The second regular meeting of the Staff Council for the 2014-2015 year was held at the UTSA main campus in the Willow Room (UC 2.02.12) and was called to order at 8:37am with Anne Peters, Vice Chair, presiding.

**Members Present:** Amy Ossula-Phillips, Alejandra Perez, Laura Earleywine, Lisa Johns, Kai Kamaka, Cynthia McCowen, Eric Weber, Jerry Smith, Katherine Valdez, Cynthia Orth, Michael Logan, John Shaffer, Brandon Anoil, Christine Bodily, Annie Maynes, Sarah Netterlund, Wendy Frost, Gidget Vasquez, Maranda Tupper, Anne Peters

**Members absent (excused):** Shannon Rios, Alfred Zavala, Alejandra Gonzalez, Amanda Alvarado, Brittany Kyle, Diane Mazuca, Irene Mireles, KC Gonzalez, Monica Bowden, Virginia Galloway, Venetta Williams

**Members absent (unexcused):** Justin Bingham, Ben Campos, Wanda Guntz, Amanda Marin

**Meeting Minutes:** September meeting minutes were approved by a majority vote via e-mail.

**Introduction of Council Members:** Each member shared their name, department, number of years at UTSA, term of membership in Staff Council, and an interesting fact about themselves in an effort to become familiar with everyone.

**Emergency Secretary Election:**
- Responsibilities of the position reviewed with the Council
- Nominations opened and one candidate nominated, Lisa Johns, who accepted the nomination
- Moved by John Shaffer, seconded, and approved unanimously to appoint Lisa Johns to the position of Secretary

**Committee Updates**
- **Communications-**
  - Sarah Netterlund reported that the committee has started getting access to the website for those who need access to make website updates.
  - Wendy Frost will be making Council page updates as part of the Communications committee.
  - They are also working on some articles for UTSA Today. The first article is planned for promoting the Staff Appreciation Award.
- **Elections-**
  - Cindy Orth reported that the Elections committee is really a seasonal committee with most of the activity taking place in the spring. She would provide updates as they arise.
• **Fundraising**
  - Cindy Orth reported that due to the extension of bowling league dates at University Bowl, the previously approved date of March 3, 2015 for Strikes for Scholarships was no longer available unless the Council wanted to “buy out” a league team. However, this was discussed as not an option because it would significantly reduce the profit from the event and would decrease the scholarship fund.
  - A tentative reservation for May 18, 2015 is on hold for University Bowl.
  - Cindy proposed the Staff Council move the date of the event to May 18, 2015.
    - Motion made, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote to confirm the May 18, 2015 date for Strikes for Scholarships.
  - Discussion was held about past Strikes for Scholarships at University Bowl and the successful collaborations Staff Council has had with bowling alley.

• **Health and Wellness**
  - Brandon Aniol reported the committee is carrying on with initiatives established last term in working with Kristee Phelps, UTSA Occupational Health & Wellness Manager, to identify what can be offered to staff through Campus Recreation in an effort to promote university-wide wellness.
  - The committee will be meeting to create questions to be used in an interest survey, which will be sent out to all staff to determine interest in staff usage of the facility.
  - There is also discussion about a pay-as-you-go option for staff, but Brandon was unconvinced this would be seen as cost saving for those staff members who work out 5-6 times per week.

• **Issues**
  - Kai Kamaka reported that there are currently no issues for the committee to address.
  - A request was made to make it known to staff in your area that you are a Staff Council member and that you are available to hear issues for the issues committee. You can also refer them to Kai Kamaka as chairperson of this committee.
  - Committee Chair recommends that a link for submitting staff issues to this committee be put on the Staff Council website.
  - Laura Earleywine also recommended that information about this committee as well as other Staff Council updates and events be put on the digital signage across campus.
  - Discussion followed about the process to do this and other ideas about how Staff Council can use this idea to promote what Staff Council is doing.

• **Parking**
  - Jerry Smith clarified the confusion of the October meeting regarding chair of this committee, stating he was the chair of the Staff Council parking committee while John Shaffer was the vice chair of the university-wide parking committee.
  - Reported that complaints have come to him regarding pedestrian and bicycle traffic. These would be addressed by the committee.
  - Jerry asked the question for consideration, “Are signs needed?” This would be for the purpose of clearly marking crosswalks.
  - Jerry reminded the Council that anyone can report a downed sign with a call to Facilities.
  - A concern was presented regarding the directional arrows in the Tobin Garage and how some drivers turn to the left to park upon entering the garage although the arrows direct traffic up or to the right. This causes drivers who follow the arrows to have to stop short in order not to hit drivers going the wrong way.
Another concern that was presented was how high the bushes in University Circle have grown since being planted. Growing so high that they are now causing a line of sight issue around the circle and that they should be cut back.

- **Scholarships**
  - Alex Gonzalez, Committee Chair, was not in attendance to report.

- **Staff Appreciation**
  - Lisa Johns reported that an email was sent to all Staff Council members with information regarding the process and guidelines for submitting nominations for this award.
  - November 6, Thursday, is the deadline for November award nominations.
  - The first Thursday of every month was clarified as the deadline for nomination submissions.
  - Discussion followed regarding carrying over nominations from one month to the next for those nominations that were not chosen.
    - A point was made that having to resubmit the nomination was time-consuming and may be seen as a deterrent in making nominations. This will be discussed in the next committee meeting.

