

MINUTES

CLAS Staff Council – regular monthly meeting

Wednesday, February 17th, 2021 - Zoom

[Zoom](#) Link

- I. Call to order
- II. Present: Kathy Ford, Carole Kern, Emma Kirk, Jen Knights, Amanda Jensen, Julie Ostrem, Greta Sokoloff, Mark Fullenkamp, and George Hospodarsky; ex officio – Rebecca Kick. Guests: AD Maggy Tomova, Lynne Nugent
- III. Absent: Sandy Mast, Jeremy Richardson, Melia Pieper, Heather Mineart
- IV. Motion to approve January minutes put forward by Fullenkamp, seconded by Ford. Minutes approved unanimously by Council.
- V. New Business
 - a. Meet the A.D.s – Maggy Tomova, Associate Dean for the Natural, Mathematical, and Social Sciences AD Tomova joined the Math Department in 2005 and in 2017 became Chair. She started her AD role in 2020 and CLAS staff are a part of her portfolio so she is interested in keeping up with staff accomplishments and issues. Much of her job is dealing with issues that arise in departments, much of which is connected to civility and DEOs have recently done training in this area. Collaboration with other ADs: a lot of overlap with AD Racevskis; with respect to research related issues she works with AD Weiner; work on both undergraduate and graduate student issues with ADs Lang and Getz. AD Tomova is a good first contact for people in the departments she oversees, if she can't help you directly, she can point you to the appropriate person.

Fullenkamp asked if as an AD, Tomova gets good feedback from CLAS Staff. Tomova said she does not get a lot of feedback. She meets with departmental administrators twice a month, so she is not sure whether it means there are no problems or if she is just not hearing about them. She asked if there was a clear path for communicating concerns to which Fullenkamp replied that there can be a bottleneck in communication because you cannot see a clear path around supervisor.

Kick stated that a large part of the reason behind the formation of CLAS Staff Council was to provide CLAS staff a voice. Jensen brought up that it can vary a lot depending on your supervisor and that hopefully the Council is becoming a conduit for staff to have a voice. Kirk added that staff seeking different support is often more administrative, as opposed to academic so it does not really go straight through the academic structure. Kirk has always had good results with going to ADs with issues. Sokoloff agreed that with Kirk that a big part of it is the variability in staff roles and responsibilities. Ultimately a lot of variability in the issues staff might have and who would be best to talk to for those issues. Kirk added that there are decisions made at the College level that do trickle down to staff so it is key for staff to have a place at the table so we can more effectively voice our opinions.

Tomova asked what she could do to make sure staff know that they can reach out to her. Fullenkamp suggested a mentoring system where staff could have a place to bring confidential issues as opposed to having just one path through the Ombudsperson. Kirk suggested that Departmental Administrators could be encouraged to invite staff for input about departmental issues. Often things go down just at the Administrative or Faculty level and does not trickle down to staff. Ostrem brought up that her DEO started the practice of inviting staff to faculty meetings which Ostrem finds it invaluable and encouraged other DEOs to start the same practice. Tomova said that maybe she should schedule meetings with staff, by

department. Knights encouraged AD Tomova to share strategy and vision for the College and how staff can participate.

- b. Election Update: no update yet, by March meeting (results!).
- c. Strategize about how to increase CLAS staff committee rolls – Kirk encouraged Councilors interested in this issue to look at committees and see if they find any that are lacking staff participation so the Council can work to increase staff participation.
- d. Schedule off-cycle meetings
 - i. Trans Awareness training: Knights will create Doodle poll to choose a date that works for as many people as possible to participate.
 - ii. Budget update with Erin Herting: Sokoloff will get some dates from Herting and will schedule like above.
- e. Kirk updated the council of the CLAS Strategic Plan in response to an email received from a CLAS staff member about the listening sessions recently held. The final revision is complete and staff was added in to more places. The next step is for Dean Sanders to do revisions and then there may be more listening sessions.
- f. Ex-Officio updates
 - i. ASG – Kick is reserving time with the Council to discuss HR restructuring. Kick is on a committee that is determining HR services – what is an HR service and what is a departmental service – and they are meeting with the relevant stakeholders to get feedback. Their final report is due April 1 so they will join us for our March meeting.

VI. Committee updates

- a. Awards – Committee will meet after Council meeting to review Mary Louise Kelley Leadership and Excellence Award nominations.
- b. Communications – Election information is up and live for CLAS Staff Council website. The Communications Committee is also partnering with the Education Committee to regularly highlight potential professional development opportunities for staff on the News page of the website.
- c. DEI – Updates from UI Staff Council DEI Committee:
 - Community Outreach Committee Collaboration with Co-Chair
 - Committee Liaison Updates
 - DEI Celebration Update
 - Encourage Staff to take UI BUILD classes and share experiences with colleagues
 - Highlight and celebrate Black History Month
- d. Education – With the completion of the Professional Development page the Committee is considering creating a survey to ask CLAS staff what topics they might find useful. The Committee also discussed regularly highlighting one course or certificate program to draw attention to that course as well as the webpage (working title – Skill Set of the Month).

Next meeting – Wednesday, March 17th, 2021

CLAS Plan

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Tue 2/9/2021 1:25 PM

Hi

I recently listened in on the CLAS Strategic plan Zoom session. The entire document seems to make little reference to staff and how it is incorporated into CLAS going forward. There is some reference under DEI for staff, but little other discussion.

Has CLAS Staff Council raised this concern?

Re: CLAS Plan



CLAS Staff Council

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Tue 2/9/2021 2:03 PM

We have talked to both Dean Sanders and the Strategic plan committee about these concerns (and they did add some language about staff especially in the research sections after our conversation), but I encourage you to also send specific comments/suggestions to the committee since I believe the more they hear about this issue the more likely things might improve

George Hospodarsky
CLAS Staff Council President