

## Staff Senate Minutes

September 17th, 2024 (2:00pm–3:30pm)

Online Via Zoom

### Start recording - Staff Senate follows Simplified Robert's Rules

- Meeting recordings are for the Secretary to complete minutes effectively; when minutes are approved, the recordings will be deleted
- Join the Zoom Meeting - <https://wou-edu.zoom.us/j/85780295099>

**In-Attendance:** Adrian Trujillo, Alexis Morrison, Ambre Plahn, Kirstie Rudich, Wendi Mars, Ellie Baker, Connor King-Goehring, Jenna Otto, Rip Horsey,

**Absent:** Sandra Holland, Kristen Perry,

**Guests:** Dominique Vargas, Michael Ellis, Mike Hanson, Heather Brophy,

### Approval of minutes

- August 20th Minutes approved.

### Guest Speakers

- Dominique Vargas, Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - Search Advocate Role
    - This is part of our Equity Action Plan. This is a program developed with Oregon State University and several of WOU's faculty and staff attended this training to become search advocates. What this means is they are non-voting members of search committees. Their role is to bring an equity lens to the search process. They participate in every single aspect of the search along with other committee members, just without voting/decision making rights. They are there purely to support the applicants and the committee to ensure the search is as accessible and inclusive as possible. The goal is to keep searches as unbiased as possible. The training is free and is done through OSU.
    - Currently, we have about 20-30 active trained search advocates in our community. If you would like to get involved and become trained, you can sign up directly through OSU and will need to attend four 4-hour long training sessions. Anyone is welcome to sign up for this training, just be sure to get permission from your supervisor. The link to sign up is: WOU is in the process of developing our own online training program that we will be able to offer this training to our campus community.
      - Once you have completed the training, you can let Dominique know and she will add you to the search advocacy resource group on campus. This group does meet once per term to discuss issues that have come up with previous searches. No details about specific people/searches will be given, just more of a broad discussion about issues and best practices.
    - How do you utilize a search advocate?
      - Anytime a hiring authority/search chair can email DEI to request a search advocate to serve on their search. It is preferred that they do this prior to the position description/employment authorization is complete. They should include a bit of information about the search, department, etc. Dominique will go ahead and send the call out to the search advocate team to see if anyone is interested in serving on the search. This individual will serve throughout the entire process

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- from the development of the position description down to deliberations of the final candidate.
- Questions about this program?
  - How many of the search advocates are classified versus unclassified?
    - There is a clear disparity between the number of classified staff and unclassified staff.
    - Strongly recommend that we have more outreach to our classified staff and their supervisors to encourage them to attend the training and join the pool of advocates.
- University climate survey
  - Over the last couple of years, we have been engaged in an Equity Assessment. We are currently in phase 4 of the assessment, and we will be conducting a campus climate survey. The survey will be sent to every single current WOU employee and student on October 14 – November 1. It will be sent electronically and will be anonymous, so no names or identifying information will be collected. The only question that will be asked about you will be what your role at WOU is: student, unclassified, classified, faculty, etc.
    - Upon completion of the survey, folks can choose to participate in a drawing for a coffee/bookstore gift card. This step will be completing optional and is done through a secondary weblink not connected to the survey. However, it will require the person's name in order to be entered into the drawing.
  - There will be paper copies available for anyone that is not able or comfortable completing the survey online. The goal is to get as many folks as possible to engage, however it is not mandatory. If folks need alternative formats of the survey, then the DEI Office will absolutely work with folks on a case-by-case basis. There will be several locations around campus for folks to submit their paper survey in a sealed method to ensure anonymity.
  - October 14 – November 1, the DEI Office will be tabling in the WUC so that folks will be able to ask questions and/or participate in the survey if they wish to.
  - The survey will be sent to a third-party provider who will compile the data and will submit a report to WOU along with the findings of phases 1-3 of the Equity Assessment. WOU will not receive any raw data. They will ensure to screen out any personally identifiable information. Once the results have been submitted to DEI, it will be distributed to campus with the hope they will utilize it to create their departmental strategic plans, etc.

## Reports

- Committee Reports
  - Shared Governance - Nothing to report (TBD for Fall)
  - President's Cabinet - Nothing to report (next meeting is September 18)
  - University Council - Nothing to report (TBD for Fall)
  - Other - Administrative Equity, Staff Connections, etc.

## Unfinished Business

- Determine new goals for the upcoming academic year
  - Prioritize Giving Day
  - Build connections through consistent communication and guest speakers
  - Ask each subcommittee to set their own internal goals for the year

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- We could use the campus climate survey as a tool to help narrow down goals or themes that Senate would want to focus on.
- We could also look at the University Strategic Plan to see how we can pull out staff specific goals that we would want to align with. Maybe ask Judy Sylva to give us a short presentation or talk about how we can use the plan to help us build our own goals.
- Advocate for more staff representation across campus and particularly within various “big” tables/groups/searches/etc.

### New Business

- Vacant Classified Senator Seat
  - If you know anyone interested in serving on Staff Senate, please encourage them to nominate themselves or nominate them in the next round of nominations to fill our current vacancy.
- Goal suggestions included a request to explore the need for and consistency of meetings
  - Shared Governance, University Council, President’s Cabinet, etc.

### Announcements

- President’s Fall Kickoff:
  - September 16
    - 9-10am meet and greet at Rice Auditorium Patio
    - 10-11am State of the University Address Rice Auditorium
  - September 20
    - 3-5pm President’s Fall Appreciation Gathering in the Grove
    - [RSVP here](#) by Wednesday, September 18
- Agenda item suggestions
- Kudos/Recognition
  - Internal Communication Hub technical difficulties
  - September Employee of the Month is...Chris Solario...YAY!
- Public Comments - Anything for the good of the order?
  - DEI is hosting their fall Professional Development session about supporting First Generation College students on Friday, September 20 from 1:00 – 3:00pm. The live session will be held in Rice Auditorium with an option to join virtually via zoom.
  - Occupational Therapy Grand Opening will be on Thursday, September 19 from 3:00 – 5:00pm in WOU:Salem

### Adjourn

### Upcoming

- Next meeting October 1, 2024
- Guest: None