2002 SAC Report to the President

Acknowledgements

The President’s Staff Advisory Committee wishes to express its gratitude to Walter Hunter and Roberta “Bert” Gordon. The work of this committee has been steadily supported and elevated to a new level of respect in the Brown community through Walter’s style of inclusiveness and counsel. He is a master at the craft of transforming a room of individuals into a unified group. Bert is at the heart of this committee. Her vast expertise of all issues great and small, the generosity of her time and her unwavering commitment to SAC continue to move the committee’s vision for greater achievements year after year.

Executive Summary

Overview:
The mission of the President’s Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) is to:

- Facilitate active and direct communication between University Staff and the President
- Provide a forum for discussion and investigation of issues of importance to the staff and University
- Present formal recommendations to the President

The Staff Advisory Committee, which just completed its fourth year, provides a vehicle for input to the Brown Senior Administration on a wide range of issues of importance to staff. To date, fifty staff members have participated in the program. In January 2003, ten new staff members will join the committee, bringing the total staff who have served to sixty.

Key Issues and Recommendations:
This past year, after meeting with President Ruth J. Simmons on November 27, 2001, SAC focused on the following areas. In addition, the committee participated in prevalent campus issues as they ascended to importance during the course of the year.

- Employee Communications: Presidential Forums for all University staff were held on February 26, 2002 and September 24, 2002. Both forums were widely publicized by SAC and extremely well attended by staff. The focus of both forums was communicating the President’s Academic Enrichment Initiative (AEI) and to give staff a first hand opportunity to ask President Simmons related questions. University staff have also been surveyed at such events as Staff Development Day and the Health and Wellness Fairs to gather data on issues and concerns to bring forward to the President and her constituents.

- Staff Representation on Committees: During the last academic year, in an unprecedented move, the President recommended that a staff member be appointed to ACUP (Advisory Committee on University Planning). Although the viability of ACUP and University governance were being reviewed, a SAC member was invited to join the transitional committee as a non-voting member. This appointment continues with the current University Resources Committee. To reinforce the objective of increased staff representation, a SAC member also served on the search committee for the new Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, and another was appointed to serve on the Campus Community Police and Security Committee. These appointments helped facilitate essential staff involvement in key areas of university business and campus concern.

- Employee Emergency Fund: A comprehensive review took place of current programs that provide financial assistance to employees during times of financial need and financial emergencies resulting from uncontrollable causes. The result was to recommend no changes to the current employee loan program, but rather to expand the Disaster Grant and change it to the Emergency Fund. The President committed an initial $30,000 in funds. Review of size of fund and source of ongoing funding will occur annually.

- Employee Reward and Recognition Programs: An in-depth analysis of the current reward and recognition programs was conducted in conjunction with the Office of Training and Development. It was found that employees favored discontinuing the event in favor of including employees with 15 years of service and that the gift selection be upgraded (utilizing Brown First concept by purchasing through the Bookstore.) The survey also indicated that the President’s Leadership and Achievement awards be folded into one award for which employees would be eligible and to be renamed the Employee Excellence Award. This revamping of awards would foster a more positive feeling and eliminate the separation of non-exempt and exempt staff. A small survey was also done to gather information on staff opinion regarding combining events surrounding these awards. A letter to advisor Walter Hunter summarizing these findings was submitted.
Campus Safety & Security: During the beginning of the 2002 academic year, a number of incidents occurred which caused great concern regarding campus safety. In January of 2002, SAC invited Colonel Paul Verrecchia to two separate meetings to become educated on Brown’s police/security operations, increased police presence on campus, extension of shuttle and escort systems, lighting of various streets and parking lots and to participate in a discussion of whether to arm the University police officers. On March 6th, SAC co-sponsored with the Dept. of Public Safety a University forum for staff to have an opportunity to query the Department and Executive Vice President Donald Reaves regarding strategies to make Brown a safer and more secure campus. The University hired the Bratton Group in March to recommend and develop strategies on security issues on campus. SAC met with the Bratton Group during the month of April to hear first hand their assessments of Brown’s police operations and to give members of the Bratton Group feedback and recommendations for enhancing campus safety and security. After the release of the Bratton recommendations, SAC met one final time with the Colonel and newly appointed Captain Emil Fioravanti to discuss the issue of arming. After that meeting, SAC members present unanimously voted in favor of arming the Brown campus police force. A letter to advisor Walter Hunter to that affect was submitted and a copy is included in the appendix of this report.

Administrative Managers Handbook
This handbook was designed to provide basic information that new administrative managers can use as a tool to sift through the large volume of information and resources required as a new manager at Brown. The handbook includes information on Administrative Department contacts and resources, Useful links, Bear Lingo (Brown Acronyms) and a Calendar of Annual and Monthly Listing of Important Dates and Deadlines.

