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# The University Senate

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## 2023-24 P&A SENATE MINUTES: No. 3

February 2, 2024  
9:30 - 11:30 A.M.

The third meeting of the P&A Senate for the 2023-24 academic year was convened via Zoom on Friday, February 2, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. Fifty-nine senators and 17 alternates signed in as present. Chair Whitney Taha Frakes presided.

### 1. Welcome and Updates

Whitney Taha Frakes, chair, P&A Senate/P&A Consultative Committee (PACC), outlined today's agenda and gave some background information on the guests that would be speaking today. She added that a work group of the P&A Communications Subcommittee is developing a one-pager/infographic given the number of situations in which administrators have asked for more information about the P&A employee class at the University. The chair and vice-chair of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee (PSAC), Regent Mary Davenport and Professor Christopher Uggen, both suggested that such a document would be very helpful when interviewing presidential candidates.

Taha Frakes said this is a significant and much appreciated change in the frequency and type of interaction that P&A leadership, on behalf of its constituents, has with the Board of Regents (BOR). Members of the BOR, she added, are recognizing that the public and members of the Minnesota state legislature do not fully understand the contributions and importance of the P&A employee class at the University. Taha Frakes said these discussions and requests for information are an encouraging result of the work that the P&A Senate and PACC have been involved in during the past four to five years.

### 2. Student Senate Report

Taiwo Aremu, vice chair, Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC), provided a summary of the work the Student Senate is engaged in and which can be reviewed in this [document](#). He highlighted the following:

- The SSCC met with representatives from the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to discuss concerns regarding the changes to UMN Email and Google Workspace. Students in general are opposed to the changes and have invited OIT personnel to the February 22nd, 2024, Student Senate Meeting for further discussion.
- The Student Senate is drafting a resolution that ensures transparency of senior leader salaries at the University. Students feel this may align well with Interim President Ettinger's idea of fostering transparency with the public and the legislature.

Kit Breshears asked Aremu if there had been indications to the SSCC that there is still room for change in the UMN Email and Google Workspace decision. Aremu said it is unlikely that

changes will apply to what has already been done, but the hope is the administration will consider reviewing their decisions for faculty, staff, and students who will eventually be leaving the University.

### **3. Civil Service Senate Report**

Stacy Maher, chair-elect, Civil Service Senate/Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC), provided a summary of the work the Civil Service Senate is engaged in and which can be reviewed in this [document](#). She noted that the CSCC will provide data relevant to P&A employees from the floating holidays survey that CSCC sent to all civil service and P&A employees on the Twin Cities and Rochester campuses.

### **4. Subcommittee Reports**

Written reports from each of the four P&A Senate subcommittees may be reviewed in this [document](#). The chair or co-chairs of the subcommittees are:

- Outreach Subcommittee (*Toni Abts and Stacy Doepner-Hove, co-chairs*)
- Professional Development & Enrichment (*Molly Bendzick and Angela Vetsch, co-chairs*)
- Communications (*Maureen Long, chair*)
- Benefits & Compensation (*Marti Fasteland and Monica Kocon, co-chairs*)

Stacy Doepner-Hove reminded senate members that elections are coming up for unit representatives to the P&A senate as well as the election of officers to the P&A Senate. Toni Abts noted that, based on feedback that the Outreach Subcommittee sent out to senate members to gauge their interest in serving in officer positions, an invitation to attend upcoming PACC meetings is extended to anyone who is interested in the positions so that they can better understand what serving on PACC involves.

### **5. P&A Senate Officer Elections - Coming Up!**

Kit Breshears, chair-elect, P&A Senate/PACC, took a few minutes to invite anyone interested in running for leadership positions in the P&A Senate to step up. He said everyone is qualified, no one should be worried they don't have enough experience, and it's an excellent professional growth opportunity. Breshears said he has been involved in governance at the University for over a decade and he emphasized that change which happens around policy practice, and ideation at the University often gets its start in governance.

Marti Fasteland noted that senate members do not have to be part of the Twin Cities campus to be in leadership; members from all campuses are encouraged and welcomed to consider leadership positions.

### **6. PEAK Updates**

Emily O'Neill, program coordinator, PEAK, Office of Human Resources, (OHR) and Tracey Kane, senior employee and labor relations consultant, OHR, referred to [this slide deck](#) as they updated P&A Senate members on the first round of PEAK implementation.

PEAK is now moving from Phase One implementation into Phase Two implementation and, O'Neill said, the PEAK team is able to apply what was learned in Phase One as the process moves forward. She said that they are trying to shift communications to better resonate with the University community, and to respond to questions and input from Phase One.

O'Neill said to date, new operations centers have been stood up for the Finance and Human Resources units. OIT is a key partner and they had stood up their operations center model prior to the beginning of Phase One implementation. The Marketing/ Communications goods and services model was started this month.

