



University Staff Advisory Council Monthly Brief and Updates for Staff November 2024

November General Council Meeting Recap

- Academic Portfolio and Program Review (APPR) Insight Session: During the first portion of the November General Council meeting, USAC members tuned into the APPR Insight Session. While the outcomes are undetermined, staff welcomed the opportunity to learn more and ask questions directly to leadership. The [December APPR Insight Session](#) will be held on Thursday, December 19, at noon. Staff members can visit the [APPR website](#) or subscribe to the [APPR newsletter](#) for more information.
- Membership Model Discussions: The council further discussed implementation details for the [new USAC membership model](#). Rollout procedures will be finalized in December.
- Sharing and Distribution of Information: USAC's mission is to elevate the role of staff, promote staff general welfare, enhance work environments, increase staff representation in decision-making, and drive improvements that further the institution's ability to accomplish its mission and goals. As such, Council meetings are spent discussing matters occurring across academic colleges, administrative/academic units, and campuses, and determining the most appropriate approach to advocacy. Staff members with concerns they would like USAC to address are encouraged to contact askusac@psu.edu or complete the anonymous form on [our website](#).

USAC Updates

- USAC's [new membership roll-out](#) begins in July 2025 and will allow for increased representation from every campus and college along with designated administrative/academic support units. A listening session will be hosted this spring for any unit interested in starting a local staff advisory council. More information will be available on [our website](#) in January.
- A strategic planning process is underway to determine USAC's advocacy efforts in the years to come. When finalized, USAC will share the multi-year strategic plan, and the university community will receive regular updates.

USAC's 2024-2025 efforts focus on three strategic priorities determined by staff.

- Priority #1: Promote transparent pathways for career advancement
- Priority #2: Facilitate inclusion of staff at all levels and all campuses in decision-making
- Priority #3: Improve communication and engagement from leadership

A summary of year-to-date efforts in these areas will be published in January 2025.

University Updates

- [Human Resources launched a tool](#) in November that will record calls for training purposes and quality monitoring. USAC asked for clarification on the protocol and has been assured that the content of recorded calls will remain confidential, only be accessible by HR, and be deleted after one year.
- A [Staff Satisfaction Survey](#) will launch in Spring 2025 for all full-time and technical service employees. The survey will measure engagement and job satisfaction in areas such as collaboration; communication; diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging; benefits; staff wellbeing; performance management, and more. The staff survey will run concurrently with a [COACHE survey](#) being administered to Faculty. USAC had the opportunity to meet with Modern Think, the organization administering the staff survey, to ask questions about how data will be compiled, stored, and protected and to provide suggestions for survey prompts/questions.
- [ABA Approval of Unified Law School](#): President Neeli Bendapudi, Danielle M. Conway, Penn State Dickinson Law Dean, and Donald J. Farage, Professor of Law, commend the staff at Carlisle and University Park for their commitment to students throughout the process of unifying Penn State Dickinson Law and Penn State Law.

Ways to Engage with USAC

- USAC's Fourth Annual Listening Sessions will be held on January 28 from 2-3 pm and January 30 from 9-10 am. The listening sessions aim to gather information about the Penn State staff experience so that USAC can [communicate information to leadership](#), set strategic priorities, and shape a better work culture. Stay tuned for registration details in January.
- In February 2025, USAC will host a virtual information session on how to start a local Staff Advisory Council (SAC). The session will be open to all members of the staff community. Details will be forthcoming in the new year.
- The Eastern Region travel engagement meeting will be held at Penn State Wilkes-Barre in March 2025. Additional information will be provided closer to the event.
- Reminder: USAC leadership meets monthly with administrators including Jennifer Wilkes, Sara Thorndike, Tracy Langkilde, Margo DelliCarpini, and others. Staff members can submit questions, comments, and suggestions on our website.

Local Staff Advisory Council Spotlight

Penn State Lehigh Valley (PSULV) Staff Advisory Council hosted its 3rd annual Gab, Gather, & Gobble event on November 26. Employees gathered to share their favorite family dishes to foster community and establish PSULV traditions. Cultural staples like Spanish rice and beans and baba ghanoush made the event a special opportunity to share traditions and come together before the holiday.

Interested in spotlighting your campus/college's Staff Advisory Council? Contact us at askUSAC@psu.edu.

Employee Resources

- [2024 Holiday Calendar](#)
- [New Employee Resource Group for Caregivers](#)
- [Employee Assistance Fund \(EAF\)](#)

Send a colleague some kudos with a “[We ARE](#)” Shout Out in Penn State Today.
Or show a colleague your appreciation by requesting [Positive Paw](#) sticky notes.

About USAC

The University Staff Advisory Council consists of dedicated staff who advise 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.

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