



Genesee Staff Council
2019–2020 Annual Report

University of Rochester



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Mission Statement

The mission of the Genesee Staff Council (GSC) is to facilitate active and direct communication between University staff and senior administration and to provide a forum for input and discussion of issues important to the staff and the University. The Council is composed of a group of diverse staff from across various University offices and academic departments.

About this Report

This document describes the undertakings of the Genesee Staff Council (GSC) from August 2019 through September 2020 and identifies priorities and themes that will guide our work for October 2020 through September 2021. As 2019–20 was the inaugural year of the GSC, this report also serves as a historical record of the creation of the council.

Foundation Building

What did we do to set the council up for success?

Council Creation

Following requests from the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Equity and Inclusion, Interim President Richard Feldman agreed to the formation of the Genesee Staff Council in March 2019. The initial scope of the GSC included all nonmedical units of the University, with its first year intended as a pilot program.

Nominations for council representatives opened on August 19, 2019, and elections were held from September 9 to 18 to fill 30 member roles across 11 districts. The number of representatives in each district is roughly proportional to the percentage of staff who work in that district. Eligible candidates were required to have a minimum of one year of service with the University and not be a member of the faculty. A total of 79 nominations were received, and the election had a turnout rate of 49 percent.

The breakdown of districts and memberships is as follows:

- Advancement: 2 representatives
- Arts, Sciences & Engineering: 7 representatives
- Auxiliary & Unions: 7 representatives
- Central Administration: 4 representatives
- Eastman School of Music: 2 representatives
- Laboratory for Laser Energetics: 2 representatives
- Memorial Art Gallery: 1 representative
- River Campus Libraries: 1 representative
- Simon Business School: 1 representative
- University IT: 2 representatives
- Warner School of Education: 1 representative

Further detail on which departments and units are included in the districts is attached as *Appendix A*.

Getting Started

The first meeting of the inaugural Genesee Staff Council was held on September 27, 2019, and meetings of the full membership have proceeded monthly thereafter.

Co-chair elections

- Caterina Caiazza and Marc Seigfred were elected as co-chairs of the GSC. Their two-year term will continue in 2020–21.

Formation of operational committees

The following standing committees have been created and populated to facilitate the operations of the GSC:

- Bylaws: The GSC Bylaws, created by the Bylaws Committee and ratified by the full council on December 13, 2019, are attached as Appendix B.
- Communications
- Elections
- Executive

Development of staff feedback channels

The GSC has deployed multiple methods to engage with constituents and solicit feedback on the staff experience, including:

- District representation
- Town Hall meetings
- Department/Unit meetings
- Email/paper surveys
- District listservs
- One-on-one or small group conversations
- Council web page
- @Rochester

The council has also conducted outreach in response to pressing issues that affect staff, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and associated changes to working environments.

Council Activities

What have we accomplished? How have we responded to staff feedback?

Engagement with University Leaders

The GSC co-chairs and executive committee have had regular meetings with University President Sarah Mangelsdorf, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion Mercedes Ramírez Fernández, and Associate Vice President for Human Resources Tony Kinslow. GSC co-chair Caterina Caiazza acted as facilitator for the Leadership Update for University Staff in June 2020.

The full council membership has also had opportunities to engage with these leaders, as well as with Sam Burkett (Human Resources Communications), Michele Hill (Total Rewards), Laura DuMont (Total Rewards), Michelle Lewis (Human Resources Development), Holly Crawford (senior vice president for Administration and Finance), and Mark Cavanaugh (director of Environmental Health and Safety).

Topics addressed have included benefits changes, wage compression, salary equity and transparency, parking, employee recognition, salaried employees changing to hourly, benchmarking with peer institutions, employee morale, COVID-19, budget constraints and furloughs, remote work, pandemic-related reopening safety, and anti-racism and social justice efforts.

Based on feedback from these meetings in 2019–20, the full GSC plans to meet with President Mangelsdorf and Vice President Ramírez Fernández on a more regular and consistent basis. The GSC has also established relationships with the co-chairs of the Faculty Senate to learn about the history and functioning of the more long-standing group and to work collaboratively on issues that affect both faculty and staff.

