Engineering Staff Advisory Council Agenda

Friday, October 2, 2020 8:30 a.m.

Via Zoom (COVID-19 precaution)

Attendees: ESA Councilors Jacob Heiden, Travis Greenlee, Dawn Marshall, Katie Schnedler, Casey Westlake, Josh Lobb, and Michelle Reyes; Advisors/Guests: April Tippett, Cathy Koebrock, Jenny Simpson, Sandy Gerard, Katie Voss

1. Call to order 8:33
2. Announcements – None offered
3. Vote on minutes from previous meeting. Minor changes were made. Travis Greenlee moved to approve. Katie Schnedler seconded. Unanimously approved.
4. New business items for this agenda – None offered
5. Liaison Committee Discussion
   a. Finance and Operations Update - April Tippett
      i. Census enrollment data was 1990 undergraduates (6-7% decrease from last year); 279 graduate students (<2% decrease). Using this enrollment data, COE submitted revised revenue budgets. Deans have budget review board meeting in October. Revised tuition revenue projections do not impact this budget for this FY, but they help tell the story of what’s occurring in COE. E.g., based on this information, the college might invite students to apply for admission in spring 2021 semester (not typically done).
      ii. Academic departments are working on their course modality descriptions for Spring 2021 semester which are due Monday, Oct. 6. Then college will start facilities planning.
      iii. Scholarship portal opened on Sept. 15. 1100 applications have been submitted so far. April will speak to first year seminars the week of Oct 19.
      iv. Planning is underway to align F&A structure for COE centers to the UI standard. The current arrangement for the centers/institutes in COE has been unique. April stressed that it is no one’s intention to dismantle the centers and that the dean apologizes for creating anxiety. This will be a process and it will take awhile to gather all the information. Dean Nembhard, Prof. Udaykumar, and April met with each center’s leadership team. Next week they will start meeting with central administration. UI administration (President, Provost, VPR, etc.) are all committed to smooth transmission.
      v. Question/comment from Dawn: The college has asked for our feedback and questions but we [staff/faculty of the centers collectively] don’t know enough to ask. We have been told that the objective is to bring COE in line with practices from other colleges/depts. We don’t understand what “normal” is, what are we trying to align with. Other staff at the centers might want to better understand the procedures.
      vi. April: Center directors will be getting this information. April then gave a brief overview of the Collegiate Economic Analysis, which includes more than just tuition revenue. Right now, the centers do not contribute (through F&A) to the general education fund, which then is subject to share with various central units
like GAO, DSP, etc. April said that she will share Dawn’s feedback with Dean Nembhard.

vii. Josh shared his perspective of how F&A was affected when many of the BME faculty joined ITI. Not having access to those F&A funds negatively impacts the ability to recruit faculty, the quality of the graduate programs (and therefore, rankings and recruitment), to fund TA and RA positions. While there are pros and cons, overall, he thinks with the current arrangement, in general, the education mission of the college has been underfunded. There are people who have been losing out with the current model.

viii. April reiterated that the transition process is being determined with input from centers and will be phased in. Five years for transition is just initial proposal. Reiterated that UI Central Administration is committed to making this a smooth transition, infrastructure.

ix. Jacob asked April for clarification about how staff should give feedback, e.g., through center directors, ESAC, directly to Dean Nembhard (who provided a way to submit questions directly to her). She said staff could send questions directly to the dean and Jacob can also ask questions at the EAC meetings. Jacob hopes that staff can be involved in process and not just dragged along. April stated that—while she is not speaking for the dean—she doesn’t think the dean wants that. Dean Nembhard values everyone in the college, their roles, and how they align with the mission. For example, NADS has strengths and visibility that can impact ranking and help attract faculty, students, and funding.

b. DEI Council Update - Cathy Koebrick
   i. DEI Council met for the first time this week and Dean offered remarks.
   ii. Council is still seeking undergraduates (easier to get attention now than in the summer and also want to engage first years) and have received quite a few applications. Co-chairs are reviewing those and will make decision shortly.
   iii. Action plan for the current year has four objective areas and have created subcommittees within the council around those areas. First action is the ASEE diversity recognition program. Application and plan have to be submitted mid-November. Another part of this year’s action plan centers on communication.
   iv. There are some funding opportunities to support DEI initiatives, e.g., grants for students to attend virtual conferences, undergrad scholarships, funds for faculty/staff. DEI reading group was funded by initiative money last year. Applications are live already on DEI website.

c. HR Update - Cathy Koebrick
   i. Events
      1. Celebrating Staff Longevity 3:30 Oct 15 - will recognize staff who reached milestones through end of Oct. Casey will send invitation to staff today
      2. It is time for performance reviews. Cathy will be presenting on best practices for preparing your performance review on Oct 13
      3. UI HR is offering a web panel for managing remote workers Oct 14
      4. Annual flu shot campaign has begun, but UI health plans will also cover flu vaccines received at doctor’s office or pharmacy at no cost
   ii. 4 staff departures in the last month
   iii. Reminder to complete employee health and safety acknowledgement and COVID training (as employee and also as supervisor, if applicable)
iv. Jacob asked when we want to send the reminder out for Performance Review event, after discussion decided to send it the morning of.