Staff Representation on University Committees
Overview
SAC members have become involved with participation on many campus-wide committees serving as representatives of staff and advocates for staff concerns. This interaction has enabled SAC to provide a voice to staff perspective and a visible presence on committees within the Brown community.

University Resources Committee (URC)
During the last academic year, at the urging of President Simmons, a SAC member was invited to join the Advisory Committee on University Planning (now renamed the URC) as a non-voting member. Gail Goodness was selected to serve as the staff appointee to this key committee. Her presence and participation adds a previously unvoiced staff perspective on key issues focusing on budget, planning and finance.

Search Committee: EVP for Finance and Administration
During the spring of 2002, President Simmons announced plans to seek a new EVP for Finance and Administration to fill the vacancy created by the departure of longtime EVP Donald Reaves. A search committee, headed by President Simmons and EVP for University Planning Richard Spies, was comprised of representatives from faculty, staff, alumni and student bodies. SAC member Ann Rockwell Roe was appointed to serve as staff delegate. Search committee members were fully involved in the screening of resumes, interviewing potential candidates and in providing final recommendations to the President, resulting in the hiring of Elizabeth Huidiekoper as the new EVP for Finance and Administration.

Campus Community Police and Security Committee
In another noteworthy example of SAC’s representation of staff within the campus community, Ann D’Abrosca, past-chair of SAC, was appointed to serve as a member of the newly-formed Campus Community Police and Security Committee. This committee initiates dialogue on matters of concern to all members of the Brown community regarding security and crime on campus. Representation on this committee brings a staff voice to these discussions on critical topics such as police arming, implementation of safety programs, and the physical safety of the campus (i.e., adequate lighting, etc.)

Outcome
The inclusion of a staff representative on committees of importance within the Brown community demonstrates a dedication to providing staff with an opportunity for essential and valuable input. SAC is privileged to serve in this central representative role. SAC hopes this commitment continues and that such honored opportunities of service will be available in the future.

Emergency Grant Fund
Overview
Following the Presidents suggestion at our meeting on November 27, 2001, the Staff Advisory Committee formed a sub-committee charged with reviewing current goodwill programs at Brown, as well as similar programs offered by other institutions. We submitted “Recommendations on the Disaster Grant Fund”
Brown University offers two programs that provide financial assistance to employees. The first program, entitled the Employee Loan Program (also known as the Stewart Fund), offers a loan that must be repaid in one year. This program is well known by the staff and provides a valuable financial resource to employees. The committee does not have any recommendations for changes to the current loan program.

The second program, entitled the Disaster Grant Fund provides funds to assist employees who experience financial emergencies resulting from uncontrollable causes such as illness, death, accident, or natural catastrophe. We prepared a survey to compare similar programs offered by other institutions. Approximately eight institutions responded in which 4 of them had no such program and 4 had similar programs to Brown’s disaster grant program. We believe that the current disaster grant program is a good program but we recommend some improvements:

- Change the name from Disaster Grant Fund to Emergency Grant Fund.
- Revive the approval committee and update the process.
- Increase the maximum grant from $2,500 to $5,000.
- Gross up grants to compensate for tax withholding deductions.
- Simplify the application process by developing an application form.
- Restore limited funding by a $35,000 annual appropriation.
- Employee awareness of the program should be enhanced. This will begin by updating policy and procedures on web and informing supervisors of program.
- Limit grants to disaster need unless and until the program’s scope and funding can be evaluated to include goodwill purposes. Human Resources and the Loan Office will review this program in Fall 2003.

Outcome

We believe this program will provide an important safety net for Brown employees to assist them in managing financial losses, which are not the fault of the employee such as natural emergencies, accidents, catastrophes, deaths, or illnesses.

Employee Reward and Recognition Programs

Overview

An in-depth analysis of the current reward and recognition programs was conducted in conjunction with the Office of Training and Development. It was recommended that employees with 10 years of service be invited to the annual Years of Service Award program and that employees with 15 years of service be recognized in the future as well, or that the gift selection be upgraded (utilizing Brown First concept by purchasing through the Brown Bookstore), and the ceremony be eliminated. The committee also recommended that the President’s Leadership and Achievement Awards be folded into one award, for which all employees would be eligible (this award would be named the Employee Excellence Award). This revamping of awards would foster a more positive feeling and eliminate the separation of non-exempt and exempt staff. A sampling survey was also done to gather information on staff opinion regarding the combining of events surrounding these awards.

