



## General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

10:02 am – 11:25 am

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**Present [Staff Council Executive Board](#) Members:**

Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President ♦ Jr Sears, Staff Council President-Elect ♦ Katalina J. Castillo, Staff Council Secretary ♦ Nick Martinez, Staff Council Communication Officer

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**Absent Staff Council Executive Board Members:**

Shiya Rawls, Staff Council Treasurer

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**Special Guests:**

Timothy Rychlec, Assistant Vice President, Facilities Management ♦ Erica Morales, Director, Benefits and Compensation ♦ Sandra Jacobson, Associate Director, Annual Giving

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**Location:**

Zoom Webinar

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**1 Call to Order 10:02 am**

Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

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**2 Meeting Agenda Review 10:03 am**

Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

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**4 Approval of December Meeting Minutes 10:05 am**

Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

- January Meeting was cancelled due to campus closure for weather

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**5 New Employee Announcement 10:06 am**

Presenter: Katalina Castillo, Staff Council Secretary

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**6 [Edge Grant](#) Presentation 10:07 am**

Presenter: Katalina Castillo, Staff Council Secretary

- January Recipient: Tamika Small, Office of Human Resources
  - o Been with UHD for over 8 years
  - o Plans to attend [Talent Acquisition Week](#)

*This agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the Staff Council Executive Board.*

- February Recipient: Steven Villano, Center Public Service & Community Research
  - o Been with UHD for over 8 years
  - o Plans to attend the [2025 Gulf-South Summit](#)

#### 7 January [Kudos](#) 10:08 am

Presenter: Katalina Castillo, Staff Council Secretary

#### 8 [Share the Good News](#) 10:09 am

Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

- Weeks of Welcome 2025
- UHD Hosts Texas Canvas Connect 2025
- American Heart Month
- [Honoring Black History Month](#)

#### 9 Guest Panelists 10:11 am

**Presenter:** Timothy Rychlec, Assistant Vice President, Facilities Management

- Elevator Modernization
- Office Trash Pickup with Metroclean on Tuesdays and Fridays
- 8<sup>th</sup> South Restrooms update on why there are no paper towels
- Q&A
  - o Elevator Modernization works off once funding is applied usually in September. We usually have a proposal and update it usually when purchasing opens. We send it up however long it takes them to get done to spit out a purchase order then move forward. If an elevator completely dies, then we find an emergency way around it.
  - o A [Work Request](#) for replacement toilet seats for the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Shea Street Building was submitted during the meeting.
  - o The smell on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor has been worked on
  - o Automatic bathroom doors being turned off issue update
  - o Tuesdays & Fridays are trash pick-up days. Any unwanted trash must be placed in the hallway trash container. Per contract, custodians are not allowed to pick up trash left in front of your office space doorway on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday
  - o Metroclean contract has been renewed for 5 years

**Presenter:** Erica Morales, Director, Benefits and Compensation

- [Get Fit Texas Challenge](#) Overview
- [Buena Vida Wellness](#) App
- New application platform for [Fitness Release Time](#) and [Wellness Leave](#)
- Wellness Assessment Partnership BCBS

*This agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the Staff Council Executive Board.*

- Retiree Perks
- Q&A
  - o Wellness Center is available for free to Get Fit participants on Monday-Friday from 11 am – 2 pm by providing your name and signing a waiver

**Presenter:** Sandra Jacobson, Associate Director, Annual Giving

- #ILoveUHD Initiative
- Q&A
  - o The purpose is to share Gator Love through a broader community, grow our impact, wider reach in good news that is coming out of this university
  - o If you do not have social media, still share with me to be featured online

## 10 Staff Council Business

10:49 am

**Presenter:** Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

- Staff Council Old Business
  - o DBA Staff Concern (to be archived)
  - o Dining Services Focus Groups/Survey
  - o Upcoming Bylaw Review
  - o Staff Climate Survey 2025
  - o Performance Evaluations 2024
  - o Shared Governance Townhall Recap
- Staff Council New Business
  - o Update on AWA Policy & Remote Work
  - o Q&A
    - Decision is coming externally such as an executive order to end remote work at the federal level. Trend is that all governors of the republican red states are in support of it
    - There is a working group comprised of staff members that was put together being chaired by [Carole Clerie](#), Vice President of Human Resources. Reach out to [uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu](mailto:uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu) to provide feedback
    - Human Resources houses the [list of positions available for hybrid/remote work](#). The decisions of which positions can work hybrid/remote were determined by each Vice President of the area
    - The AWA Policy is only regarding staff, not faculty
    - Parking questions regarding discount and faculty and staff are tabled to be asked to the working group
    - There are service lots around campus
    - AWA Policy possibly being rescinded and additional staff incentives and initiatives to support employee satisfaction