**University Assembly Meeting**
- Alex Perez reported on this meeting. What follows is the summary submitted to the Secretary for reporting purposes.

[Begin report]

**Topic of Discussion**

President Romo gave an overview of his proposed Tier One goals and presented a chart showing a breakdown of these goals. He discussed the importance of each “pillar” to Tier One as well as the importance of all pillars working together. He said that it was important to work on multiple goals at the same time and recommended that the Assembly members break into groups to discuss each pillar in-depth. [Roundtable discussions followed for each of the following pillars.]

- **Educational Excellence**
  - How to improve graduation rates? One student at a time. The group stressed the importance of paying attention to each student to meet their needs.
  - Need to create and sustain innovative and popular classes.
  - Faculty should continue to work in improve their teaching style to engage students (e.g. innovative instruction utilizing media).
  - Increase and broaden communication to the community. Get the word out to more students about why they should come to UTSA.

- **Superior Infrastructure**
  - Communication at every level is important—increase marketing information.
  - Aligning budget to goals is important. Prepare multiple plans (and backup plans) to be better prepared for lack of state funding, university budget constraints, low enrollment, etc.
  - Funding projects are important (capital campaign, etc.) Perhaps look at showing a more tangible outcome when goals are reached for greater impact.
  - For greater endowment opportunities, increase alumni presence on campus among current students.
Innovative Research & Discovery–
- Publicize more student research at the undergraduate level.
- Acknowledge and promote research in all academic areas (not solely focused on the STEM fields.)
- Instructors should place importance on promoting more critical and analytical thinking.
- Abundant degrees- offer research program to differentiate students and add to their overall experience.
- Increase connection with the community so students can make business connections.
- Offer scholarships to undergraduates who aspire to do research.

Strong Community Involvement–
- Offer service learning as credit for course at UTSA to show the importance of volunteering.
- To recruit other students, promote our graduates, and reach out to alumni for fundraising and committee service opportunities.
- There are some impressive companies listed on the UTSA Jobs website. Students can promote school spirit through their jobs as ambassadors of UTSA.

Superior Student Experience–
- Create the ability for students to declare their majors early on if desired. Student can’t declare their major until they have earned 30 credit hours. If a student doesn’t take 15 hours per semester, they won’t be able to declare their major until their second year, possibly not allowing them to register for required classes, which could put them behind in the 4-year graduation rate plan.
- Improve access to nearby campus housing; make more bike friendly.
- In addition to Student Instructors (SIs) [this more than likely means Supplemental Instruction Leaders (SI Leaders)] in lower-level courses, focus on upper-level SIs that students could benefit from.
- Reinforce the faculty relationship through SIs.
- Increase internship opportunities for students to gain real world experience.
- Open up class availability times and advising options. For students who work, having limited meeting hours with their advisor can be challenging. Perhaps, advisors could offer advising services through email or add special meeting hours to benefit students’ schedules.

World-Class Graduate Programs–
- Create more flexible graduate program for workers with families, etc.
- Allow part-time Ph.D. students to enroll in classes and receive funding.
- Provide funding for Master’s students through scholarships.
- Provide joint-programs to interested students.
- Increase variety of Master’s programs.
- Increase Ph.D. student diversity on committees. [End report]

Discussion followed regarding the input from Staff Council regarding the six pillars and how the Staff Council Chair brought to the attention of the Assembly and President Romo that there is no mention of staff importance/value in this plan. It was reported that President
Romo did agree that staff acknowledgement was missing and that often staff are the people who come up with the best ideas.
  - Kai Kamaka recommended to the Council inviting Vice Presidents to attend Staff Council meetings.
  - A concern from one member was the negative attitude and comments she has received from departmental leadership, calling Staff Council “a joke” and that input from the Council may not be taken seriously.
  - Anne Peters recommended a formal statement to CMOs regarding the importance of hiring and retaining excellent staff. This was discussed and would be addressed through the Communications committee.

**SECC Reminder/Announcements**
- Laura Earleywine, as an Area Champion, reported that participation data is not available as quickly or accurately as it was in the past.
- Discussion followed on how to get employees to participate.
- Campaign updates were provided by the Vice Chair:
  - Silent Auction was currently going on and items could be seen on the SECC website
  - The Book Sale was happening today (October 23rd) under the Sombrilla.
  - The campaign continues through October 31st.

**New Business**
- Staff Council Chair is working with VP Research, Dr. Agrawal, to attend a Staff Council meeting in order to hear about what the Council does and has accomplished.
- Floor was opened to other new business.
  - John Shaffer of The Graduate School reported that Dr. Dorothy Flannagan has officially stepped down as Vice Provost & Dean of The Graduate School as of August 2014. She will officially retire December 2014.
    - Dr. Page Smith has stepped in as Interim Vice Provost & Dean.
    - First round interviews from the national search for this position began this week.
    - The Provost’s goal is to have someone in this position by the spring semester.

**Announcements**
- Committees were welcomed to use the Willow Room for brief meetings.
- Meeting was adjourned at 10:09am.
- Our next meeting will be Thursday, November 20, 2014, at 8:30am in the North Paseo Conference Room, NPB 2.106.
- Minutes taken and submitted by Lisa Johns, Secretary.