevin said that academic advisors would like to have input while online tools are being developed. Banner may be a great improvement for a lot of people on campus, but it's been a step backwards for academic advisors.

Christine Jepsen thanked President Morehead for taking the time to visit Staff Council, and asked about House Bill 859, Campus Carry. If it were signed into law, does UGA have plans to appoint a task force to implement procedures, and if so, would staff be included in that. President Morehead said he needed to be careful in responding to that question, and noted that last week he wrote another letter to the Governor about HB 859. He personally thinks it's counterproductive to be talking about how we might implement a bill that has not yet been signed into law. President Morehead thinks it's better to wait until the Governor has made his decision about it. He added that the Chancellor has made it clear that anything related to HB 859 will be a University System response. He appreciated Christine's point.

Laura Kelley asked President Morehead how Staff Council could be the best advocates for UGA staff. He said he thinks it's important to talk to people, to find out what staff are concerned about and to use Staff Council to raise those concerns in the governance process. He cautioned that we should think through the implementation and financial aspects of any proposals we make, and rate all proposals in terms of importance.

President Morehead asked if there were any more questions from the College of Agriculture. There were none. He thanks the Staff Council for inviting him to speak, and departed.

Staff Council Committee Reports

Because of time constraints, there were no Staff Council Committee reports.

University Council Committee Reports

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Chair's report

Because of time constraints, there was no Chair's report.

New Business:

Upcoming elections: Kelly Cona shared that elections are being held at the May meeting. She also announced some changes concerning University Council openings. Anjali Dougherty will remain on the Strategic Affairs committee another year. There are two Student Affairs/Student Life committee member positions open because even though Laura Kelly and Kyla Sterling were elected last year, they were finishing the terms of other people. Both terms will be for three years. The Human Resources committee member position is also open and will also be for three years. Kelly also clarified that University Council positions start in August. Staff Council positions start July 1. Laura Kelley clarified that recent changes to Staff Council bylaws allow for anyone who is elected to a three-year University Council committee term is still considered a member of Staff Council even if they are replaced by another representative from their department.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Next Staff Council Executive Committee meeting 3:30 pm Tuesday, April 26, 2016, Georgia Center, Room C.

Next Staff Council meeting 2:30 pm May 4, 2016, MLC Room 207.