*This agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the Staff Council Executive Board.*

- and retention question will be tabled to be asked to working group
- The question of being prepared for employees who will leave due to this change has come up in conversations
- Panel is made up of someone from each division
- Official response as to why this is happening will be provided in March, if an answer is received
- New Comments/Suggestions Received
  - Trash pickup was addressed earlier
  - Middle Lane Operator to and from OMB Garage is currently in a contract process. Per [Chief Casey Davis](#), they are looking to replace physical hardware and going through a procurement process because of the dollar amount. Working with the vendor on finalizing the contract and for the vendor to come out and replace the hardware.
  - Conflict of scheduling cleaning time of the men's locker room has been addressed to avoid cleaning time with gym goes in the locker room. If you feel uncomfortable about a situation at the Wellness and Success Center, please contact [Caleb Wells](#), Director of Sports and Fitness.
- Staff Engagement Opportunities
- REMINDER: Gator Blue Fridays UHD garments (shirts, hats, etc.)

## 11 [Staff Engagement Opportunities](#)

11:18 am

Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

- Ongoing: [Get Fit Challenge](#)
- February 19: [Mammogram Bus on Campus](#); 9:00 am – 3:30 pm by appointment only
- February 20: [TTLC Presents: Unlock the Power of Data: Mastering Qualtrics Basics](#); 10 – 11 am in ACAD 700 & Zoom
- February 20: [200,000 African Americans – The Great Migration to Houston](#); 11:30 am – 1 pm in C100 (Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning)
- February 24: [Demystifying Taxes](#); 11:30 am – 12:30 pm in OMB N600 & Zoom
- February 25: [Leveraging Your Emotions to Fuel Drive and Purpose](#); 3:45 – 5:15 pm (Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning)
- February 26: [UHD Day at the Capitol](#); 8 am – 5 pm
- February 27 – March 8: [Dominique Morisseau's "Pipeline"](#), O'Kane Theatre
- February 28: Go Texan Day (Rodeo Season is here!)
- March 2: [JCPenny Suit Up Event](#)

*This agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the Staff Council Executive Board.*

- March 17: [Performance Evaluations to Begin](#)
- March 19: [Next Staff Council General Meeting](#)
- March 22: [Open House](#); 10 am – 2 pm

12	Closing Comments	11:23 am
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Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President

- [uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu](mailto:uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu)
- [Past meeting agendas and minutes](#)
- [Register to attend the monthly general meetings](#)
- [Comments/Suggestions](#)
- [Submit events to be recognized and promoted](#)
- [Share Your Good News](#)

13	Meeting Adjourn	11:25 am
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Presenter: Adrian Bermudez, Staff Council President





**DETERMINED.**  
**DEDICATED.**  
**DOWNTOWN.**



# AGENDA



- Approval of December Meeting Minutes
- Introduction of New Employees
- Edge Grant Winner Presentation
- Employee Recognition
- Share the Good News
- Guest Panelist: Timothy Rychlec, Assistant Vice President, Facilities Management
  - Updates from Facilities Management
- Guest Panelist: Erica Morales, Director Benefits and Compensation
  - Get Fit Challenge
  - Buena Vida Wellness App
  - New application platforms for Fitness Release Time and Wellness Leave
  - Wellness Assessment Partnership BCBS
  - Retiree Perks
- Guest Panelist: Sandra Jacobson, Associate Director, Annual Giving
  - #ILoveUHD Initiative
- Staff Council Business – Things To Share
- Staff Engagement Opportunities
- Closing Comments





# APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Minutes distributed – any corrections?

- Motion to accept minutes? Second?
- Minutes accepted



# WELCOME NEW GATORS!



Name	Job Title	Department
Christiana Adesina	Nurse Practitioner	Student Health Services
Minkyung Lee	Director, Institutional Data Analytics	Institutional Effectiveness
Gizelle Lopez	Administrative Assistant I	MDCOB Graduate Office
Marlon Watkins	Academic Success Coach II	Gator Success Institute