d. UI Staff Council Update - Jenny Simpson
   i. Just a reminder that today from 1:30-4:30, ITI is having retreat, F&A is an agenda item
   ii. Catastrophic leave option has been expanded so COVID-19 has no cap on donations anymore, anyone can continue to donate sick and vacation time
   iii. Flu vaccination campaign has started.
   iv. No planned changes to flexible work arrangements, new norm, working really well

v. Campus Climate Survey ends today

vi. Working at Iowa survey Oct 19 through Oct 30 (Healthcare has their own survey)

vii. COVID-19 self-reported cases are going down, not spreading across age groups, no proof being spread in the classrooms

viii. Shared governance emergency response team to handle cases across campus

ix. Staff council is talking about getting their minutes back to the council for approval in a more timely manner so councilors can report back to their constituencies from the official minutes rather than from their own notes

x. Michelle shared that she has been sending ESAC minutes to staff council

xi. Josh asked whether ITI meeting is open to others; A: no, retreat for center, brainstorming research ideas, fund seed grants; explained why F&A is on agenda

e. EAC Update – Jacob Heiden. Invited three weeks ago to attend EAC meetings as ESAC president; next year Travis will attend, great to have ESAC be participating in EAC

6. Budget Update
   a. Katie said that the reports for October are not out yet, but to her knowledge there are no new expenses
   b. Jacob said that staff hours should be getting charged and he will follow-up offline with Katie

7. Committee follow-ups
   a. Elections – Travis. Committee met and looked at council vacancies and how to get more people engaged. Also confirmed description of committee. Brainstormed initiatives and maybe things to purchase, but did not finalize of these ideas
   b. Executive – Jacob. ESAC did receive request to make desk cycle available at home, will discuss in new business
   c. Sustainability – Jacob. We are still collecting reusable materials, staff member is checking it once a week and will contact Mailboxes to do pick up when needed

8. Old Business
   a. Bylaws Amendment Vote to update Elections description. No one was opposed. Bylaws amendment approved. Publicity committee will update bylaws webpage.

9. New Business
   a. Desk Cycle Program – Jacob has received inquiry about using desk cycle at home
      i. Desk cycle was funded by grant in FY19 from UI Wellness. Dawn shared that, as she recalled, there was quite an extensive conversation with risk management so that would have to be part of the consideration about home use. She supports exploring employees using it at home.
April seemed to recall that we need to share use data with UI Wellness and it might be a condition of having the expense reimbursed, which may not have happened.

April suggested that the engineering library could check it the desk cycle for home use.

There is also a desk cycle at NADS, so we would need to discuss that, too, but NADS is maybe more populate than SC

Filling Vacancies on ESAC

According to bylaws, we can have up to 11 councilors, so we have 3 vacancies.

Kathy shared that there are more staff in centers than central administration. That being said, we also don’t want everyone to be from one center.

Sandy added that previously there were three people from IIHR, so there has been a tendency for councilors to be clustered

Travis asked Cathy if we can get more information about the distribution of staff members across college/centers/departments. Cathy will send to Travis.

Cathy – want people to participate because they are interested

Sandy when she served on ESAC there kind of an understanding that you would “replace” yourself

Maybe list of people who have never served

Dawn said highlighting how ESAC could address the specific concern of a staff member might motivate them to get involved more than just a general interest

Sandy observed that now is a great time to send out a recruitment email given everything that is going on

Travis asked for short list of folks? No one had any

Michelle suggested adding vacancy information to ESAC email update(s)

April suggests Zoom Olympics as an event. Jacob says he encourages Engagement committee (Josh) to consider that idea.

Casey shared there will be Halloween Happy Hour with costume contest October 29th. She is always open to new ideas; ways to lighten the mood during pandemic.

10. Travis moved to adjourn; Jacob seconded. None opposed. Meeting ended at 9:59 AM

Next meeting

November 6, 2020 8:30 a.m.

Committee updates:

Executive: ESAC President is invited to weekly EAC meeting. Contacted Dean Nembhard regarding ESAC collaboration throughout the year. Investigating at-home option for Desk Cycle Program.

Bylaws/Policies & Procedures: Committee is still considering revision to definition of quorum.

Elections Chair provide update
**Staff Awards:** Committee is working with COE HR and administration to plan virtual Longevity Award event

**Publicity:** Did not meet, no update

**Engagement and Inclusion:** Did not meet, no update.

**Sustainability:** Confirmed logistics to continue reusable packing material collection.