Representation on University-wide Committees

GSC members have participated in various committees and project groups to act as a voice for staff in University decision making, including:

- Coronavirus University Response/Restart Team (CURT)
- Public Safety Review Board Composition Committee
- Staff Emergency Fund
- Hirst Lounge Advisory Committee
- UR Community Commitment
- Career Path Modernization Advisory Committee

Formation of Additional GSC Committees

Within the GSC, topic-focused committees have been formed in response to themes that emerged from staff feedback:

- Employee engagement
- Professional development
- Job description and career path

Interim Elections

Interim elections have been held to replace individual GSC members who have left the University or stepped down from their role on the council. A list of current and former representatives is attached as *Appendix A*.

Design and Launch of a New GSC Website

The Communications Committee designed and wrote content for a new GSC website, which University Communications staff are building and have tentatively scheduled to launch late fall 2020/early winter 2021 at www.rochester.edu/staffcouncil. The new site will feature easy-to-navigate sections highlighting council representatives and committees, staff resources, news and announcements, staff spotlights, and more.



INAUGURAL PIN

A commemorative inaugural pin was produced for all council members. Central to the design, a thirty-petal dandelion surrounds a waterwheel. The waterwheel was central to the growth of the city of Rochester and is used to symbolize the importance of staff to the success of the University.

Council Priorities for 2020–2021

How can we best represent staff? Where can we make an impact?

Promoting Communication and Transparency

Continue to enhance communication between staff and University leadership

- Call for increased transparency from University administration
- Increase leadership's awareness of topics that are of critical importance to staff

Continue to have an active role on University-wide committees and teams

- In addition to those noted earlier in this report, pursue new opportunities as they arise, including but not limited to:
 - Policy 106 Review Committee (harassment and discrimination policy)
 - Racial and Social Justice Discussion Group through the Office of Equity and Inclusion
 - Faculty Senate ad hoc committees

Improve constituent outreach

- Establish regular and consistent channels for constituent outreach and engagement
- Emphasize alternate modalities, especially in units with limited computer and email access

Partner with Human Resources throughout leadership transition

- Inform Interim Chief Human Resources Officer Kathy Gallucci of current staff priorities and concerns
- Participate in the search committee for a new Vice President for Human Resources

Impacting Workplace Culture and Climate

Embed a social justice mindset into our council and committee work and encourage active University response to social justice events in our community

- Seek additional training for GSC members on harassment, discrimination, bias, systemic racism, and equity and inclusion

Have an active role in the Career Path Modernization project

- GSC co-chair Caterina Caiazza has been named to the project's advisory group
- Use the GSC's Job Description and Career Path committee to collect information on staff concerns and priorities related to the project
- Relay key priorities to the project team

Promote professional development opportunities for staff and advocate for additional skills and leadership training

- Professional Development committee to identify key skills where training is needed and desired
- Work with the Learning and Development Office and Office of Human Resources to embed formal leadership and skill development into new career ladders

Explore factors impacting employee morale

- Employee Engagement committee to identify contributors to morale through ongoing research and staff feedback
- Partner with HR to recommend expansion of employee recognition programs

Council Operations and Expansion

Formally establish the GSC as a permanent body

Establish administrative support and budget resources to support council activities

