



University Staff Advisory Council Meeting Brief and Updates December 2023

This brief highlights topics that may be shared widely with staff. Any questions can be directed to the linked resources or to askUSAC@psu.edu. For information on USAC, the Voice for Penn State Staff, visit the [USAC website](#).

December Meeting Recap

During the December meeting, the council welcomed speakers on two topics. Dr. Nalini Krishnankutty, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging program manager for Penn State Human Resources, and Sharon Lucas, analyst for the Office of Investment Management, joined the council to discuss the new University-wide Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) at Penn State. ERGs are voluntary, employee-led groups open to all staff and faculty created around common identities, backgrounds or interests. The presentation expanded on the information recently shared with the Penn State community in an [article on Penn State Today](#). Two ERGs were recently announced, Rainbow Roar and Vet-aLIONce, and resources are available for those who are interested in forming other ERGs.

The council was then joined by three members of the Faculty Senate: Shelli Stine, associate teaching professor of biobehavioral health and current chair of Faculty Senate; Josh Wede, teaching professor of Psychology; and Michele Duffy, associate teaching professor in the College of Health and Human Development and secretary of Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate has existed for over 100 years and is currently in the process of a three-year study to reexamine the structure. With increased collaboration between the two groups and because USAC is also currently considering a restructure, it was an ideal time for discussion between USAC and Faculty Senate on membership, structure, representation of a large and diverse university, and shared governance, amongst other topics.

Lastly, the council voted on two motions to shift the USAC yearly calendar. The first motion was to change the membership term so that it begins on July 1 and runs through June 30th. The second motion was to amend the current by laws related to the election process so that leadership elections and transitions on the council are aligned with the new membership terms and timeline.

Committee Updates

- **Awards:** The committee is preparing for the announcement of Staff Awards in January. This includes updating the nomination forms and drafting a press release.
- **Communications:** The communications committee made several updates to the website, developed the monthly briefs, updates USAC's three social media channels regularly, and helped to coordinate a press release.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging:** The DEIB committee is working on goal setting for what can be accomplished in the second half of the year.
- **Logistics:** The Logistics Committee supported the focus groups that were held in November. These small groups met via Zoom to allow interested PSU employees to provide further details on topics identified through USAC's last listening sessions.
- **Membership and Elections:** The committee has been discussing and planning the updates to the by laws regarding membership and leadership elections timing.

- **Outreach:** The Outreach committee is planning for the USAC Summit and working on identifying a theme. The committee is also creating a Quick Start Guide as part of a toolkit to assist new a staff advisory council formation.

University-wide Committee Involvement

USAC officers and members sit on a variety of external committees, which can be found on the [USAC Impact page](#).

Staff Facts or Benefits: Lab Work with Quest Diagnostics

By using Quest Diagnostics or LabCorp, you will pay the least amount of coinsurance (10%), after deductible, for lab services. More information is available on the [HR website](#) and the [FAQs page](#).

Next Council Meeting

The next USAC general council meeting is on Tuesday, January 16, 2023.

Important News, Updates, and Reminders

- General salary increases (GSI) will be reflected in January 2024 paychecks, and the salary increases will be retroactive to July 1. More details are available in the Penn State News [article](#).
- The [2024 holiday schedule](#) was announced by Penn State HR. Note that Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 15th, is a University holiday.
- The [Safe Walk Service](#) is a program at the University Park campus designed to provide walking accompaniment for Penn State students, employees, and visitors who may feel unsafe walking alone on campus at night. To Request a Safe Walk, call 814-865-WALK (9255).

Valuable Links

- Show a colleague how much you appreciate their efforts with a [Positive Paw](#)
- Recognize a fellow Penn Stater by submitting a "[WE ARE](#)" shout out in Penn State Today
- Don't miss important announcements and news from [Penn State Today](#)
- Learn how to identify and report [spotted lanternflies](#)
- The Penn State community is encouraged to report potential issues about behavior that is inconsistent with the [Penn State Values](#). A 24/7 [Penn State Hotline](#) is available or call 800-560-1637.

About USAC

The University Staff Advisory Council consists of dedicated staff who act in an advisory capacity to central administration; explore issues, policies, and practices that impact staff; suggest revisions to policies and new policy initiatives; and advocate for staff welfare and development. USAC serves the PSU president and administration through the vice president of human resources and accepts new members annually.

Contact us: askusac@psu.edu

USAC Website: <https://hr.psu.edu/usac>

LIKE us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PSUUSAC/>

Connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#)