

USC Staff Assembly

**General Assembly Meeting
Thursday, January 10, 2019
USC Michelson Center for Convergent Bioscience (MCB) Room 101
University Park Campus (UPC)**

2018-2019 Members

Last Name	First Name	Present	Absent
Acevedo-Lam	Tanya	x	
Adcook	Steve		x
Aguilar	Carmen	x	
Aguinaldo-Dino	Maybelyn		x
Akulov	Anton		x
Alarcon	Patricia		x
Almassizadeh	Renee		x
Andalon	Tiffany	x	
Aranda	Karla	x	
Arce	Bertha	x	
Ault	Vanessa	x	
Boeck	Katie	x	
Bonagofsky	Kathy	x	
Boyd	Robert	x	
Brown	Jabari	x	
Castaneda	Agustin		x
Castilla	Jorge	x	
Chesley	Erika	x	
de Caen	Jeff	x	
Feeley	Sabrina	x	
Fried-Gintis	Sarah	x	
Gallegos	Lisa	x	
Gallegos	Lisa	x	
Godinez	Mike	x	
Gonzalez	Adriana	x	
Gorse	Michael	x	
Halfacre	Gloria	x	
Hinojosa	Shannon	x	
Hoang	Queena	x	
Jacobs	Anette		x
Jamanila	Teresita		x
Jebavy	Erin	x	

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Last Name	First Name	Present	Absent
Johnston	James	x	
Kidder	Eric	x	
Lee	Paul	x	
Lewis	Kierra	x	
Low	Theodore	x	
Luna	Sarah		x
Malan	Mark	x	
Mardirossian	Jackie		x
Martinez	Naomi	x	
Mico	Brian	x	
Mizushima	Linda	x	
Nieto	Lou		x
Olivos			
Romero	Deborah	x	
Ortiz	Bryan	x	
Ramirez	Sergio	x	
Reano	Cory	x	
Rivera	Lillian	x	
Sinclair	Sandry	x	
Smith	Rona		x
Tai	Joyce	x	
Tellez	Rosemarie		x
Trujillo	Mary	x	
Wang	Jonathan	x	
Weiss	Jeanne	x	
Williams	Debbie		x
Zuniga	Randy	x	

Call to Order:

President Jeffrey De Caen called the meeting to order at 9:03 am

January Staff Recognition Award:

Jeff de Caen said that the January awardee couldn't attend and that Erika Chesley and JaBari Brown were planning to surprise her at her office.

Approval of Minutes:

Katie coordinated the approval of December's General Assembly meeting minutes, which had been distributed to Assembly members in advance of the meeting. On a motion by James Johnston (seconded by Mark Malan), the meeting minutes of December 6, 2018 were unanimously approved.

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Associate SVP for HR Report- Janis McEldowney

Janis reported she didn't have anything to report. Jeff asked about whether or not there was any update for the Senior Vice-President of Human Resources. Janis said that the position had been created and it would be directly under the President and that they may be close to hiring someone. She is less clear of what that means or what changes will happen. Mark Malan asked if this potential person could look at the fractured system and make suggestions and Janis said yes that was the hope. One of the issues is the non-formal gatherings but for formal gatherings they are compliant. Mark reminded people that at Penn State it was the janitor who reported things so it is important that everyone understand the processes. Sarah Fried-Gintis asked Janis about background checks for people who work with minors. Sarah said she is receiving different information from different areas and it is confusing. Janis said that enforcement is being ramped up and there is a new position under compliance that is overseeing the minors.

Personnel Council Report-Awilda Bregand

Awilda reported that open enrollment went well. There is a concern that only 60% of people participated in the health assessment screening. They think that some people don't want to participate due to confidentiality. The screening is down from the first year. The question was asked if the 40% who didn't participate were faculty or staff and Awilda said that they hadn't drilled down to that level yet. James thought that the BIOIQ went better this year. Mark thought that the assessment area should be more secluded because people could see who walked in and out of Kings Hall. Mark also asked what we were doing with the information since we aren't promoting yoga or other health programs. Mark also thought we needed more healthy food options in Seeds and other restaurants. Erika said that we do have a dietitian on staff who is willing to meet with staff and faculty to talk about things. Katie asked if we could have a dance class or a yoga class that we can take without having to enroll in a program and something more than just the staff hour. Mark reminded everyone that we can take a class using tuition assistance if our boss says it is for our job but he thought it would be good to encourage people to take other classes. Gloria Halfacre thought that because the BIOIQ screenings were all on one side of campus, some people may not have wanted to walk across campus and maybe it would be a good idea to have multiple areas around campus where people could go for the assessment. Bryan Ortiz asked why the SSRP (Support Staff Retirement Plan) was removed and Awilda didn't know why and said it should have been.