Senate members noted that the phrase "Person of Interest" (POI) is confusing. In some units, POI can refer to a variety of personnel, and there are legitimate reasons for customization within specific units for business processes, and a one-size-fits-all approach may not always work.

O'Neill described which units of the University would be addressed in the four phases of PEAK Implementation. She described the intention of the process centers; to unify similar jobs from around the system into one operations center in order to improve the consistency of delivery.

Questions from senate members included the following:

- For employees who did not move to operations center positions, are they still working in the same departments? If not, what happened to those jobs? O'Neill said there are ongoing work realignment efforts to help employees who remained within units to adjust to job expectations that may have changed.
- Is there a place to find out more about OIT's work with training and talent development? It hasn't been advertised very well.
- Was anyone let go or demoted if they did not choose to go to a centralized position? O'Neill said no one was let go or demoted in Phase One; if portions of an employee's *work* moved, other elements were added to the composition of their job.
- The main concern people have about the PEAK Implementation is that they will get fired or demoted.
- Has the workforce been reduced? It feels as though when employees leave, they are not necessarily replaced. Does OHR track this type of data? Kane said in some cases that is true - open positions are not filled immediately. In other cases some positions may need to be realigned given the work that does end up staying in a unit and that will have an affect on whether or not people leaving the unit will need to be replaced.
- Will units in Phases Three and Four be disadvantaged in terms of opportunities to participate in the central operation centers? O'Neill said OHR has been working through how much staff it will take to operate the operation centers. OHR will project out as the implementations and transitions occur and continues to encourage people to participate in the Expression of Interest process if there are positions they are interested in.

Senate members added numerous questions to chat. O'Neill and Kane were appreciative of the feedback and said they would review the following question in order to inform their work moving forward.

- Who are you going to survey to learn if PEAK has been successful in the customer satisfaction survey? Will you survey staff, faculty, students? And how frequently will you survey them/us?
- This is deep in the weeds but supplier set up and maintenance delays remain lengthy. No need for a live response. I just wanted to note the issue for the Financial Operations section.
- How do you generate customer satisfaction surveys? Who receives them?
- I am glad to hear that there's awareness that ending student jobs needs work. We have had student jobs end prematurely which impacts our service to students, staff, and faculty

in the college as well as students having their pay interrupted with real world impacts to paying rent, etc.

- The process feels very process and outcome focused; it does not feel like it is focused on the people that are impacted.
- This presentation was focused on the transition for the people in the operation centers. How has this impacted the users of these services?
- What are some of the tangible and direct professional growth/pathways that people who have transitioned already have been able to access? (idea for people-focus content)
- There are issues with the leave management transition. Thankful that they have admitted the rollout did not go well with that, and I hope there has been improvement in the last year.

O'Neill and Kane said they would welcome the opportunity to discuss PEAK Implementation further with P&A Senate leadership and members. In the interest of time, Taha Frakes thanked the presenters and moved to the next agenda item.

### **8. University of Minnesota Government Relations**

Melissa Lopez Franzen, executive director, Government and Community Relations, Office of the President, said the Government and Community Relations team is growing and the main goal right now, regarding personnel, is to fill the federal relations director position. She added that her team is working at the Minnesota Legislature to obtain funding in the supplemental bill (that was not provided originally for the second year of the biennium) the bonding bill, Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPER) funding, and resources to support the transition in the academic health sciences.

Lopez Franzen noted that current initiatives include:

- Inviting legislators to visit the Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Twin Cities to see the properties and buildings that would be assisted by the bonding projects
- UMN Day at the Capitol - February 22, 2024
- A drive to encourage employees to sign up for to be UMN advocates to help increase funding for the University

Taha Frakes asked Lopez Franzen how P&A employees can tell their own stories, how the stories can be used in advocating for the University, and what would be the best way for a P&A who wants to share their story to initiate contact with the Government and Community Relations team? Taha Frakes also described the one-pager/infographic that the P&A Communications Subcommittee is working on and offered to share that with Lopez Franzen and her team when it is finished.

Hearing no further comments, Taha Frakes thanked Lopez Franzen and moved to the last agenda item.

### **9. Old Business / New Business**

Taha Frakes invited Adolfo Carrillo Cabello to share a historical perspective on holiday days/hours as it relates to the current floating holidays discussion being led by the CSCC. Carrillo Cabello noted that in 2021, P&A leadership advocated for an increase in the number of bankable hours that P&A could maintain, from 176 hours to 216 hours. Carrillo Cabello added that part of

the argument for this request was centered around Christian-centered holidays  
<https://policy.umn.edu/hr/academicvacation-proc01>.

Taha Frakes fielded a number of questions from P&A Senate members regarding the recently developed Administrative Policy: *Employee Sick and Safe Leave* which aligns with the [Minnesota's Earned Sick and Safe Time](#) law. She said she would discuss the concerns at an upcoming meeting with Ken Horstman, vice president, OHR.

In the interest of time, Taha Frakes thanked senate members and adjourned the meeting.

Geanette Poole  
University Senate office