

## **Tulane Staff Advisory Council**

May 26, 2021

**Present:** Trina Beck, Anita Jobson-Wolfe, Lea Goodwin, Steven Coy, Janel Fielding, Tsetsa Dankova Rosensteel, Korey Lane, J. Malbrough, Kathy Carneiro, Kevin Grant, Evan Nicoll, Shannon Aicklen, Robert Morton, Marie Maywalt, Carmen McCaffrey, Gale Marie Abbass, Kristen Jones, Lucia La Salle, Will Ferbos, Ashley Hicks, Antoine Young, Jonathan Remkes, Julie Henriquez Aldana, Lindsay Hellwig, Natalia Fuentes, Philip Stitt, Shawn Potter, Brittney Yandle, Christopher Stokes, Sharon Valle, Jean Paul Lefort, Barbara Ryan, Beth Nazar, Jen Huber, Kim Fleming, Margaret Bell, Marissa Lespinasse, Phillip Odom, Regan LeCesne

**Excused:** Kady Weingart, Amy Hurd, Monique Hodges, Laura Doré Wiley

**Guests:** Margaret Bell, Anneliese Singh, Kayla Jutzi, Brandy Perry, Kayla Jutzi, M. Bennett, Mary Hicks

**Absent:** Brittney Hamer, Julie D'Antoni, Taryn Vinet, Matthew Tombaugh

*Call to Order 3:00 pm*

Welcome everyone, the Tulane staff joining us and our guest speaker, Dr. Anneliese Singh!

Please email us at [sac@tulane.edu](mailto:sac@tulane.edu) to confirm your attendance if you are on Zoom on your phone. In the future if you are unable to make the meeting, please email us at [sac@tulane.edu](mailto:sac@tulane.edu) so we can mark you as excused.

1. **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from the April 2021 meeting prepared by Anita Jobson-Wolfe were reviewed and voted on. Minutes are approved.
2. **Guest Speaker** is Dr. Anneliese Singh, Associate Provost for Diversity and Faculty Development at Tulane. Dr. Singh joined Tulane in July 2020 as our first Chief Diversity Officer and also has an appointment in the School of Social Work with a joint affiliation in the Department of Psychology. She is a native of New Orleans and earned her undergraduate degree at Tulane. Dr. Singh did her graduate work at Georgia State University and earned a master's degree in professional counseling and a PhD in counseling psychology. Her research focuses on approaches to counseling and psychology that address the needs and experiences of historically marginalized groups, with the goal of effecting lasting social change.

Dr. Singh discussed some of the initiatives she is overseeing as part of President Fitts' [Plan for Now](#) and [Strategy for Tomorrow](#), including the successful recent Teach-In on April 2 and an in-depth look at staff and faculty search processes. The EDI office can work with Tulane staff on educating, consulting, and advocating, and the office has an EDI fund from the

President to support these activities. Dr. Singh encouraged SAC to consider initiatives that might take advantage of this fund. Additionally, Dr. Singh is looking at bias incident reporting and restorative justice, as well as organizing and reviving [affinity groups](#) such as [ALAAMEA](#).

Dr. Singh noted that many staff have participated in the Strategy for Tomorrow EDI Inventory that occurred in April 2021. This inventory will feed into a 5-year plan that will determine which EDI efforts Dr. Singh's Office is taking on. An EDI climate survey will be sent out this fall to students, staff, and faculty.



*Question:* Natalia Fuentes asked if Dr. Singh has been involved in the Senate's Equal Opportunity Committee and will her EDI office be the home department for this committee? Dr. Singh said yes it would and mentioned Dr. Eva Silvestre's work as EDI's Data Strategist. Dr. Silvestre will help in building the equity score card which will be built into the 5-year strategy. Dr. Singh mentions trying to bring under one roof a lot of what is being done at Tulane in various silos.

*Question:* Beth Nazar –There is a lot that needs to be done in order for staff to feel like they can advocate for themselves and in order for allies to feel like they can advocate for others. We are getting the messages from the President and from HR but it is not being communicated by supervisors. Maybe there could be a yearly training to remind managers of this?

Also, several years ago there was an HR review of Tulane staff job titles and descriptions. There was a discussion about the data about racial and/or gender bias in salaries, as well as issues with Tulane staff job descriptions not matching what staff does and that there would be a review of this. Hard to get data on what Tulane staff does. What is the status?

Dr. Singh says this summer there is a staff EDI training which should be announced shortly. There also needs to be a faculty reset before the fall and she has been talking to Patrick Norton about this.

