MINUTES

Attendance: Kristine Dodd, co-chair; Eric Anderson; Linda Angela; Dawn Cummings; Daisy Ferreira; Carolyn Harris; Ethan Hebert; Annemarie Kennedy; Michael Leitao; Robert Mattei; Anita Nester; Bethany O'Hara; Abigail Peterson; Felicia Raton; Heather Robichaud; Erin Royal; Maria Sokolova; Beth Travers; Alex Vidmar; Ray Windsor; Grace Young

Absent: Barbara Simoneau, co-chair; Sarah Aneyci; Sarah Brown; Maria Fontes; Marguerite Joutz; Liisa Laine; Jennifer Quiroz

1. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: January 28, 2020

There were no objections to the minutes and they were accepted by all present members. Co-Chair Kristine Dodd addressed that the minutes from the December 10, 2019 SAC meeting will be on the next SAC meeting agenda for acceptance, as the Council has not yet had a chance to accept them. She recognized that half the members of the Council were not present at the meeting and asked new members who could not confirm what happened at the meeting to review the minutes for things like grammatical errors. Any questions or issues with the minutes could be addressed with Co-Chair Dodd, with minute taker Annemarie Kennedy, or with past SAC Co-Chairs Grace Young and Liisa Laine.

2. Staff Concerns

Kristine Dodd updated SAC on a staff question on signage for parking on south and north streets. The University is working with the City of Providence on the signs. Because this involves the city, the issue isn’t fully under Brown’s control, but SAC was able to update the staff member who made the inquiry that it has been received and is being worked on.

Mike Leitao addressed a past staff concern regarding grade changes on technology, noting that Brown is dropping its E designation. University Human Resources responded to all E designation staff and that satisfied the concerns of the staff member who raised the issue. The University expanded the ranges for all salary grades so meets qualifications for both E and standard grades, and there is no more concern about the designation.

3. Darlene Williamson, Talent Development Program Manager

Darlene Williamson has worked at Brown for more than 16 years, first as an administrative assistant, then for Summer in Continuing Studies, then working for Events and Conferences, and most recently in the Registrar’s Office for assigning spaces. In her new role since October, Darlene now coordinates BEAR Month and Staff Development Day.
For BEAR Day and BEAR Month, Darlene aims to plan or highlight something every day - a staff discount, tour, lecture, or something special going on around campus. She also wants to tie BEAR Day/Month into Staff Development Day after it was asked why they are two standalone events. A video airing next Tuesday will share stories at Brown.

Upcoming BEAR Month highlights include the After Hours staff art show reception on Thursday at 5 p.m. and Bear Day on 2/18 at 3 p.m.; check out the full listing at brown.edu/go/bearmonth (BEAR Day is also the same day as the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity’s Professional Development Day, which all Brown staff are encouraged to sign up for)

**Question:** Is there an effort to get information in the hands of Human Resource coordinators in different departments to encourage staff to participate and to let supervisors know that this is happening and that staff are encouraged to go?

**Answer:** This was featured several times at a Human Resources roundtable where business partners attend; Human Resource business partners/representatives also received emails from Darlene. It’s on Facebook and has been advertised in Today@Brown weekly. If SAC and staff members think the message needs to go out broader, Darlene can certainly think about that. It was noted that some supervisors are faculty who don’t go to the website or check Today@Brown, and Darlene made a note to be sure to reach out to faculty supervisors of staff.

**Question:** Is there a formal way to suggest ideas for Bear Month?

**Answer:** Not a formal procedure, but please do email talent_development@brown.edu with feedback. There’s still time to explore suggestions and ideas for Staff Development Day in June.

Staff Development Day will be held on **Monday, June 8.**
A committee convened on February 10 to develop a theme and overall schedule, decide on keynote or town hall, and determine breakfast location.

Feedback from last year indicated that people were confused by the schedule fluctuating, with overlapping events. Staff Development Day will go back to a more traditional schedule, with the committee considering mainly 75-minute sessions but also a few 45-minute sessions such as tours.

**Question:** Mondays are usually orientation days for new employees. Will the University try and avoid orienting employees who need new cards, photos, paperwork, etc., to be processed by Brown staff on June 8th?

**Answer:** Good question; Darlene will look into that. She knows that the School of Professional Studies isn’t starting its new summer classes then but isn’t sure about staff orientations. If it appears that it will become a major issue, we might need to move the event to Friday.

SAC will be involved in an a.m. and p.m. session, community service component, raffle, and an end-of-day celebration. People really enjoyed the SAC-led sessions in the past and also asked to have the community service component close to campus, rather than committing to something off-site for half of the day or more. The end-of-day celebration was unanimously wanted, Darlene reported; it represents community building and connecting with people you don’t get to see often. Past years included a “Family Feud,” “In it to Win It,” and lip sync battle. The setup and the food is always the cost, and human labor provides the rest.

**Question:** Is Talent Development helping with the cost if SAC hosts a special event?

**Answer:** We have the same budget as last year, with no new funds or line items.
Mike Leitao suggested banding together to get some things donated by other departments, especially the Facilities and Media Services costs for setting up. Most of what we pay is to other Brown departments; maybe they’d be willing to work with us on prices. Let’s approach as a team.