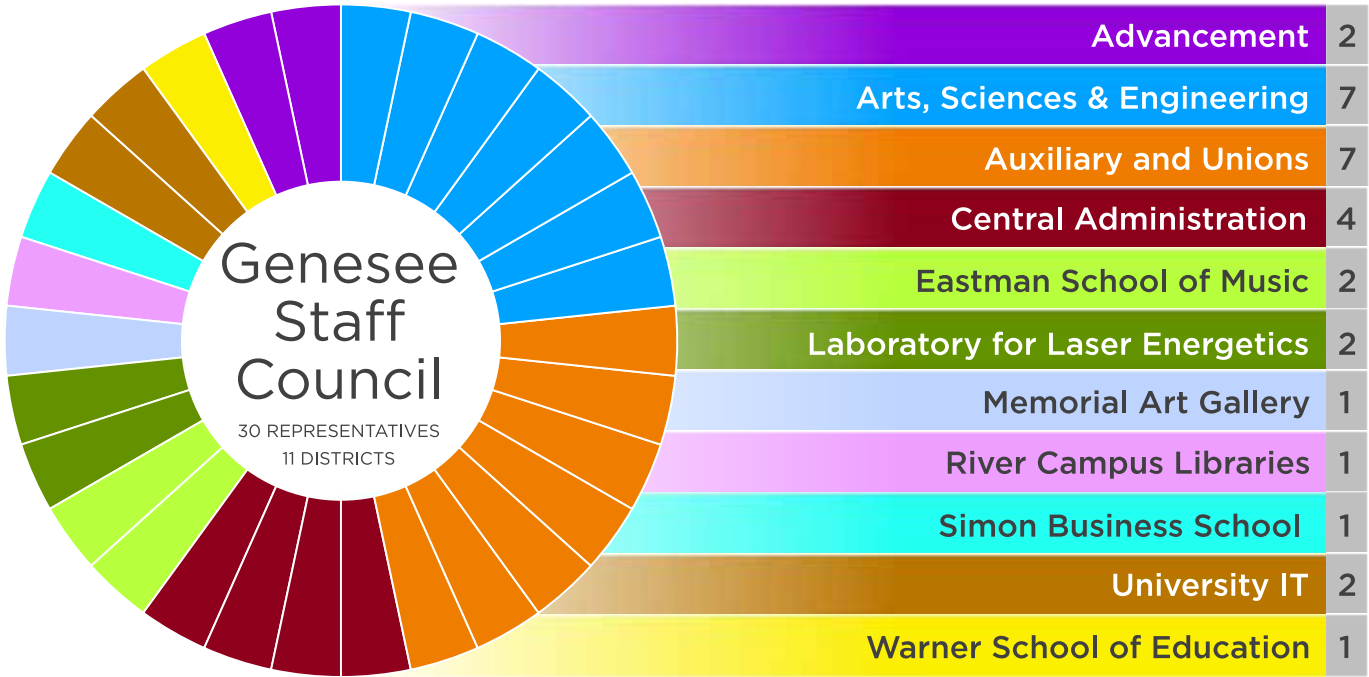
Plan the expansion of the council to include medical units

- Reapportion districts and representatives
- Review bylaws and make necessary additions and changes
- Address concerns of nonmedical staff regarding their continued representation

Streamline election process for new members and prepare for the first general election with incumbents to be held in 2021

Appendix A

Composition of GSC Membership



Current Representatives

DISTRICT	NAME	DEPARTMENT
Advancement	Celeste Cooper	Gift and Donor Services
	Lauren McKenna	Office of the Senior Vice President for Advancement
Arts, Sciences & Engineering	Melinda Adelman	Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences
	Chris Apple	Athletics and Recreation
	Caterina Caiazza, <i>Co-chair</i>	Gwen M. Greene Center for Career Education and Connections
	Laurel Contomanolis	Residential Life and Housing Services
	Robert De Leon	Gwen M. Greene Center for Career Education and Connections
	Sherri Gunter	Department of English
	Kari Kafka	Institute of Optics
Auxiliary/Union	Dawn Marshall-Hosier	SEIU 200 United–Dining Services
	John McIntyre	Horticulture and Grounds
	Anthony Siragusa	Department of Public Safety
	Josh Spenard	Planning and Project Management
	Andrea Walton	University Facilities & Services–Parking
	Paul Wlosinski	Department of Public Safety
	<i>Vacant</i>	University Facilities and Services

DISTRICT	NAME	DEPARTMENT
Central Administration	Rani Bhagwat	International Services Office
	Kristi Brock	University Health Service
	Michael Osadciw	University Communications/Creative Services
	Matt Spielmann	Ain Center for Entrepreneurship
Eastman School of Music	Amanda Sharpe, <i>Secretary</i>	Academic Affairs
	Rich Wattie	Technology and Media Production
Laboratory for Laser Energetics	Alexander Pita	
	David VanWey	
Memorial Art Gallery	James Chudyk	Memorial Art Gallery Facilities and Services
River Campus Libraries	Katie Papas	Rossell Hope Robbins Library/Koller-Collins Center for English Studies
Simon Business School	Janelle Kohlman	Benet Career Center
University IT	Yennifer Hernandez	Projects and Service Delivery
	Marc Seigfred, <i>Co-chair</i>	Core Technology Services
Warner School of Education	Theresa Danylak	Communications
Ex-Officio	Terra Butram, <i>Parliamentarian</i>	Human Resources
Ex-Officio	Rebecca Walters	Human Resources