She believes that there may be an EDI and anti-racism component added to the performance reviews.

In regard to Beth's job description questions, she will reach out to Dr. Bolton's replacement and get updates.

Natalia Fuentes shared an institutional inequity in the ability to take classes at Tulane. She has been unable to take classes in the program she is interested in as they are offered during her work hours and her managers have not been flexible on this. After COVID, we have shown most of our jobs are flexible. This issue may affect the minority staff more as they may not be able to get the degree needed to be able to gain a better job at Tulane.

Dr. Singh would like to chat more about this with SAC and will look at this situation. More data is needed.

*Question:* Jonny Remkes: Facilities staff have been disproportionately impacted by challenges due to childcare issues, etc. and the lack of a flexible work environment. Dr. Singh would like to schedule a separate meeting to learn more about this.

Trina Beck said SAC looks forward to continuing this conversation with Anneliese Singh and EDI in the future and at future meetings. Thank you for this wonderful conversation.

3. **Announcements by Human Resources:** –Kim Fleming is stepping down as the SAC HR rep. She has been promoted to be Director of the Tulane Leadership Institute. SAC welcomes Sharon Valle as our new incoming HR representative. Sharon reported that the job description review project mentioned by Beth Nazar was getting started until it was derailed by COVID. EDS is being restarted in conjunction with the job description review. This is one of Compensation's three major projects they are working on. The goal is to develop more consistency across units and jobs, e.g. so we do not have 50 types of job descriptions for program managers. Sharon reminds everyone that each unit has an HR business partner, listed at [hr.tulane.edu](http://hr.tulane.edu). Kim added a reminder that the Employee Assistance Program is offering [emotional wellness sessions](#).

Kim and Sharon reminded everyone about the incentive plan for vaccinations. Once vaccination is confirmed, full time employees get \$500 (taxes deducted) and parttime \$250 (taxes deducted). If employees need a medical or religious waiver, reach out to HR. This incentive does not include Tulane's student workers.

*Question:* Robert Morton: If a staff member falls ill after getting the vaccine, can staff use their COVID time instead of sick or vacation? Sharon confirmed that yes, they can.

*Question:* Trina Beck: a question was emailed to SAC regarding telehealth. Now that providers (counselors & therapists) are all online, for employees who do not have a private soundproof room, could one be available for them on campus? Sharon reported that this issue has been raised in HR and options are being looked at.

Sharon Valle said in regard to Natalia's question about taking classes on the tuition waiver during work hours, the standing policy is that the classes will be after work. However, if the class is in the daytime and is the only time it is offered, staff should talk with their managers. The managers should try to work with the staff member to accommodate this. However, taking more than one class during work hours in a given semester is not likely to be feasible. Natalia Fuentes said that this does not always happen and is used as an excuse. Some programs only have classes during the daytime or work. Anita Jobson-Wolfe mentioned that the SPHTM classes are all 8am – 12noon or 1pm – 5pm.

*Question:* Marie Maywalt: Will Tulane consider buying back PTO at a reduced rate? Staff are having problems using up their time before they lose it because they are unable to take vacation due to increased workloads and many did not take any vacation during COVID. Sharon will take this back to HR and ask. Stephen Coy mentioned raising the limit for a while post-COVID to give the staff more time to take the time off. Beth Nazar noted that managers also need to support their staff and let them take the time off because this is important for overall health and well-being.

#### **4. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a. Board of Administrators (BOA) – Kathy Carneiro reported no Board meeting.
- b. University Senate – Trina Beck reports that the Senate met on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and re-elected James Duggan as secretary. President Fitts gave a report thanking faculty and staff for their role in making this a successful year despite the pandemic. Tulane's COVID-19 positivity rate is almost zero and has been for some time. 95% of Tulane's students came back this spring and 80% of our classes were in person. President Fitts mentioned the shout out we received from Forbes for improving our financial position. There will be two special Senate meetings in June and July to discuss the Fall plans. Vaccines will be required for students and may be required for faculty and staff, but the incentives rolled out this week may preclude the need to require them for faculty and staff. There was a report on admissions by Satya Dattagupta. Tulane went test-optional for applications for

the first time ever, and shifted more of the merit-based financial aid to need-based aid, some of which was specifically aimed at families disproportionately affected by COVID. Tulane used a hybrid of virtual and in-person recruiting which was very successful. Tulane has admitted its most diverse and highly qualified undergraduate class ever for Fall 2021. The average SAT score is 1474. Top five states are California, New York, Illinois, Texas, and Louisiana. We did not do as well in international recruitment due to COVID but have a strong showing and the top five countries are China, United Kingdom, Panama, Mexico, and India. Overall we have 23 countries represented. There will be 119 incoming freshmen who identify as Black or African American which is the most to enter Tulane ever and a 51% increase since 2016. With the Louisiana Promise Program, Tulane is meeting the full need of 40 students without loans.

