



Board of Trustees Meeting May 10, 2024 Staff Council Report

Thank you, Madame Chairwoman and members of the Board of Trustees. It is my honor to submit a report on behalf of the GW Staff Council.

Since our last report, the Staff Council has been busy moving from a state of planning to focusing on our priorities and initiatives, as well as collaborating with campus partners, and developing ways to recognize and support GW staff.

- In February, the council voted to amend the Staff Council Bylaws. Among the items voted on were:
 - The elected Staff Council term will now run on a calendar year instead of a fiscal year. This change was made in recognition that for many staff members, the busiest times of the year are in preparation for and during the early fall semester. This change will also allow for a voting period that does not coincide with popular periods of annual leave in the summer.
 - We also voted in favor of removing the Communications Committee as a standing committee, thus removing the Chair of the Communications Committee as an appointed position and choosing instead to establish an elected Correspondence and Engagement Secretary.
- More recently, the council worked with Baxter Goodly and team in the selection of the first GW Safety Advisory Committee staff representatives. This process and committee design is a wonderful reflection of having a diverse selection of voices from many different groups and areas of GW for positive change.
- In March, it was my privilege to attend all of the strategic staff sessions hosted by Sabrina Minor, the staff sessions were incredibly engaging and in high demand. We have received feedback from staff regarding the draft Future-Focused Conversations Summary Report. In short, the report does an excellent job of reflecting staff thoughts on the future of academics at GW and what our students will need to succeed, but it did not address many of the thoughts and concerns staff shared about what we, as members of the GW community, believe is missing or needed so that we can help make that future happen for our students. We look forward to continuing to be part of future conversations.
- One of the more impactful initiatives we have started is our micro surveys in each of our monthly newsletters to get to know GW staff, their pain points, and their views. We have

received remarkable feedback on topics ranging from commuting times and methods to the performance management and merit process. In these surveys, we have received hundreds of comments that often become disheartening to read but will help guide the council's work forward.

- Thus far, the feedback we have received has resulted in two passed resolutions.
 - The first to support the permanent adoption of the GW Remote and Hybrid Policy.
 - The second resolution expresses our full support of and calls for a comprehensive wage review and adjustment process for staff to ensure a competitive and appropriate market rate. It also calls for the permanent decoupling of annual salary increases from performance management to be replaced with standardized yearly salary increases and funded performance-based bonus options.
 - This resolution contains survey results from two of our surveys, which I would encourage GW leaders to read on our Priorities & Initiatives website. The comments included in the results were but a handful among well over 300 we received, and they reflect the demoralizing effects and unequal application of the current performance and merit process.
- For our final update, I would like to address the recent protests on campus. As the statement from the Staff Council Officers read: Diversity of thought, advocacy, and debate are at the heart of GW and what it means to be Revolutionaries. At the same time, every member of our community deserves to feel physically and psychologically safe, valued, and respected. Discrimination, harassment, and any form of oppression have no place at GW. Regrettably, we have heard from many staff members who did not feel safe, they were met with discrimination, and they encountered lacking or severely delayed communication from the university and their division/schools. Many of us learned what was happening at the university through the GW Hatchet and social media posts instead of from the administration, and this lack of transparency added to the feeling of being unsafe. Staff also felt left out of consideration and struggled with finding resources to support them. As the university reflects on this time, the council looks forward to engaging in those conversations so that, collectively we can grow from these challenging experiences.

I would like to end by thanking all of the GW community members who continue to engage and collaborate with the council, as well as the many committee members and elected representatives who are doing incredible work with an immense amount of passion to build a stronger, more supportive community for GW staff.

Madam Chair, this concludes my report, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Verbally submitted to the Board of Trustees by Staff Council President Bridget Schwartz on behalf of the Staff Council.