

Staff Senate Meeting**July 2, 2020****12:00-2:00 p.m.**

Note: Due to modified UMB operations in response to COVID-19, the July Staff Senate Meeting was held via WebEx Meetings as a closed meeting.

Call to Order (12 noon)

The meeting was called to order by Staff Senate President, Kristy Novak.

Attendees

Voting Members: Ayuk-Brown, Ayamba; Boggs, Steven; Brightbill, Gregory; Buckingham, Kent; DeBoer, Taylor; Dietz, Allison; Essien, Sharese; Fenwick, Christina; Hamilton, Jill; Harrison, Shawndae; Hitch, Kecia; Hokenmaier, Sarah; Holt, Susan; Lewis, LaToya; Ludd, Latoya; Novak, Kristy; Phelan, Mary; Sizemore, Cody; Volberding, Jenn; Wilson, Lakeisha; Zhang, Lei.

Alternate Members: Azen, Michael; Hockensmith, Thomas; Perri, Carroll.

Absent Members: Jackson, Sarah; Privette, Shawnta; Wakefield, Priti; Barkman, Emma.

Establish Quorum (50% +1 = 12 voting members): Quorum is achieved at 21 members.

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions of newly elected and currently serving senators were completed at the last meeting.

Approval of June Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes without changes by Jill Hamilton; 2nd by Sharese Essien.
- Motion Passed Unanimously.

Community Committee Update (provided by Sarah Hokenmaier)

- The Staff Senate Community Outreach committee met with Brian Sturdivant (Office of Community Engagement), and the faculty senate representative(s). Discussions focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the School Supply Drive which collects school supplies for James Mc Henry Elementary and UMB CURE Scholars (usually held annually during the months of August and September).
 - The group recognized that there will be challenges due to COVID-19; namely the early closure of schools, the uncertainty of re-opening (and what re-opening will look like), loss of jobs, and parents having to adjust to new schedules.
 - The group acknowledged the impact that COVID-19 will have on the fundraising event this year. However, the challenges created by COVID-19 will reinforce the need to have a Back to School drive. The group is committed to continue conducting needs assessments to adjust to the changing effects of COVID-19 on community needs. Brian will reach out to the different constituents to get feedback.
 - The School Supply Drive may extend into the month of November, and may overlap with the Thanksgiving Drive.

- The plan is to establish a website to provide information on current fundraisers; the website will include a link for individuals to submit monetary contributions to the fundraiser of their choice.
- Monetary contribution is the preferred method, however other suggestions include having volunteers assemble school supply kits to be shipped directly to families. The group is asking for feedback from staff senate.
- The Staff Senate Community Outreach Committee will work with the Communications Committee to establish ways of communicating with the UMB community about fundraising opportunities and how they may get involve.

Questions:

- Lakeisha Wilson expressed her support for monetary contributions but suggested including opportunities for purchasing gift cards (e.g. Walmart, target, and amazon).
 - The staff senate was reminded that foundation rules do not allow for the purchasing of gift cards; reimbursement is only provided for purchases made.
- Jill Hamilton noted that not everyone will be excited about contributing money or may have genuine concerns and would probably rather buy items that are needed. The Staff Senate Community Outreach committee is opened to other ideas or suggestions.
- Kristy voiced her support for having a website with current and active community fundraising opportunities but recommended having a more prescribed way for individuals to contribute by providing options for entering direct payments (e.g. credit card, or checking account transactions) so people are more confident that their monetary contributions are being used the way they intended. She believes that this will lessen the concerns about monetary contributions and may even increase participation in fundraising events.

Guest Speakers

- **Matt Lasecki, Associate Vice President, Human Resource Services**

Covid-19 Survey

The results of a survey on UMB Experience during COVID-19 was presented by Matt Lasecki. The following are highlights from the presentation:

- Staff Senate is the first group presented with results from the survey. Matt will meet with UMB leadership later today and in the next coming weeks to discuss the results.
- The survey was sent to all UMB Staff via Qualtrics.
- The survey included 36 items including 6 open text items. Over 1500 comments were received and over 1, 100 responses to the survey (representing a 25% response rate). Matt noted that further analysis is needed to establish common themes that exist within the comments.
- Overall the survey was well received.
- The goal was to create a survey for staff that was parallel (having similar items/questions) to the faculty survey so that analyses could be conducted and conclusions made would represent the campus community as a whole.
- Qualtrics made the survey mobile ready so that it facilitated more participation.