Erika asked what kind of feedback they had gotten about the tuition and retirement benefit changes. Awilda said that she got three to four calls and had about four to five cases that she was working on but she didn't know how many calls the center got. Erika said that hiring managers used to use what they changed as carrots to encourage people to work here and now it isn't there. Jeff thought we need to have more information that is communicated about what the peer universities are doing and even if we have less in one area we might have more benefits in another. Jeff said there are a lot of discussions going on behind the scenes that we aren't aware of. Mark thought that more information should be made available so we can see that we are paying more in one area so others will still have jobs.

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Committee Reports

Communications – Erika Chesley, Chair

Erika talked about the Assembled Voice (AV) and how it has been an update on staff accomplishments and new things that were of interest. It came out twice a year and Erika gave a shout out to past chairs and committee members that put so much time and energy into it. The committee discovered that all of the information in the AV could be found in areas of the Staff Assembly web page and we weren't getting any financial benefit from the advertisements. In its current form it is 23-25 pages long and the committee would like to recommend doing away with the paper version and move it to a more technology based platform. If it is online we could monitor what people are reading and what they are interested in. Part of the problem has been the information the AV provided could have been six months old. Erika asked the assembly what parts they enjoyed reading. People said the retiree updates from the Emeriti Center, president's message, while others said they used to read it when it was in paper form but once it was emailed out in pdf form, they were more likely to not read it. Many people agreed that the real time option was better and a suggestion was made to add an area where people could ask questions about what is concerning them. Janette Brown asked what is driving people to the site as the Emeriti Center is also trying to find out the best way to get people to visit their site. Janette reported that the Executive Committee had also agreed to get rid of the pdf form and that she would like to connect and coordinate with the Communications Committee. Erika said that there will be a marketing campaign that will be launched around the new site. Erika asked the committee members to stand up and encouraged us to reach out to them with ideas or to send an email to the USC Staff Assembly email address with the subject of Assembled Voice. Since Jeff had stepped out of the room, Brian Mico the Vice-President approved moving forward with a vote. Mark Malan moved to accept the changes and move the AV from its current form to online. Lisa Mizushima seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Compensation & Benefits – James Johnston, Chair

James reported that the committee met and talked about the "bring your own device", but that due to the holidays, it kind of died. The committee will start meeting again soon. The Benefits and Executive Committees of the Emeriti Center met yesterday and Prateek Bhatia and presented which was great. The health plans group is looking at a senior HMO plan and they are going to have focus groups to talk about it. The Emeriti Center celebrated its 40th Anniversary last month and it was a great success. The Employee Health Committee for the University will meet in January and he will have more information in February. A question was asked about pet insurance as a benefit and they said that Prateek had come to their department and they asked him about it at the time. Awilda said that she is already looking into it.

Environment & Safety – Naomi Martinez, Chair

Jeff brought up that Rec Sports was changing the security of Cromwell Field and access that between 6pm-6am the north side entrances will be locked and it will require a card swipe on the north east corner. If you are a current faculty or staff member then you have access. Paul said that he plays intramural sports and it has been an issue of individuals taking the bags of the people while they are playing. Jeff said that Naomi will dig deeper into this. Naomi said that her concern was that we weren't given a lot of notice and were just told it was happening.

Rights and Responsibilities – Renee Almassizadeh, Chair

Renee was out sick so there is no report.

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Rules and Elections – Rosemarie Tellez, Chair

Rosie was out sick so there is no report.

Scholarship – JaBari Brown, Chair

JaBari reported that they need people to nominate for monthly award. They are waiting for the Staff Club to approve the changes to the application process. The committee is also looking at increasing benefits if people win or having an incentive for people to nominate. They are also starting the process of the scholarships.

Staff Appreciation – Paul Lee, Chair

Paul reported that there was a lot of discussion around the timing of Staff Appreciation week and do we align it with the President's lunch but if we do that, it may impact people with the start of registration for the fall. Paul asked people to raise their hands if there would be a negative impact the first week of April. Several people raised their hands. Paul reported that another alternative would be the last week of April which would align with Administrative Assistants day. Mark asked if we could do it over Spring Break, but Jeff said a lot of people take that week off. If we do Administrative Assistants Day then we overlap with something that the Contracts and Grants Office does. Jeff said when we did the week after Memorial Day last year it was okay not great. We had postponed it from the week after Commencement because a lot of people are dealing with the cleanup. Based on the informal vote, there wasn't much against either the first week or the last week of April.