The following general trends were evident from the gathered results:

- Staff Development Day: based on staff’s rankings of their favorite existing programs, a majority listed Staff Development Day as their favorite program.
  - 54 – good idea
  - 2 – bad idea
  - 4 – no opinion
- Years of Service: an overwhelming majority felt not having a ceremony for Years of Service, but instead presenting higher quality gifts and adding 15 years as a new category was a good idea.
  - 46 – yes
  - 8 – no
  - 5 – no opinion
- Brown Says Thank You: a majority of staff felt Brown should continue holding the Brown Says Thanks You event.
  - 40 – yes
  - 11 - no
  - 6 - no opinion
- A majority also felt all staff, exempt and non-exempt, should be invited to attend.
  - 40 – yes
  - 11 - no
  - 6 - no opinion

President’s Achievement Award and President’s Leadership Award:

A majority favored combining both these existing awards.
Results on combining the award ceremonies with an existing event were as follows:
Were fairly split on whether to combine with Brown Says Thank You were unfavorable towards combining with Staff Development Day were fairly split (leaning toward the negative side) on combining all staff related events (Years of Service, Brown Says Thank You, Employee Excellence Awards, and Staff Development Day), renaming the new event Staff Appreciation Day.

Outcome
The Staff Advisory Committee was honored to work along with the Office of Training and Development, gathering this information to provide feedback on current staff opinions, however, in light of the current budgetary climate, and considering the significant costs involved with these programs, further consideration should be given to balancing these programs within current and future budgetary constraints and to ensure that they support overall University objectives.

Campus Safety & Security
Overview
Campus safety and security was at the forefront of the SAC meetings and agendas at the beginning of the 2002 calendar year. At the onset of the 2002 academic year, a number of incidents occurred which caused great concern regarding campus safety. In January of 2002, SAC invited Colonel Paul Verrecchia to two separate meetings to become educated on Brown’s police/security operations, increased police presence on campus, extension of shuttle and escort systems, lighting of various streets and parking lots and to debate whether to arm the University police officers. On March 6th, SAC co-sponsored with the Dept. of Public Safety a University forum for staff to have an opportunity to query the Department and Executive Vice President Donald Reaves regarding strategies to make Brown a safer and more secure campus. The forum was well attended and gave staff an opportunity to be heard at a convenient time. The University hired the Bratton Group in March to recommend and develop strategies on security issues on campus. SAC met with the Bratton Group during the month of April to hear first hand their assessments of Brown’s police operations and to give members of the Bratton Group feedback and recommendations from a staff perspective for enhancing campus safety and security.
After the release of the Bratton recommendations, SAC met one final time with the Colonel and newly appointed Captain Emil Fioravanti to discuss the issue of arming. After that meeting, SAC members present unanimously voted in favor of arming the Brown campus police force. A letter to advisor Walter Hunter to that affect was submitted and a copy is included in the appendix of this report.
In another noteworthy example of SAC working with the community, Ann D’Abrosca was appointed to represent staff on the Campus Community Police and Security Committee.
In conclusion, on December 6, 2002, SAC was recognized at the Department of Public Safety’s Commendation ceremony with a certificate of appreciation for their tireless efforts during the last calendar year.

Outcome
Through the efforts of SAC the Department of Public Safety was made keenly aware of the safety concerns of staff from all areas of the University. These concerns were brought to the forefront of those in charge of the Department. To SAC’s benefit a collegial relationship was formed with a University Department and staff representation on the Campus Community Police and Security Committee.

Administrative Managers Handbook
Overview
Although there is a wealth of information available on various Brown University department web-sites it can be overwhelming and time-consuming for new managers to find the information they need. The Administrative Managers Handbook was created to provide a single source of useful information for new administrative managers. The handbook contains sections on administrative department contacts and resources, links to university policies and resources, frequently used Brown acronyms, and a calendar of important events and responsibilities for managers. The committee felt that the handbook would be most useful published as a web-site that would contain direct links to useful information on department sites. Training and Development has agreed to host and maintain the web-site. The manual revised the SAC Resource Guide that was originally produced in 1989 and revised in 1994 and 2001.

Outcome
This document represents a valuable resource that can be utilized by new and seasoned managers to enable them to more effectively and quickly perform their jobs.

Informational Meetings with Senior Administrators
University Planning:
On June 18, 2002, Executive Vice President for Planning Richard Spies, gave an extensive presentation on the President’s Academic Enrichment Initiative (AEI) to the committee. He discussed the challenges and changes that have been proposed, funding sources to support these initiatives and the timeline for these changes. He then reported on some specific enhancements citing improvements to staff salaries and benefits that directly impact this group. A thoughtful discussion on communicating current and future changes to all staff on a continuous basis was embraced by Vice President Spies. This resulted in Vice President Spies’ offering additional presentations on the AEI such as brown bag lunches and other venues.