- Response rates: School of Medicine, which is the largest unit- 44 %; University Administration- 27.39%; HS/HSL-1.35%; Social Work -6.04%; Pharmacy 5.95%. School of Nursing-6.04%, School of Law-3.69%; Graduate School-1.26%; School of Dentistry 3.60%.
- Demographics (The EEOC standards were used): Men-21.43%; Women-71.32%; Non-binary/third gender-0.21%; Prefer to self-describe-0.84%; Prefer not to answer-6.2%.
- Individuals were asked to self-identify their race: 6.31% Asian, 20.75% Black, 0.32% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 58.4% White, 2.57% Other; 11.34% participants preferred not to identify race.
- The survey also captured the number of employees that had care responsibilities at home during COVID-19 (300 employees were recorded with day care responsibilities of a child and/or parent).
- Of the respondents recorded having school age dependents, approximately 50% recorded having school age dependents at any level (50% had children in junior high school or lower); 46% reported that they were the primary source of education.
- Overall results indicated that UMB employees were moderately to highly satisfied with UMB's response to COVID-19 and transitioning to a telework environment. Exempt employees generally reported higher satisfaction than non-exempt or C1/C2 staff.
- The overall perception was that University-Level leadership has effectively protected staff from the negative health consequences of COVID-19, and supported staff in adapting to the changes related to combating the spread of the virus.
- Overall, the majority of respondents (+95%) agree that University-level leadership has communicated effectively and transparently during the crisis.
- Most responders reported that their immediate supervisors helped in resetting priorities due to changes at the institution caused by COVID-19; helped them understand the direction forward; showed care and concern during the COVID-19 crisis; and communicated effectively and transparently.
- Most respondents are comfortable engaging in remote work (60% extremely comfortable, 28.5% somewhat comfortable).
- Despite overall satisfaction, the survey identified areas of assistance reported by respondents: 14% would like information on how to best engage with coworkers in a remote environment; 14% would like webinars on how to be successful with remote work, 24% would like greater access to technology for remote work; 12% would like more assistance using remote work technology.
- Work Effectiveness: primarily exempt staff perceived an increase in productivity due to the shift from in-person to remote work; there was some correlation between the frequency of engagement with coworkers and perceived work effectiveness. This is an area that may be explored.

Next steps

- Report to CMAG, DAC, etc.
- Analyze the comments to find a pattern
- Share data with Faculty Survey group
- Communicate and follow up with key stakeholders

Questions:

- Amy Daniels recommended using the NVivo software analyze the comments. The Nvivo software NVivo is used to analyze qualitative and mixed methods data.
- Kristy commented that she was happy to see that the survey captured the individuals at home providing care and education to children during the COVID-19 work at home mandate. She noted that a Florida University issued plans for returning to work without the consideration that employees may need to find alternative care for their children to do so. She commended UMB leadership for being understanding.
- Matt will share the raw responses (without statistical analysis) to the staff senate. Data tables will include results from both exempt and nonexempt survey participants.
- Kristy confirmed that the information should not be shared with the rest of the UMB community until it has been disseminated through the appropriate channels.

Staff Senate Orientation 2020-2021

A Staff Senate Orientation presentation was provided by Kristy Novak, Staff Senate President (See PowerPoint Presentation).

Presentation Highlights:

- Meeting Schedule 2020-2021-Staff senators were reminded of the meeting schedule for 2020-2021 which is anticipated to continue in closed format on Webex- Please add to your calendar; Staff Senate secretary will send out a meeting invite as the date gets closer.
- Attendance policy
- Robert rules
- Committee participation
- Meeting Minutes: Read minutes and agenda prior to monthly meetings
- Responsibilities & Roles
- Staff Senate Strategic priorities- Themes are aligned with each committee, so each committee will be tasked with fulfilling these goals.
- Stay Connected
- Committees & Liaison Roles: Current Committees: Communications, Policy & Legislative, University Life, Board of Regents, Community Outreach, and CUSS,
- Liaison roles to be filled -Communications Council, UMB Civility Campaign, HR Working Group, Arts & Culture Council, and Campus Sustainability Steering Committee. Kristy will send out an email with the available liaison roles.

