



University Staff Advisory Council Monthly Brief

March General Council Meeting Highlights

- **Factors Informing the Commonwealth Campuses Recommendation** – Michael Wade Smith, senior vice president and chief of staff, provided context to [previously published](#) information on factors contributing to the conversation surrounding campus closures. His presentation:
 - Shared insights on the Commonwealth Campus ecosystem, emphasizing student success, campus sustainability, and the financial challenges of various programs.
 - Stressed the financial investment to maintain staffing while realizing declining enrollment.
 - Displayed a variety of charts and graphs to reflect 5 and 10-year data for campus [enrollment numbers](#) and population density in counties where campuses are located.

Updates from USAC

- **USAC Officer Elections** – We are happy to announce the newly elected officers for the 2025-2026 term:
 - Chair-Elect: Melissa Meyer
 - Secretary-Elect: Leah Carraway-Justice

Both will work alongside the 2025-2026 Chair, Matt Heller, and Secretary, Alice Puzarowski starting July 1. Congratulations, and we look forward to your leadership in these roles!

- USAC is actively advocating for staff impacted by potential campus closures through their engagement with the Staff Transitions Workstream. During monthly meetings, USAC has shared a variety of recommendations sourced by staff across the campus system of ways to support staff during and after potential closure of campuses.

Ways to Engage USAC

- **Listing of Local Staff Advisory Councils** – Employees can find a listing of established Local Staff Advisory Councils (SACs) on the USAC [Local Staff Advisory Council webpage](#).
- **USAC Community Engagement Group (MS Teams)** – The Microsoft Teams group serves as a space for staff employees to connect, share best practices, and learn more about Local Staff Advisory Councils. [Join the USAC Community Engagement Group](#).

- **USAC Anonymous Feedback Form** – Full-time staff employees are welcome to anonymously reach out to USAC with feedback or comments via the [webform on our website](#).

Local Staff Advisory Council Spotlight

The College of Health and Human Development (HHD) Staff Advisory Council (SAC), with the support of HHD Dean, Craig Newschaffer, is piloting a program by which staff can request up to \$100 to offset costs related to professional development, including registration fees, travel expenses, abstract submission fees, conference registration fees, poster printing costs, or books or other work-related print materials. SAC leadership worked with finance office representatives to design the program. Applications are due April 15, and, so far, there have been 9 applications. This is a pilot program to help determine future demand and impacts.

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

Employee Resources

- **New Branded Templates** – New Penn State PowerPoint and Microsoft Word templates are now embedded directly within the applications. See instructions on how to access in this [Penn State Today news article](#).
- **Flex Vanpool Program** – A new [vanpool subscription program](#) is available to employees who work on a hybrid schedule and are working two to five days per week.
- **Employee Unionization Information** – Penn State is aware of faculty unionization efforts and recognizes that unionization is an important topic for our employees. Penn State is committed to providing clear and comprehensive information to support an open and respectful dialogue. The University has launched an [Employee Unionization information website](#), which will serve as a resource for faculty and staff to access updates and information related to the unionization process.

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 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.

Visit the [USAC News & Updates site](#) to view previous meeting highlights.

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