

MINUTES

CLAS Staff Council – regular monthly meeting

Wednesday, November 18th, 2020 - Zoom

<https://uiowa.zoom.us/j/94610667972>

- I. Call to order – 11 a.m.
- II. Roll call
 - a. Present: Kathy Ford, Carole Kern, Emma Kirk, Jen Knights, Amanda Jensen, Sandy Mast, Julie Ostrem, Greta Sokoloff, Mark Fullenkamp, Jeremy Richardson, and George Hospodarsky; ex officio – Rebecca Kick, Melia Pieper, Heather Mineart. Guest(s):
 - b. Absent:
- III. Motion to approve October minutes simultaneously from Fullenkamp and Kern and seconded by Kirk. Minutes unanimously approved by Councilors.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Meet the ADs – Associate Dean for Research Joshua Weiner:

AD Weiner started as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology in 2004. He holds a secondary appointment in Psychiatry and has been an associate director of the Iowa Neuroscience Institute (INI) since 2017. Weiner also was integral in establishing, and continues to co-direct, the new interdisciplinary Neuroscience major which is only a few years old and already has 285 students declared. Weiner started the INI Summer Scholars program, a program that provides undergraduates with financial support to continue their research over the summer. AD Weiner also has an active research program which focuses on brain circuit formation in early development. With all the recent turnover, Weiner's entree into the world of the Dean's Office has been interesting. Even pre-COVID there was a budget deficit which has been exacerbated by the pandemic (e.g., fewer students, less state funding, existing tuition freeze). [AD Weiner mentioned an upcoming Board of Regents (BOR) meeting to discuss the State's Universities and the BOR did keep [the tuition freeze](#)].

AD Weiner also oversees CLAS IT. One important source of funding opportunities comes from student technology fees. These fees MUST be used for equipment that enhances the CLAS undergraduate experience. There is currently a surplus so people should submit ideas for larger projects that promote experiential learning. Hospodarsky asked for clarification on the kind of equipment and Weiner replied that it should be a computer, but it can be a computer that runs equipment of some sort. For example, the Biology Department got a genome sequencing system with these funds. Just ask!

He is also responsible for overseeing facilities management, which cover 39 departments in CLAS and greater than 39 Buildings. Finally, Weiner oversees sustainability for the college.

AD Weiner's portfolio also includes CLAS research, grants, publications (books and papers), and performances. With respect to grant getting, AD Weiner has tried to make sure the grant support office is functioning well and that grant managers are deployed to, and available for, all CLAS departments. Sokoloff brought up the issue of creating opportunities for research staff to work on professional development and for those research staff able to apply for independent funding to take advantage of some of the support in place for grant getting. Weiner elaborated that departmental grant managers should be assisting not only faculty but trainees (postdocs and graduate students) as well as eligible research staff. Sokoloff asked about training opportunities for staff that may not have a lot of experience on their own like grant writing workshops. Weiner talked about OVPR resources, for fee grant editing (does require a 12-week lead time), needs to check on whether or not it is open to staff. Also, there is grant writing training provided by CLAS, it is a two-phase program with phase I occurring in October. 20 people are funded per year currently. On December 10th there

was an NIH review panel open to all. Weiner recommended the [OVPR](#) website and especially the new [CLAS Research Resource](#) website. Ostrem asked about the incentive for faculty to apply for funding and if that had been looked at. Weiner remarked that it was a tricky thing to do based on vast differences in funding opportunities across research areas in CLAS. PTAP is 40-40-20 so 40% of faculty time should be devoted to grant getting if you are in a grant getting discipline. There is work to identify as many mechanisms as possible for obtaining funding and to have that information available for all CLAS departments as well as a database of faculty who have successfully applied for, and received, funding through a particular mechanism who can be a resource for new applicants. Hospodarsky reiterated that Research Scientists are important to the campus (OVPR advertises the multi-million dollar grant recently award to Bill Kurth in Physics, who is a research scientist) but often overlooked with respect to their contribution to grant getting.

b. [CLAS HR Review](#) –

Weiner briefly discussed what has been going on since the review was published. Now Reardon and Dean Sanders are working on how to decide on the final structure. There will be a separate HR position to deal with DEI and Cultural issues because we are a larger college with more people. Fullenkamp wanted to mention that there was a lack of focus on staff-related issues in the review. It more strongly emphasized HR-Faculty interactions, especially with respect to hiring. They did talk about how people don't know who their HR representatives are and who to talk to. Hospodarsky stated that they were trying to come out with better instructions for who to talk to for different issues. Jensen seconded Fullenkamp's feedback about the lack of discussion of staff HR issues. Sokoloff mentioned that it would be a good point to bring up with Dean Sanders. Jensen reiterated a common theme for the Council, that we and most staff in the college would like to see more staff representation on committees like the HR Review committee. Hospodarsky agreed and thought the committee should have come to the Council for input. Jensen just emphasized that we as a Council need to keep bringing this issue up since it continues to be an issue where CLAS staff feel like second class citizens in the college. Hospodarsky stated we need to remind people we exist. Kirk stated that it may be important to get this in writing in the various MOPPs.

c. Ex-Officio updates – no time for Ex Officio updates

- i. UI Staff Council – There wasn't time for a Staff Council update so I am including a link to the UI Staff Council newsletter for November ([UISC News](#))
- ii. HR –
- iii. ASG –

V. Committee updates

- a. Awards – The Awards Committee met and strategized the distribution of Thank You gifts to CLAS staff. Gifts should arrive at departments this week and will be distributed by department administrators. 6 applications were received for the Mary Louise Kelley Professional Development awards and they will be discussed before the next committee meeting. The committee also decided to commit to another virtual Staff Recognition event in spring 2021 with the hopes that an in person even may be possible late summer or even in the fall.
- b. Bylaws – Still need to see about some more committee members!
- c. Communications – The Communications Committee met and discussed adding a link to for the COVID-19 Training for Staff/Supervisors to the News section of the webpage. That compliance is due 11/27/20. Under the CLAS Excellence header Jensen will include something about Working at Iowa Survey Results (December 2020) as well as the Campus Climate Survey as soon as the results are made available. Jensen will also add some wellness and self-care links for managing the upcoming holidays. Discuss with Council contacting Faculty Assembly about amending their MOPP to include staff on all new committees and reviews. Fullenkamp was going to contact Nic Arp to see about doing a piece on the Council to increase visibility.
- d. DEI –

- e. Education – The education committee continually seeks updates to the Professional Development webpage and has partially built a new section, “Sowing seeds for success: Working with college students;” it will be launched before the end of the calendar year.
- f. Executive –

Next meeting – Wednesday, December 16th, 2020