Reminders/Next Steps for Senators

- Utilize Doodle Poll to sign up for a committee: the poll was sent out immediately after the meeting. Committee members were selected on a first com first selected basis.
- There is usually an average of five (5) members per committee.

Elections

➤ **Member at Large Position**

- Gregory gave brief instructions for UMB connect. Staff Senators were asked to note the UMB connect email and accept the notification to add. This is for voting members only. Senators who cannot access were directed to contact Greg for assistance.
- Voting Instructions:

- You should have received notification that you have been added to an organization in UMBconnect. Log into UMBconnect following the link and make sure your credentials work.
- During the election period, you will be given another link to access the polling function in UMBconnect. Once there, you should see a prompt to complete the ballot for the Member at Large position.

➤ **CUSS Alternate Positions**

- Susan Holt gave a brief introduction to CUSS, giving highlights to some of the advocacy initiatives completed by the committee in the past, and encouraged senators to sign up. She noted the traveling expectations for CUSS members.
- Voting Instructions:
 - Voting was opened using UMBconnect immediately following the meeting. Instructions were the same as the instructions given for voting for Member at Large Position,

Christina opened the floor for nominations. The following nominations were accepted during the meeting:

- Mary Phelan
- Sharese Essein
- Ayamba Ayuk

Current primary members are: Jennifer Volberding, Susan Holt, and Collette Beaulieu.

➤ **CUSS Updates:**

- Meetings will be held virtually due to COVID-19; Laila Shishineh PhD, Cuss Senate President, serves as Co-chair on the COVID-19 transition committee and will provide updates of any changes to this format.

Old Business

➤ **UMB President Search Committee**

- The Faculty Senate is interested in a joint forum to discuss issues of importance and inform representatives participating on the search team. Information will be shared about this opportunity when available.
- The Search Committee has met once, and will be meeting again after the staff senate meeting.
- The Committee is working with a search firm (3rd party).
- It was suggested that Staff Senate could form a focus group that will formulate questions to be asked to the potential candidates, and propose qualities needed for a candidate to be successful in the role of UMB President.

➤ **UMB Recovery Task Force**

Kristy shared that a number of focus groups were formed to address COVID-19 related issues and to establish procedures for returning back to the campus safely. Members of the Staff Senate and Faculty Senate were asked to join focus groups so that the UMB Campus is represented in decisions.

Updates:

- Gregory Brightbill: UMB COVID-19 Operations: Schools are working on standardizing processes and procedures for returning; However, UMB leadership is still reinforcing that roles and functions that are able to work remotely should continue to do so. The Committee is exploring the most effective way to conduct contact tracing and sharing information to individuals who may have been affected in some way.
- The University COVID-19 Task Force will be meeting soon; senators were asked to submit concerns or recommendations to Gregory Brightbill so they may be addressed at the committee meeting.
- Sarah Hokenmaier: The COVID-19 Community Focus group discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the community, recognizing the digital divide that exists within the West Baltimore community. The UMB leadership is committed to supporting the community and addressing the concern of a lack of access to technology. The digital divide has especially far-reaching consequences when it comes to education. The Staff Senate will be informed when plans have been confirmed. The focus of the group will adjust to the needs of the community.
- Christina Fenwick- COVID-19 Human Resource Focus Group is currently working to establish a Manager's Guide for returning safely to campus. The guide will address concerns related to approval for extended remote work, monitoring symptoms (for those who return to work), leave for high risk employee. The University of Maryland College Park has shared their version of COVID- 19 Manager's Guide; the focus group will modify and rebrand this version.

➤ **Activity in Place of August Retreat**

- Staff Senators were asked to contact Kristy with any recommendations for the August virtual retreat.
- The Executive Committee will reach out to Mark A. Emmel, MAS, SPHR, for ideas on a virtual format for the retreat.
- A subcommittee may be assembled to focus on a virtual retreat.
- There is a possibility that the event may be cancelled if there is a lack of interest, ideas, or format for a virtual retreat.