Former Representatives

DISTRICT	NAME	DEPARTMENT
Ex-Officio	Katrina Van Bortel Buckley	Human Resources
Ex-Officio	Maggie Cousin	Office of Equity and Inclusion
Arts, Sciences & Engineering	Catherine Lewis	Undergraduate Admissions
Ex-Officio	Eleanor Oi	Office of Equity and Inclusion
Eastman School of Music	Kim Preston	Eastman School of Music
Ex-Officio	Leah Stormo-Soles	Human Resources
Auxiliary/Union	James Wentworth	University Facilities and Services
Advancement	Leslie Zornow	Donor Engagement

Appendix B: Bylaws

I. Mission

The mission of the Genesee Staff Council (GSC) is to facilitate active and direct communication between University staff and senior administration and to provide a forum for input and discussion of issues important to the staff and the University. The Council will be composed of a group of diverse staff from across various University offices and academic departments.

II. Membership

- A. Elected Members form the Council and shall be selected by peers from within their respective districts.
 - i. Shall serve for a two-year term effective from the date of their election.
 - ii. Shall have no term limits.
 - iii. Composition and number of representatives shall be determined by the Election Committee six months prior to the beginning of the election period based on district census data.
- B. Officers
 - i. Co-chairs
 - a. Shall be elected for two-year terms.
 - b. Inaugural Co-chairs shall serve different term lengths to create a staggered change of leadership and to promote continuity—one for a 2-year term (2019-2021) and one for a 3-year term (2019-2022).
 - c. Shall not serve more than one consecutive term.
 - d. Shall remain on the council for at least one additional year following their term as ex officio members to create continuity of leadership.
 - e. Shall be elected by an internal process of the Staff Council, conducted at the first meeting of each term.
 - f. Shall be responsible for setting agendas and priorities, representing the Council to University administration and faculty.
 - g. Shall prepare and distribute meeting agendas.
 - h. Shall prepare the annual report of the Council for the Chief Diversity Officer and the Chief Human Resources Officer.
 - i. Shall appoint a member to review and amend meeting minutes in the absence of the Secretary.
 - j. Shall recommend Parliamentarian candidate for appointment.
 - ii. Secretary
 - a. Shall be appointed by the Co-chairs for a one-year term.
 - b. Shall maintain records of the Council's proceedings, including, but not limited to, attendance and minutes.
- C. Ex Officio Members

Ex officio members are non-voting members of the Council and shall be recommended for appointment by the Co-chairs and ratified by two-thirds vote of the Council.

 - i. Parliamentarian
 - a. Shall be appointed for a two-year term.
 - b. Shall have previous experience with the operation of the Council.
 - c. Shall preside over questions of procedure.
 - d. Shall maintain and uphold the Council by-laws.
 - ii. Representation from the Office of Equity and Inclusion
 - iii. Representation from the Office of Human Resources
 - iv. Council members who are no longer eligible to complete their elected term, but remain employees in good standing, may serve up to six months of their term at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
 - v. Immediate past co-chairs (who do not remain as elected members of the Council) can be appointed as ex officio members at the discretion of the Council.
- D. Removal from the Council
 - i. Members shall be removed from the Council for the following reasons:
 - a. Departure from the University.
 - b. No longer meets eligibility requirements to remain on the Council (please refer to section on eligibility under elections).
 - ii. Members of the Council may be removed at the recommendation of the Executive Committee pending confirmation by a two-thirds majority of the Council. Removal must be based on, but is not limited to:
 - a. Failure to fulfill roles and responsibilities of a Council member.
 - b. Conduct unbecoming of a member of the Council.
 - c. Insufficient meeting attendance.

III. Roles and Responsibilities —Members

- A. Shall fulfill the mission of the Council.
- B. Shall maintain effective communication with their supervisor to ensure that job responsibilities are organized in cooperation with their staff council role.
- C. Shall attend all Council and committee meetings where possible. If a member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, notification shall be provided in advance to the Secretary of the Council or committee chair.
- D. Shall encourage informed communication among University Staff and the broader University community, including the recognized governance groups.
- E. Shall solicit nominees and make recommendations for University committees and other committees as requested by senior administration.

