



## Board of Trustees Meeting February 2, 2024 Staff Council Report

Thank you, Madame Chairwoman and members of the Board of Trustees for the welcome and invitation to submit a report on behalf of the GW Staff Council. Today marks a milestone for the council and for university staff.

The GW Staff Council was formed with the support of University past-President Mark Wrighton to represent the voice of GW staff and help create an inclusive, safe, and supportive community. Following the approval of the Staff Council Bylaws in February 2023, the first council elections were held, and the inaugural council, comprised of 10 executive officers and 25 school and division representatives, began its term on July 1, 2023.

In a few short months, we have begun building the structure of the council, represented staff at university events, set priorities, and are getting to work on initiatives to create positive change for staff. Since the beginning of our term, we have held monthly meetings open to the GW community and have had many university leaders attend to provide much-needed insight and transparency into university operations. Our guests have included President Granberg, VP of HR and Chief People Officer Sabrina Minor, Executive Vice President and CFO, Bruno Fernandes, Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success Jay Goff, and Chief of Police James Tate.

The council has also set our priorities, which include reviewing, providing recommendations, and advocating for changes in the following:

- Salaries that support the cost of living in the DMV area.
- Benefits that support the varying life stages and challenges of GW staff.
- An improved, equitable, and transparent performance review and merit process.
- Clear pathways for advancement, growth, and recognition within the university.
- Increased transparency and communication from university leadership.
- Insight into the university budget process.
- Staff Council representation and involvement with university events, searches, initiatives, and committees.
- Increased organizational efficiencies.
- A more holistic onboarding process for new staff.



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- Create an inclusive community where staff across the university can support, mentor, and celebrate each other. A place where we foster belonging and advocate for increased and equitable opportunities.

The heart of our work is being accomplished by our five standing committees; their current initiatives are:

- Creating a framework for Employee Resource groups, also known as affinity groups.
- Examining training resources that are already available or should be made available to staff.
- Benchmarking and preparing a resolution on the addition of service leave hours.
- Creating in-person viewing locations for virtual events for staff who do not regularly have access to technology.
- Designing a website, monthly newsletter, and feedback mechanism for staff to submit their concerns and ideas.
- Beginning a recognition program for staff to celebrate each other.
- Developing and gathering resources that will help new staff integrate into GW.
- Reviewing staff recruitment, retention, and development issues, such as the performance review process, compensation equity, and the ability to grow within the university.
- Finally, we expect two resolutions to be soon submitted to the council for a vote. The first is regarding a university closure practice that includes considerations of staff who have family obligations and that puts safety first, especially for staff who must live and travel a great distance from campus due to the cost of living that has outgrown the salaries at the university. The second resolution will be in support of the continuation of the university telework plan. This is an important non-monetary benefit for many GW staff members that supports work-life balance, recruitment, and retention and helps offset the increased cost of living vs the lagging behind increases in compensation.

I would like to end by thanking Sabrina Minor for her guidance and support, our colleagues in Human Resources for their partnership, the Faculty Senate for inviting the council to have representatives on their committees, and all the leaders and staff at GW who have supported the council.

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

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