

UAF Staff Council President's Report
Summary Report for 2011-2012
Submitted by Pips Veazey, UAF Staff Council President

This year UAF Staff council has addressed a number of important issues that have arrived at our doorstep along a number of different avenues. The common thread, however, is that each has had a potential impact on our constituents, UAF staff members.

The session began with a challenge from Chancellor Rogers who asked us to take a critical look at how we do business and to determine if there are better ways to both serve our constituents and enhance our effectiveness as an organization. As a result, the leadership proposed two ideas – to rethink the demands on Staff Council leaders in terms of serving as Staff Alliance representatives and to restructure Staff Council by reducing the total number of seats to more closely reflect the actual participation numbers. The Staff Council president now has the authority to appoint a representative to serve on Staff Alliance, and specifics for a proposed reorganization are working their way through our council and will be continued topics of discussion over the following year.

Another topic of conversation that progressed throughout the year revolved around communication - both within Staff Council and between representatives and their constituents. A significant amount of attention was directed toward increasing and defining our communication channels with the ultimate goal of maximizing our ability to get information to constituents and receive feedback in return. Two Google polls initiated from Staff Council during the second semester served to confirm that this is an effective tool for sharing information.

Specific issues that were addressed include the following:

- Proposed changes to the tuition waiver benefit
- Significant increases in health care costs
- Tobacco related issues regarding hiring and health care costs
- Staff compensation
- Proposed code of ethics
- Sun Star salary database
- Geo-differential
- Emergency closure and leave options policy
- UAF Accreditation
- Soft closure

Several of these items such as health rising health care costs, compensation packages and others will continue to be important for Staff Council to address this coming year.

Among the many activities that Staff Council members sought to undertake this year, there are several that stand out as providing important resources for staff:

Staff Council calendar

Staff Appreciation Day

Petition to Chancellor Rogers stating that the staff felt undervalued

The solid communication channels between Staff Council, Staff Alliance and System Governance helped us address all of the above issues and collaborate on issues of importance with both the other MAUs and UAF Faculty Senate. It is our hope and intention that this bond will remain strong in the coming year as the university faces significant challenges within the current economic climate.