IV. Meetings

- A. Council Meetings
 - i. Shall be held regularly, as needed, and be scheduled by the Co-chairs.
 - ii. Notification shall be given to all Council members two business days prior to the meeting, if a special, unscheduled meeting is needed.
 - iii. A mandatory full-day workshop shall be scheduled annually.
- B. Quorum shall be defined as two-thirds of the voting members.
- C. Voting
 - i. For motions on the floor, a simple majority of voting members present shall carry the motion.
 - ii. For election of co-chairs, a plurality of voting members present shall determine the winners. Votes shall be cast by anonymous ballot.

V. Committees

- A. Executive Committee
 - i. Shall serve as an agenda committee for the deliberations of the Council and may make recommendations to the Council.
 - ii. Shall consist of the Co-chairs, Secretary of the Council, representation from Human Resources, appointees at the discretion of the Co-chairs, and the immediate past Co-chairs.
 - iii. Standing invitations shall be extended to the chairs of Council committees.
- B. Bylaws Committee
 - i. Shall annually review Council bylaws, including membership allocation.
 - ii. Shall propose changes to the Council bylaws as necessary.
 - iii. The Parliamentarian shall serve as a standing member of the Bylaws Committee.
- C. Election Committee
 - i. Shall oversee the election process and is composed of members not seeking election.

- ii. The Election Committee Chair shall report directly to the Co-chairs and certifies and announces the results of elections.
- iii. The Parliamentarian shall serve as a standing member of the Election Committee.
- D. Ad hoc Committees
 - i. Committees on project-related work shall be appointed by the Co-chairs and ratified by a majority of the Council.
 - ii. Committees shall exist for the duration of their work.
 - iii. Committees shall consist of a minimum of four Council members.
 - iv. Ad hoc committees may be disbanded at the request of the Council or the membership of the committee.

VI. Election Process

To provide Genesee Staff Council representation across the units and departments, there shall be 11 district groups based on division and department family, with the number of representatives determined by the total size of the district. Districts are: Advancement, Arts, Sciences & Engineering, Auxiliary Union, Central Administration, Eastman School of Music, Laboratory for Laser Energetics, Memorial Art Gallery, River Campus Libraries, Simon, University IT, Warner.

- A. The Election Committee shall oversee the election process.
- B. Eligibility to run for Council:
 - i. To be eligible for the Genesee Staff Council, nominees shall meet all of the following criteria:
 - ii. At least one year of employment with the University as of the beginning of the nomination period.
 - iii. Be in a staff position, not on a faculty appointment.
 - iv. Work in an eligible district.
 - v. Work full time or part time.
 - vi. Be in good standing (not have an active performance improvement plan).
 - vii. Shall be verified eligible by Human Resources prior to the election.
 - viii. Shall not be eligible for a period of five years if previously removed from the Council for cause.
- C. Nomination period for the Council shall remain open for two weeks.
 - i. Staff will be allowed to nominate themselves or others.
 - ii. Staff can nominate individuals outside of their own district.
- D. Election committee will confirm that a candidate accepts their nomination and confers with their supervisor that they are eligible to run within two weeks of the close of nominations.
- E. After the slate of candidates is determined, a ballot shall be distributed to all represented staff. Ballots shall be collected for a minimum of ten days. Paper ballots shall be made available for departments whose employees do not have regular access to electronic balloting.

- F. Results of the election shall be tallied by the Election Committee and certified by the Parliamentarian.
 - i. Ties shall be decided by a single runoff of tied candidates.
 - ii. If the single runoff results in a tie, the victor shall be decided by coin flip conducted by the Parliamentarian and witnessed by the Election Committee.
- G. Election results shall be announced within one week of close of the election period.

VII. Amendment Process

- A. Bylaws may be changed by a two-thirds majority vote of Council members.
 - i. This vote shall be held at a Council meeting.
 - ii. Before such a vote takes place, Council members shall be given notice regarding the intent to vote on proposed changes to the bylaws.
 - iii. All proposals shall be discussed during at least one Council meeting prior to a vote on the proposed changes.
 - iv. At a minimum, the bylaws shall be reviewed annually by the Bylaws Committee.

Report completed by the
GSC Communications Committee

Ratified by full
Genesee Staff Council on
December 11, 2020



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