A talent show was suggested, and Mike Leitao responded that when he and Jess Pontarelli were SAC co-chairs, they tried a talent show instead of the usual lip synching contest. Only one person signed up for the talent show, so they had to cancel. Linda Angela suggested a compromise where you structure the talent show into different themes instead of one broad talent.

Darlene also noted that serving alcohol at the end of the day when people are preparing to go home was not a good idea, so Brown saved money and ensured safety by hiring a Del’s Lemonade truck instead.

**Question:** How far in advance can/should people submit ideas?

**Answer:** The committee is pushing to confirm sessions by the end of March. Once that is nailed down, end-of-day stuff can be planned more pointedly. Please let Darlene know of any suggestions and ideas before the committee’s next meeting on March 23rd.

**Question:** Are giveaways associated with BEAR Month or with Staff Development Day?

**Answer:** They’re not usually a BEAR Day thing, and Staff Development Day just features the SAC raffle. SAC has a list of all community partners and calls them to ask for donations; proceeds go to Brown Gives and United Way.

Staff spotlight: Last year SAC asked for staff highlights to recognize colleagues and had a marquee ticker in the Sharpe Refectory and a big board. SAC hopes to continue and expand that idea this year to springboard into a SAC initiative to bring staff highlights out on a regular basis. It’s nice to show the people you work with that you support and appreciate them. The board had a poor response but had great feedback about the idea; SAC wants to make it more ongoing.

Mike Leitao suggested that, since SAC rents out the whole side of the cafeteria for the event anyway, maybe we could use the space to stick something to the wall like a bubble. Anita Nester suggested placing the staff spotlight as an item in the SAC newsletter. Kristine Dodd said she and her co-chair Barbara Simoneau had campaigned on things like staff recognition; they would love to get something off the ground, working with the Outreach and Communications sub-committee to maintain it.

It was noted that although people liked Joe Meisel’s band at Staff Development Day, they didn’t like having the band play during lunch because no one could hear each other. Live or DJ’d music would be better for the end-of-day celebration than as a mid-day activity.

Darlene Williamson also noted that the New Employee Advisory Program (NEAP) was originally aimed at new employees, but just as many current staff as new staff want to be involved. The University is working on a new name for a more inclusive program; the concept is storytelling. Maybe that initiative can connect with SAC and its Outreach & Communication Committee.

**Other suggestions for Staff Development Day?**

Dawn Cummings had really liked hearing a presentation on the history of Brown and thinks others would enjoy it. Mike Leitao added that he’d really enjoyed the bear tour that brought you to all the bear statues. Darlene Williamson noted that the landscape tour fills up every year, and she was asked to schedule two this year (SAC agreed that’s a good idea).
Robert Mattei went back to Dawn’s comment about the presentation on the history of Brown, saying that some Brown staff are starting in the Jewelry District without being up on campus. There’s a disconnect there; people feel less involved with the Brown community. Robert suggested playing on a 2020 theme as not only hindsight being 20/20 but looking forward to the future with 20/20 vision. Maybe someone could play on the theme every day leading up to June 8th with a “did you know?” piece of history/trivia in Today@Brown. Ethan Hebert added that with the addition of 225 Dyer, Staff Development Day can get staff to come see those new spaces. (Darlene responded that a tour of 225 Dyer is scheduled for the 27th).

Darlene asked SAC, should we hold sessions on Staff Development Day in the Jewelry District? Eric Anderson asked about the attendance in the Jewelry District last year (Darlene would have to check), noting that he hasn’t heard a lot of interest in Staff Development Day from employees there.

Kristine Dodd noted that one logistical issue with the Holiday Party was transportation concerns. It would also help to offer Staff Development Day downcity, although there’s no parking around Jewelry District. Darlene Williamson wondered about extra shuttles, but Mike Leitao informed her that those need to be paid for (they are run by an outside company, First Transit) in order to have extra drivers.

Anita Nester suggested “how to shuttle around Brown” as an idea for a Staff Development Day session, noting that some people are intimidated by the process. Mike Leitao volunteered to lead the session and show people how to use the app, etc. (after checking that it’s OK with his director), and Robert Mattei noted that the new Brown University app had a shuttle feature showing where all the stop are; perhaps there could be a session on the redesigned Brown U app? (Robert will check with Stephanie to get the best contact person for this session to Darlene.)

Kristine Dodd encouraged all subcommittees to elect a co-chair and present at the next SAC meeting.

Grace Young asked Carolyn Harris for a flyer for an upcoming Parent Networking event. Annie Kennedy will distribute the Google request form to all SAC members for requesting postings, flyers, and other communication support from the O&C sub-committee.

Taking into consideration today’s discussions, Kristine Dodd will include a Google map and shuttle details for future SAC meeting locations.

At the conclusion of discussions, all new SAC members gathered together to take a 2020-21 cohort photo.

Upcoming Events:
- February is BEAR Month! Take advantage of this great opportunity.
  - For more information on how to participate: http://brown.edu/go/bearmonth
- Professional Development Day - February 18th - all should go if they can. OEID brings in leaders across campus to talk about issues like implicit bias, climate surveys, etc.
- (Continuing) Parent Networking Group - Children’s clothing and gear donation collections start February 3rd - March 13th

The next SAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 12 p.m. at Pembroke Center, 172 Meeting Street, Room 305.