

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2022 | Wednesday | 1:00pm | ONLINE (Zoom)

Participants: Professional Staff of University of Hartford

Welcome: Lisa Read, Staff Council Chair

I. Consent Agenda

- **The consent agenda was voted on and approved as written.**

II. Guest Speaker: President Greg Woodward

- Proud of the SGA and Staff Council for supporting their recent DEIJB statement. Their mission is in the right place to make our community more equitable. He is working to honor their request of having more representation on campus committees beginning with the President's Council. Would also like to see an annual report on DEI activities. Also considering a required course on this topic as well as enlarging the staffing in the DEI office.
- Enrollment was better this fall which is crucial to the financial health of this university which relies on tuition for 97% of its revenue. Making the school smaller, as some have suggested, would not work, and would change the very nature of our school. And most of our bills would stay the same.
- UHart has endeavored to take many steps to elevate our enrollment and retention numbers, such as adding 16 new majors in the past few years, more programs, including at the graduate level. We've also made sure our learning spaces are up to our peers and our competition, renovating Barney, Dana, and building the Hursey Center. More students are coming in to CETA and ENHP than ever before.
- UHart borrowed \$20 million to redo every village apartment this summer. On-campus residency is up 150-200 this fall and will continue to grow back. Every student who lives on campus brings in \$10,000 of revenue.
- Early retirements helped a little. There will no be an early retirement offer this year. Advice is to speak to HRD to work out best plan for you if thinking of retiring.
- We had 1270 entering students this fall which is a positive since our best-case scenario was 1300. Graduate and online student enrollments have also grown. Total enrollment is around 6000, still down about 1000 undergrads. Our profit today is about the same it was 10 years ago; it's much harder to do business today. UHart budget still in the negative, but we are over by about 20% in applications and admittance than last fall at this time, including an uptick in stronger academic ranking students. We need to find \$6 – 10 million to not spend next year since the Board wants our budget to be at 0. It will be tough still as the 2 pandemic classes remain here. We did receive COVID relief funds of \$7 million for 2 years, but not anymore.
- We are committed to better compensating our faculty and staff. The compensation project teams are moving along really well.

- We are finishing the plans for a campus-wide facility for recreation, a track and field area that includes a field hockey field and intramural fields, some stands, and a running track. In a campaign to raise about \$3 million for this project. Also had a bump in intramural sports including rugby and flag football. We also welcomed the largest class of athletes in institutional history this fall, 116, and adding 5 sports next fall: men's and women's tennis and ice hockey, and women's field hockey. Adding these Division 3 athletes will add up to a \$15-20 million difference annually in our budget since saving money on fewer scholarships.
- Overall, our campus community is in good shape and retention rate for last spring was 90%, which is slightly higher than our best year ever.
- Questions:
 - May consider eliminating the December commencement for undergraduates, but this one doesn't involve a lot of spending since on campus and no extra seating, etc. Did save money on summer commencement by moving to XL Center, \$50,000.
 - No conflict of interest with Marc Boxer being on UConn Board of Trustees. This was discussed with UConn board of ethics, UHart regents, and the state of CT ethics board.

III. Additional Topics:

Benefits Task Force. Traci Giovinazzo and Desirée Kleykamp

BTF won't meet again until mid-January but we have a packed spring agenda:

- We will discuss the potential of three premium contribution tiers for employees
- Evaluation of plan designs and if any changes are needed
- Evaluation of potentially moving to a more industry standard Short Term Disability plan (60%).

Environmental and Sustainability Committee. Sandra Rampertab

The Environmental Sustainability Committee met with Mark Boxer and others, including Elizabeth Dill, Harrison Libraries Director. The Aramark representative discussed current practices in place to recycle food waste, delivery packages, and dining hall containers. It was noted that the information needs to be better communicated to students.

Other matters include doing energy audits and designating a space to swap clothes and goods. The SGA will assist with informing students about the committee's efforts, get feedback for the committee, and survey students who are interested in being a committee member.

Aramark will begin collecting packaging materials, which will be made into a sculpture to represent waste.

New Treasurer

Thank you to Cindy Oppenheimer for stepping up to take over the Treasurer position, from now until spring elections. Thanks, Cindy!

Staff Council Nominating Committee

We are forming the Nominating Committee for officer elections this spring. The committee is responsible for soliciting nominees, confirming candidates' eligibility and willingness to run, creating the ballot, and tabulating results. The expected time commitment is usually less than an hour every 2 weeks, from January through March.

We need a committee chair and at least 2 other members. Contact staff@hartford.edu if you're interested in serving on this committee, or if you have any questions about the work involved.

Outstanding Staff Awards

Nominations are due Dec. 21, one week from today. Anyone can submit a nomination. The form is on the HRD website: <https://www.hartford.edu/about/offices-divisions/human-resources-development/outstanding-staff-award/default.aspx>.

Town Hall for Provost Search

There will be a town hall meeting next Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 1pm with the search company we're working with. The meeting is open to the whole university. See the UNotes post for more information and to register: <https://www.hartford.edu/unotes/2022/12/virtual-town-hall-meeting-for-provost-search-on-dec-20.aspx>. The E-Board is also meeting with them privately tomorrow, to address staff-specific concerns.

Residence Hall Tours

We have set up tours for staff to tour residence halls, including the renovated Village Apartments, the Neighborhoods (where most 1st-year students live), a suite in Regents Park, and an apartment in Park River. The tours will be Thursday, Jan. 12 and Friday, Jan. 13, 1-2 pm each day. Sign up to reserve your spot: <https://forms.office.com/r/AkqCzXHf1F>.