On Employee Gateway have been doing what's for lunch and the last week before break there was a promotion with Dulce. There were some last week and this week so people should check out the Gateway. A lot of people didn't know about it because Employee Gateway didn't send out an email the week of December 31st. Erika said this will be a benefit of the Staff Assembly site being real time and that they will be able to link the promotions through the live feed. Erika introduced David who creates the Monday morning emails from Employee Gateway. David said that there is so much information that they have to choose what to include. He said even if it doesn't go out in the Connect Email, it is up on the site. If there is something we feel is important or something that we want to put up, we can send it to him directly at robbinsd@usc.edu. They have an email template that only allows 10 things and it is also based on the number of clicks that they get the week before to whether things go higher upon the email. A lot of times people don't click past the first two items on the email. Paul reported that there will also be another Dramatic Arts deal coming soon.

Transportation – Ted Low, Chair

Ted reported that the committee was meeting today at 10:30 and that Shawn Chavira was coming to meet with them to talk and try to get updates on things that are pending such as the work on the Metro lines and how that will affect people on campus. The committee is also focusing on parking rates and they are looking at UCLA and what they are charging compared to USC. They are also looking at the parking issues at HSC and that there aren't enough parking spaces. There are also issues with the timing of the lights and the ones that blink red around the UPC campus. There is no CRB this month and there were only 4 appeals in December. People don't seem to be appealing things as much as they used to. Mark asked about the possibility of changing the name of the C Route because it still confuses people that there is no A or B route anymore and yet some of the signs are still up. Mark also suggested changing the names on the shuttles people it says Parking Center or AT&T Center and yet the names have changed. Ted said he would mention it to Shawn.

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President's Report – Jeffrey De Caen

President De Caen reported that he had an exciting meeting with President Austin this past Monday. He had previously suggested that it might be a good idea that when the President thinks about the State of the University Address to talk to the President of the Staff Assembly. Jeff met with President Austin and her speech writers. He hopes to formalize the process of the President of the Staff Assembly to meet with the President of the University every year before the address.

The President's Culture Committee is meeting January 24, 2019. Jeff will be the co-chair of the working committee with Paul Rosenbloom the President Emeritus of the Academic Senate as well as Stacy Giwa Vice-President of Ethics and Compliance. They are moving dialog forward and it will culminate in April and Jeff sees this as an interactive communication opportunity. This is a two way conversation and hopes it will be more like the Presidential Search opportunity but while that was only one way, this would be two way.

Jeff then pitched the idea to the group that his last big hurrah has been looking at setting up a structure more like the Academic Senate Structure. Four or five schools have started internal staff councils and he met with some of them including with JaBari who is the head of the one for Annenberg. Each group is loosely following the Staff Assembly but they have their own bylaws. This started when Rick Caruso approached Jeff to find out what was going on with the staff and Jeff didn't feel he could really represent all of the staff outside of the Staff Assembly. Jeff doesn't feel he and Staff Assembly really know what is going on in all areas and we have a better shot of representing staff if we knew more. He has been looking at the Academic Senate Model when the faculty have committees in each school that meet regularly and the larger committees then send representatives to the Academic Senate meetings. They bring information to the Senate and then take it back to their departmental committees. Jeff said that we could have staff councils in each of the schools, the hospital, and FMS. Katie mentioned that she had brought up the idea in Dornsife but that there wasn't a lot of interest in it and that it might be something that needs to come from higher up like the Provost or Senior Vice Presidents. Kierra Lewis said that in Dornsife the business office has something similar and that she is meeting with Renee Perez to talk about it going to other areas of Dornsife.

Sarah thought that if we look like the Academic Senate that it would be hard since we have so many areas. And in the hospital it might be hard because there are so many people there and that they might outweigh the academic areas. She said not to get into politics but that the Electoral College isn't great but it was designed to keep one group from outweighing another one. Someone else brought up that Rossier has a staff advisory council and that the Dean has been very supportive of it. It has become so big that they have a governance and a president, vice-president and people are elected to it. Then advisors meet with the Dean. The Fall Kick Off for Rossier has a strong presence of staff and that they have a voice. Jeff asked them to send him information about how the different schools handle their staff councils.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the current Staff Assembly was made by Mark Malan and was seconded by Robby Boyd. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:35.

Next Meeting:

Thursday February 7, 2019 9:00-10:30 am. Location: Michelson Hall (MCB) 101 at UPC

Minutes submitted by Secretary Katie Boeck.