



University Staff Advisory Council Meeting Brief and Updates January 2024

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](#).

January Meeting Recap

The University Staff Advisory Council meeting on January 16, 2024 included a lengthy conversation with Jennifer Wilkes, vice president for Human Resources. Members of USAC asked questions about compensation modernization, general salary increases (GSI), and concerns over perceived inconsistent applications of Penn State policies (including remote work opportunities and GSI increases). The meeting occurred prior to the University-wide announcement of a road map to a sustainable business model for Penn State, which includes funding for the implementation of the compensation modernization initiative.

Other highlights from the meeting include updates on an effort to design a sustainable model for USAC to grow into an organization that represents staff across the University to a greater degree than it does today.

Committee Updates

- **Awards:** The committee is coordinating the USAC Staff Awards. Nominations are now being accepted and are due on March 1. These awards recognize University staff members who go above and beyond their normally assigned job responsibilities, perhaps by resolving a particularly difficult dilemma, being exceptionally creative, or being responsive to the needs of others regardless of status. [Learn more about the awards here.](#)
- **Communications:** The committee helped to announce the 2024 USAC Staff Awards by updating the website, coordinating a [press release](#), and updating the social media channels. The committee also creates this monthly brief and posts relevant information to USAC's [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#) channels regularly.
- **Membership and Elections:** The committee is working on updates to the USAC application for new staff members to join the Council, among other projects.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging:** Members of the DEIB committee are supporting the USAC chair-elect in the planning and implementation of the university-wide listening sessions, which are scheduled for the last week of February. More details, including registration and opportunities to voice concerns, will be forthcoming.
- **Outreach:** The committee is finalizing a Quick Start Guide to share with units across the University that want to start a Staff Advisory Council that engages and advocates for staff in their unit, college, or campus.

Additional USAC Updates

- **USAC Travel Engagement Meetings:** USAC will visit the Lehigh Valley and Beaver campuses in the coming months, as it continues to engage with staff at every campus. Meeting details and virtual meeting links will be available soon.
- **Eastern Region:** Meeting will be held at the Lehigh Valley campus from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on March 21. Staff from the Abington, Berks, Schuylkill, Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton, Worthington Scranton, Great Valley, and Brandywine campuses are invited to attend.

- **Western Region:** Meeting will be held at the Beaver campus from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on June 20. Staff from the New Kensington, Dubois, Altoona, Greater Allegheny, Fayette, Shenango, and Behrend campuses are invited to attend.
- **Collaboration with Faculty Senate:** As Faculty Senate conducts their annual University Park visits to academic colleges and units, USAC representatives have also had the opportunity to attend. The Law School visit was conducted on January 30, the Graduate School visit was on February 2, and the College of Education visit was on February 6. Upcoming visits include the College of Earth & Mineral Sciences on February 20 and the College of Engineering on March 12.
- **USAC Summit:** USAC will host its annual summit on April 18 to bring staff advisory council members from all colleges, campuses, and units across the commonwealth together for a day of learning and networking. The USAC Outreach Committee is in the process of finalizing speakers and programming. More information will be forthcoming.

University-wide Committee Involvement

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

- SIMBA Governance Subcommittee: A USAC representative sits on the SIMBA governance subcommittee, which created a SIMBA toolkit that includes tips for essential functions and non-PO Invoice processing. It also includes details on Shop OnLion, procurement, and grants management. If staff have suggestions that will make using SIMBA simpler or provide better reporting, please submit a “SIMBA Enhancement Request” at the bottom [of this service now page](#).
- Terra Ingram has been asked to serve as a staff representative on the Academic Program & Portfolio Review (APPR) committee.

Next Council Meeting

The next USAC general council meeting is on Tuesday, February 13, 2023.

Staff Benefit Spotlight

We are pleased to announce that the new [Big Ten Academic Alliance Affinity Program](#) through Enterprise Mobility is now available for personal car rentals. This program offers employees and retirees great discounts on rates with Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Alamo, and National Car Rental. Plus, for National Emerald Club members, these rentals will also continue to count toward your rewards.

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](#)