- i. *Question:* Janel Fielding: Was it mentioned where the LA Promise kids are coming from? Trina said it was not. Janel hoped some are coming from New Orleans schools.
- c. Budget – SAC representatives are Chris Stokes and Janel Fielding. Trina asked if they were able to attend? Both Chris and Janel reported that they had not received an Outlook invite to the meeting. Trina will follow up with Molly Demosthenidy. Based on the budget committee report presented at the Senate meeting, Trina reported Tulane is projected to meet the current budget for 2021. Tulane rebounded faster than expected from the pandemic. For the expenses, Tulane is at or below projected expenses and is looking at finishing FY21 either at budget or with a little surplus. The proposed budget FY22 includes a 3% staff increase.
- d. Committee on Committees – Trina Beck reports they have not met.
- e. Equal Opportunity – Natalia Fuentes says she has not received an invite for any committee meeting. Trina will check to make sure all committee members are on the invite list.
- f. Benefits – No meeting.
- g. Information Technology – Antoine Young reports that this committee met for a second time to follow up on old business. On new business, looked more at the grant request process. Update to the investment council and computer standards may go into effect within the next year for Tulane. The hope is to have a set line of computers to pick from and be able to handle repairs easier. Parts can be swapped and ordered in bulk. All computers would be the same across the university which is cheaper in the long term.

- i. *Question:* Natalia Fuentes was glad to see that IT reached out to the end users of the grant request software. A DUO authentication on Tulane email is coming and she is on the beta committee. Discussion occurred on how the authentication process is working due to concerns reported by the medical doctors using it.
- h. Facilities – J Malbrough reports they did not meet. Anita Jobson-Wolfe noted that the new Warwick Hotel apartments are opening in July.

(<https://news.tulane.edu/news/tulane-set-debut-new-downtown-apartments-july>).

- 5. **SAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Trina reports that almost everyone has signed up for at least one committee. Every rep is required to be on at least one internal SAC committee. Proxies are not required but encouraged. Sign up at

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1nMXFmthph4P6i3YxsOK4YYVMayN1j7VuzXAxUtpMMg/edit#gid=0>

- a. Community Service is looking for a new chair. They do a toy drive every fall. Janel Fielding and Marie Maywalt are interested in co-chairing. Also have done school supply drive and bead collection drive.
- b. Health & Wellness is looking for a new chair. Prior to COVID, they had done kickball games, flag football, but can also do things like the April Bike Easy challenge. Tulane was #1 in our employer size category for Bike Easy. Marie Maywalt is interested in chairing.
- c. Staff Appreciation is also looking for new chair or co-chair. Brittany Hamer willing to help. They have put on Snowballs with President Fitts, had king cake; and provided free tickets to Crawfest.
  - i. A Sub Committee of Staff Appreciation is the Football Game Ad Hoc Committee. This year it will be on September 25. No major updates at this time. Tent at the tailgate area with wristbands for access to the Capital One deck with food giveaways plus raffles.
- d. Staff Issues – Natalia Fuentes will reach out to set up an official meeting time. One potential issue is the discontinuing of regular shuttle service to University Square (and to Downtown). Will Ferbos and Robert Morton will report back.
- e. Electronic Technologies– Antoine Young has been working on MS Teams for SAC. He is interested in revisiting and potentially redefining the role of this committee. Traditionally, they have concentrated on the communication side but also bring in more technological improvements to improve SAC. Antoine will send out a Zoom invite to committee members.

- f. Constitution – has not met. It is an ad-hoc committee.

6. Old Business

- a. Have one opening for a Senate Equal Opportunity non-exempt member.
- b. Once the committee chairs are in place, Trina will meet with committee chairs to help set direction for the SAC 21-22 year and provide tools based on growth mindset and design thinking. If you are interested in learning more on growth mindset check out the LinkedIn Learning Course (reminder Tulane staff has full access for all LinkedIn Learning Courses) <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/cultivating-a-growth-mindset/take-the-leap?u=26106002>
- c. If you have not turned in your photo for the SAC representative's webpage, please send your photo in now.

7. New Business -

- a. Reps are rolling off at the end of June so proxies may hear from Trina with an offer to become a rep.

Next meeting in person with a zoom option in Qatar Ballroom on June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 pm.