January 2025 Recipient



**Tamika Small**

February 2025 Recipient



**Steven Villano**

# CONGRATS TO OUR JANUARY KUDOS!



- **Academic Advising**
  - Jacqueline Aguayo
  - Diana Sanchez Ayala
  - Thali Guerrero
  - Vanessa Rojas
- **Administration and Finance**
  - Sonnie Curry
  - Cassandra Millhouse
- **Advancement and University Relations**
  - Sandra Jacobson
- **Budget Office**
  - Erika Ventura
- **Career Center**
  - Wendy Cooper
  - Liza Hatfield
  - Tiffany Register
  - Norberto Salazar
- **Center for Student Leadership and Involvement**
  - Tremaine Kwasikpui
- **College of Public Service**
  - Sharon Noel
  - Marc Williams
- **Emergency Management**
  - Cynthia Vargas
- **Enrollment Communications**
  - Courtney Schroeder
- **Facilities Management**
  - Miguel Monreal
- **Graduate and International Admissions**
  - Neil Orts



# CONGRATS TO OUR JANUARY KUDOS!



- **Human Resources**
  - Bernice Guillen
  - Donald Kesterson
  - Erica Morales
  - Gladis Moya
- **IT: Technology Learning Services**
  - Nereo Hoill
  - LoShon Harvey
  - John Lane
  - William Robinson
- **IT: User Support Services**
  - Hitesh Patel
- **Library**
  - Savannah Fields
  - Adrian Mallard
  - Yesenia Sanchez
- **Marilyn Davies College of Business**
  - Jakobi Augillard
  - Belinda Hernandez
- **Police**
  - Trinity Delafance
- **Sciences and Technology**
  - Angel Griffin
- **Social Sciences**
  - Teresa Estrada
- **Undergraduate Admissions**
  - Mandi Olivarez
  - Kristina Raymond

# HOW TO GIVE KUDOS TO A COLLEAGUE



1. Navigate to the [HR SharePoint site](#).
2. Login using your SSO credentials.
3. Click "Send a Kudos to a Colleague".
4. Fill out the form completely, ensuring everything is spelled correctly.

# SHARE THE GOOD NEWS – WEEKS OF WELCOME 2025





# SHARE THE GOOD NEWS – UHD HOSTS TEXAS CANVAS CONNECT 2025!



Joel Calix (Support and Training Specialist) and Nick Martinez (Technology Trainer) representing the Technology Teaching and Learning Center department, were presenters at the event. They delivered an exceptional keynote focusing on the Impact Messaging tool.

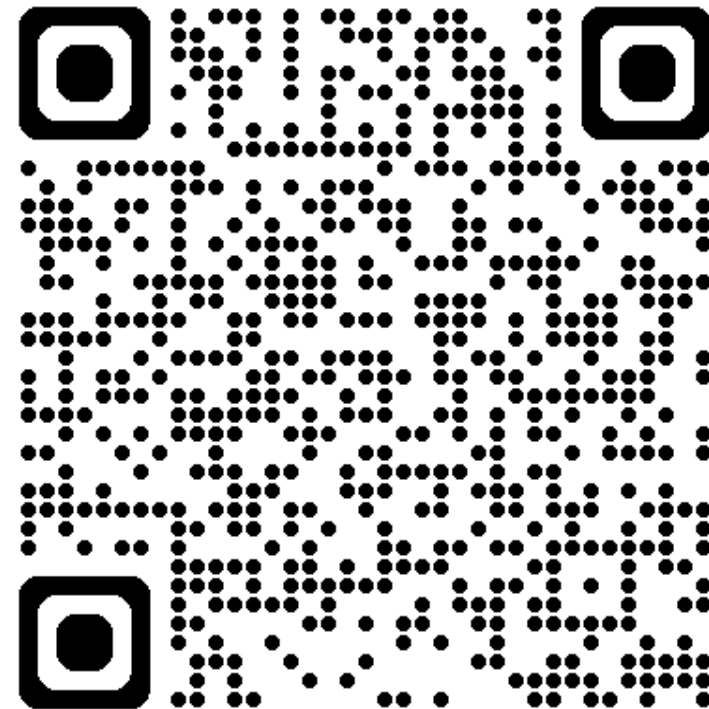


# SHARE THE GOOD NEWS – AMERICAN HEART MONTH





# SHARE THE GOOD NEWS – HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH





# GUEST PANELIST



Topics for discussion:

- Elevator Modernization
- Office Trash Pick-up
- 8th South Restrooms



**Timothy Rychlec**  
Assistant Vice President, Facilities  
Management

# GUEST PANELIST



Erica Morales

Director, Benefits and Compensation

- Get Fit Challenge
- Buena Vida Wellness App
- New application platforms for Fitness Release Time and Wellness Leave
- Wellness Assessment Partnership BCBS
- Retiree Perks

# GUEST PANELIST



Sandra Jacobson  
Associate Director, Annual Giving

## #ILoveUHD Initiative



# STAFF COUNCIL BUSINESS



- Staff Council Old Business
  - DBA Staff Concern (To be archived)
  - Dining Services Focus Groups/Survey
  - Upcoming Bylaw Review
  - Staff Climate Survey 2025
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  - Update on AWA Policy & Remote Work
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- REMINDER: Gator Blue Fridays UHD garments (shirts, hats, etc.)



# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS



- Staff Council Questions from November/December:
- VP Thomas name has been attached to responsibilities taken from other departments such as the budget office and handed to the departments. There are concerns being brought up – who should I reach out for support? Staff council or staff ombuds? Both? Structure Protocol is already being followed by reaching out to chairs, deans, etc.
- DBAs are being asked to more and work every fiscal year. More specifically, task that the budget, travel, & HR offices use to do is being passed down to DBA's, not sure about CBA's but the DBA's have concerns about this and need to know who we can reach out to in staff council about our concerns?
- ***Update: These concerns were received in the Provost's Office. To date, Staff Council did not receive any email communications regarding any follow-up actions or assistance needed so this issue will be archived.***

# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS



Dining Services Focus Groups/Survey

***Update: UHD will be moving forward with the request for proposals to begin the process of looking at other dining services vendors. VP Kim Thomas will be scheduled to discuss this topic in further details in our March general meeting.***

***The new contract is expected to be in effect on January 1, 2026.***

# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS

Abbreviated Bylaw Review (Spring 2025) Summary



## Proposed Amendments:

- Terms of Office shall begin **Aug 1** and end **July 31**.
- The nomination process will open on the first Monday and close on the third Monday in **April**.
- Elections for the Staff Council Membership Board shall open on the first Monday in **May** and close on the third Monday in **May**.

## New Bylaw Proposed:

### 7.3 University Committees

The UHD Staff Council shall be responsible for nominating and/or making recommendations of staff members to serve on university-wide committees as outlined in respective university policies. When university policy does not outline procedures for staff nominations, the Staff Council President, with majority vote for approval from the Executive Committee, will make the nomination of staff member(s) to university-wide committees when filling committee vacancies due to new appointments, expired appointments, or resignations.



# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS



## Staff Climate Survey 2025

***Update: We are collaborating with Institutional Effectiveness and a rough draft of the survey is currently in progress. We anticipate administering this survey before the end of the Spring semester.***

# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS



## **Performance Evaluations 2024**

*Refer to HR's February Newsletter for the latest detailed update on performance evaluations.*

*Evaluation process is scheduled to kick off March 17 and close around April 28. Expect to receive more information and updates in the weeks to follow.*

# STAFF COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS



Shared Governance Townhall Recap

*Topic: Policy Revisions to PS 01.A.03*

# STAFF COUNCIL NEW BUSINESS



## Update on AWA Policy and Remote Work:

- UHD anticipates rescinding the AWA Policy effective June 1, 2025 as we follow in the same direction as UH-Main campus.
- This change will impact all hybrid remote staff employees only.
- There is no impact to 100% fully remote staff employees at this time.
- The hybrid remote parking permit discount will be discontinued at the end of FY2025 (August 31, 2025).
- Alternative/flexible work arrangements available after June 1:
  - Fully remote, if job position is on list of approved positions
  - Compressed work weeks
  - Modified work schedules
- Official university announcement is scheduled to go out from University Relations soon.

***Disclaimer: The proposed changes to hybrid remote work have not yet been fully approved. Details are subject to change based on further review and decision-making processes. No actions should be taken based on this information until an official announcement has been released.***



# STAFF COUNCIL NEW BUSINESS



## Recent Staff Council Comments/Suggestions/Questions:

- *The University was open this past Saturday, Jan 11th for payment deadline. Many departments worked from 9-230PM with most of the trash cans not being emptied. I submitted a request to FM and received a reminder reply that trash is picked up Tue&Fri, per contract. As we start the Spring semester and a new calendar year, perhaps FM leadership can sit in on an upcoming SC meeting to explain how the unsanitary conditions of that contract are supposed to be helping us be the North Star Dr. Blanchard is motivating us to be. This along with the Chartwells debacle continues to loom over our heads with no end in sight.*
- *The OMB Garage middle lane operator./Can we get an update on why the middle (reversible) lane to go into and out of the parking garage is always coned off? Having that second lane would help traffic flow of an already congested area.*
- *I wanted to bring to your attention a situation that I have encountered multiple times in the men's locker room at the Wellness and Success Center. I noticed a female employee cleaning the area while males were present inside the locker room. I understand the cleaning times are posted outside the locker room but a lot of time students and staff are in the shower or bathroom stalls and not able to leave at dedicated cleaning time. This has made me feel quite uncomfortable—not for myself, but for the female employee.*



# STAFF ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Office of Human Resources  
Talent Development

TTLIC PRESENTS:

## UNLOCK THE POWER OF DATA:

MASTERING QUALTRICS BASICS

Unlock Insights, Elevate Decisions!