Continuing the Conversation: Comments/Thoughts from Social Justice Town Hall and Face to Face with Ray Lewis

Kristy provided the following updates from the Staff Senate Executive Committee with Dr. Jarrell:

Juneteenth Observance

- Kristy informed the Staff Senate that she expressed gratitude for Dr. Jarrell taking the initiative to observe Juneteenth and providing a time for reflection especially for staff members that expressed the difficulty they were experiencing in concentrating amidst the current unrest due to recent social injustices observed nationwide.
- Per Dr. Jarrell, he believes that it should be observed annually and UMB will consider how best to include this in the annual holiday schedule, while remaining compliant with state provisions regarding holidays.
- The governor is expected to provide additional guidance on the State's decision to observe Juneteenth beyond 2020.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Training

- The UMB leadership has begun the process of creating formal DEI training both at orientation and available at a highly recommended basis.
 - School of Social Work has an established DEI program, which is being used as a pilot in creating a program that will be made accessible for the campus community. There may be several formats including a course specific to new employees, and students at orientation, a shortened version that may serve as a course that is highly recommended.

Discussion:

- Sharese Essien informed that Staff Senate that she participated in Dr. Jarrell's Town Hall Meeting discussion on social injustice. She expressed that there is a need to establish a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion executive role at the leadership level. At a Women's Forum she attended, the DEI VP from Towson University spoke of her efforts at the campus in promoting DEI initiatives. She added that UMBC is also moving in the direction of hiring DEI leadership roles. She believes that having a role will allow for more DEI collaborative initiatives and provide advocacy for DEI issues.
 - Staff Senate was informed that there are Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion leadership positions in the School of Nursing, School of Medicine, and School of Social Work. Dr. Ward has also appointed individuals at the Graduate School to focus on these issues.
 - UMB leadership has been in discussions with Damon Williams, PhD., chief catalyst, Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership & Social Impact with a focus on creating a portfolio for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion leadership roles. Discussion emphasis is placed on the expertise, experience, and qualifications needed for an individual tasked with providing leadership in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Dr. Jarrell added, that persons leading in DEI should be in good standing with both the schools and the staff.
 - Perri Carroll agreed that DEI leadership is needed at each school/department. She expressed her concerns for not having that level of leadership involved in DEI issues/investigations and spoke of her own experience within her department. She noted in her experience that the request for DEI training at the management level was rejected.
 - Gregory Brightbill informed the Staff Senate that Courtney Jones Carey, is leading the Multicultural Center Taskforce in building a comprehensive Intercultural Leadership and Engagement Center focused on advancing student success and the development of cultural competencies to inform students' professional practice. He believes that this may provide a platform to address DEI issues on campus.
 - Kristy recommended Jeff Ash, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion. She believes that he is a great resource for resolving DEI issues.
 - Staff Senate was reminded that the Office of Accountability & Compliance is the institution's designated office for investigating DEI issues and providing DEI training campus wide.
- Sharese Essien also expressed concerns about supervisors not submitting annual Performance Development Plans (PDP) timely, and informed that staff senate that late PDPs

default to a “Meet Standards” performance evaluation. She would like to see more transparency and consistency among supervisors campus wide (especially when faculty supervise staff).

- Kristy also mentioned that at the Staff Senate Executive Committee meeting with Dr. Jarrell that concerns of a lack of discussion at supervisor meetings with regards to on various issues including systemic racism, racial violence, and social justice was discussed.
 - UMB leadership is aware of the challenges that supervisors are facing in communicating and facilitating discussions related to the current unrest due to social injustice and systemic racism that exists nationwide. More specifically, Caucasian supervisors are uncomfortable with having discussion with their direct reports of ethnic minority groups

New Business

- Committee Updates will be given at the September Staff Senate Meeting.
- Other Items:
 - Susan Holt informed the Staff Senate of a memo that was released on July 1, 2020 by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) suggesting salary cuts for Maryland state employees. There is also the suggestion of a reduction to the salary schedule by 1%. She would prefer to have furloughs than to have a salary reduction if the option was available.
 - Christina Fenwick stated that the Governor’s proposal to cut 3000 Maryland state jobs was not approved. She reminded Staff Senate that although some recommendations refer to Maryland State employees, we have to ensure that it is specific to University System employees.
 - Sarah Hokenmaier informed the meeting that at the Funding Model Workgroup meeting, the information provided indicated there is some optimism for fiscal year 2020/2021. However, there may be some budgetary cuts for fiscal year 2021/2022.

Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn the meeting by name Kristy Novak; 2nd by Sharese Essien. Meeting adjourned at 2: 03 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: LaToya Lewis, Secretary

Minutes approved: September 3, 2020.