Public Affairs and University Relations
On August 30, 2002, Assistant Vice President Melanie Coon, at her request, attended a SAC meeting to present and elicit feedback on a comprehensive master strategic communications and positioning plan for Brown University. The committee viewed a film entitled “Brown in the Movies” and distributed items purchased at the Bookstore showing different logos, imprints and designs of Brown University. She also presented a mission statement and asked SAC for its feedback of the appropriateness of it as it relates to Brown University. Vice President Coon then asked SAC to consider questions about Brown’s image, internal and external communications and their reaction to the benefits of a unified communications program. At the end of the meeting, she thanked SAC for their feedback and advised the members that she would keep them apprised of further developments regarding the positioning plan for Brown University.

Campus Life and Student Services
On February 26, 2002, during an open University forum President Simmons encouraged SAC to explore ways it could collaborate with students on events, activities and their overall Brown experience to foster a more synergistic relationship between staff and students.
On April 9, 2002, a distinguished panel of staff and students were invited to a SAC meeting to further explore this idea. In attendance were Paul Armstrong, Dean of the College, David Targan, Associate Dean of the College, Janina Montero, Vice President of Campus Life and Student Services, Sheila Curran, Director of Career Services, Kisa Takesue, Associate Dean of Student Life, and Tilli Dias, a student representative of UCS.
From this meeting, a myriad of collaborative ideas were discussed for future SAC consideration. Dean Armstrong stated that he is eager to strategize as to what would be the most rewarding ways in which staff and students could interact. The goal being that an intentional structured program can foster a shared purpose for the Brown University community. Ideas generated for formal programs were department internships, mentoring/advising programs, host programs and leadership programs. As an initial gesture of good faith toward this goal on May 10, 2002, Ann D’Abrosca, Chair, of SAC attended a day long leadership workshop with other administrators and students.

Public Service Projects
“Bring a Book”
During Staff Development Day on July 31, 2001 SAC successfully sponsored its first Public Service Project in collaboration with the Brown Bookstore. “Bring a Book to Brown” encouraged all Brown staff to bring a new book or purchase a book under the tent at the Bookstore café. Books benefited Hasbro’s Hospital “Read to Me” program and also to develop the newly established library at Sophia Academy, an alternate school for at risk middle school girls located in Providence. Staff completed bookplates, received a 20% off coupon to the Brown Bookstore, and were eligible for raffle prizes.

“Books Are Wings”
During Staff Development Day, on Thursday, August 8, 2002, the President's Staff Advisory Committee in collaboration with the Brown Bookstore again took the opportunity of conducting a public service project to benefit the children of the "Books are Wings" organization. This organization collects new and gently used books for underprivileged children. In the fall, library evenings were held during which time the children received the books and were introduced to a myriad of library programs. The Brown community responded with generosity once again, by donating a total of 1000 books.

“Hats & Mittens”
During the Holiday Bazaar on December 13, 2001, the President's Staff Advisory Committee and the Holiday Bazaar Committee joined efforts for the first time to conduct a public service project for the holiday season to help those who are less fortunate. The response of the Brown community was amazing. On that day SAC, members collected a total of 6 trash size bags of hats & mittens for the "Children's Friend and Service Program" and a total of 15 (25 pounds) bags of personal care item for "McCauley House," a shelter located in South Providence.
The President's Staff Advisory Committee will continue its commitment to help the community thought-out the year.

**Conclusion**

As we move forward with this recently assembled committee consisting of ten newly appointed members representing different areas of the University, SAC will continue to support President Simmons initiatives for Academic Enrichment. We hope to continue support to the University by working closely with senior administration on relevant projects that will enhance staff input, communication and morale.

**Appendix on Arming Campus Police Officers:**

*TO: Walter C. Hunter*

*FROM: Ann D’Abrosca*

*Chair, President’s Staff Advisory Committee*

*DATE: September 11, 2002*

The President’s Staff Advisory Committee met in discussion with members of the Bratton Group last spring, and we have been carefully reviewing and discussing the Bratton Report since its dissemination to the University community on May 8. Additionally, at our September 10th meeting, we met with Colonel Paul Verrecchia and Captain Emil Fioravanti of our Department of Public Safety and you to discuss the pros and cons of arming our Campus Police Officers.

It is imperative for you to know, on behalf of the members of the committee as well as myself, that we take the arming issue very seriously and that we strongly endorse the basic concept. We also wish to make it clear that we include with our endorsement the expectation that the University and the Department of Public Safety will vigorously pursue the critical issues that have been under discussion in conjunction with the process of arming:

- Officer Training and Continuing Qualification on an Annual Basis
- Use-of-Force Review
- Communication about the Perception and Reality of Safety at Brown to all members of the Brown Community on an Annual Basis
- Accountability and Rigorous Review Processes be Established

We feel that arming our Campus Police Officers is a strongly positive move for the University and will make our community a safer place for all constituencies. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the dialogue in connection with this important evolution in the University’s history.