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**Thursday, February 20**

**Time: 10 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

**Hybrid: ACAD 700 & Zoom**

qualtrics<sup>XM</sup>

- **Remembering:** Identify key features and tools within the Qualtrics platform to effectively create and manage surveys
- **Applying:** Use Qualtrics to design a simple survey and distribute it to gather valuable feedback from target audiences
- **Analyzing:** Interpret survey data through Qualtrics' reporting tools to generate meaningful insights and inform decision-making

**Scan to Register!**



**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN**





**Meece Thorne**  
Stakeholder Liaison



# Demystifying Taxes

Learn about and discuss important tax updates for the 2025 filing season.



**Monday**  
**02/24/2025**



**11:30a.m. -**  
**12:30p.m.**



**SCAN OR VISIT**  
**UHD.EDU/HR/CALENDAR**





## **Leveraging Your Emotions to Fuel Drive and Purpose**

**February 25, 2024  
3:45-5:15 pm | C100  
Commerce St. Building**



**Center for Public Service  
& Community Research**



**JOIN US**  
**Saturday,**  
**March 22, 2025**  
**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

*Check-in begins at 9 a.m.*

**UHD** University of Houston  
**DOWNTOWN**  
**OPEN HOUSE**

**Calling all**  
**GATOOOOOOOORRSS!!**  
We are asking for any staff,  
faculty, and students to  
volunteer for the event.

For all questions and for  
those who want to volunteer  
**please contact Reenie**  
**McColl at**  
**[mccolli@uhd.edu](mailto:mccolli@uhd.edu)**.



# STAFF ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- **Ongoing:** Get Fit Challenge
- **February 19:** Mobile Mammography Screenings (The Rose); 9AM-3:30PM
- **February 20:** TTLC Presents: Unlock the Power of Data: Mastering Qualtric Basics; 10AM-11AM in ACAD700 & Zoom
- **February 20:** 200,000 African Americans – The Great Migration to Houston; 11:30AM-1PM in C100 (Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning)
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- **February 26:** UHD Day at the Capitol (8am-5pm)
- **February 27- March 8:** Dominique Morisseau’s “Pipeline”, O’Kane Theatre
- **February 28, 2025:** Go Texan Day (Rodeo season is here!)
- **Save The Dates**
  - **March 2, 2025:** JCPenney Suit up Event
  - **March 17, 2025:** Performance Evaluations to begin
  - **March 22, 2025:** UHD Open House
- **March 19, 2025:** Next Staff Council General Meeting

# SHARE YOUR NEXT EVENT WITH US!



Do you have an event or volunteer opportunity you would like to share with staff? The event may be on or off campus. Let us know by emailing us ([uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu](mailto:uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu)) the following:

- A flyer of your event.
- A brief description about the event: who, what, when, where, and why for advertisement purposes in our monthly newsletter and general meeting.
- A landscape image of the flyer to be used in our monthly general meeting PowerPoint presentation.
- A square image of the flyer so we can add it to our Staff Council events webpage.

## Need to Contact Staff Council Representatives?

Email: [uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu](mailto:uhdstaffcouncil@uhd.edu)

Staff can review the agendas and minutes of missed meetings here:  
<https://www.uhd.edu/faculty-staff/staff-council/membership/Pages/staffcouncil-minutes-archived.aspx>



**DETERMINED.  
DEDICATED.  
DOWNTOWN.**

Staff can register to attend the monthly general meetings here:  
[https://uhd.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_2sHq1W6JTBqsg-kTiwQsdw](https://uhd.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2sHq1W6JTBqsg-kTiwQsdw)

Want to submit comments/suggestions anonymously? Use the link or QR code below:

<https://cglink.me/2fR/s52436>



Submit events to be recognized and promoted! Use the link or QR code below:

<https://cglink.me/2fR/s53628>



Share your good news so we can all celebrate together! Use the link or QR code below:

<https://cglink.me/2fR/s46776>



Note that you do not have to log in or create an account to provide a submission.

# CLOSING COMMENTS

## Mission

Recognizing that staff is integral to the functioning of the University of Houston-Downtown, the Staff Council will be an advisory body to the President of the University and promote positive and meaningful communication among UHD staff, the President, and the University community in order to achieve the Staff Council's goal of providing UHD with a collective voice in staff-related University matters.