St. Olaf Staff Council
Meeting Agenda and Minutes
October 28, 2026
BC142

Agenda:

1. Welcome Email to New Staff in your Division
2. Office Hours for each Staff Council Representative?
    a. Did it work?
    b. Do we do something differently?
3. Staff Council Website
4. October and November All-Staff Meeting
    a. October - Laura Riehle-Merrill for United Way, Kristin Kivell for Well-Being Committee, and Travis for quick overview of open enrollment
    b. November - Kathryn Lohre and Tarshia Stanley for an overview of Shared Governance and what that truly means for St. Olaf College
        i. Dave Van Wylen, Interim Project Manager for Repurposing of Rolvaag
        ii. Fernando as well?
5. Tarshia's Request for Futuring Technologies Committee
    a. Tarshia has requested that we appoint 2 members to this committee
6. Feedback Form Submissions
    a. May 5 - During the faculty meetings, there was mention of having faculty participating in the implementation teams give periodic updates to the rest of the faculty. Could we do the same for staff participating on implementation teams, particularly in the spirit of greater collaboration?
    b. Sep 30 - Follow up discussion about action items with this feedback form
        i. Travis speaking at October All-Staff meeting

ii. Decided not to talk about the other part at a PLT meeting, instead reach out to the individual that was discussed

c. Oct 15 - At the September faculty meeting, faculty voted to have the Google Gemini auto pop-up assistance in Google Docs, Slides, etc. disabled by default for both faculty and students, and IT has now done so and created an "opt-in" option instead. However, the same option is not (from my understanding) available to staff. This highlights yet another example of how faculty have the power to vote on and change policies that affect their work, while staff do not. If Staff Council could somehow push for this opt-in option to be considered for staff, or at least petition IT to create a way for individual staff to turn off these Gemini "assistance" options, I think it would be much appreciated (at least by me)!

i. Do we work with IT? If so, who would like to take the lead on working with them?

1. I suggest that we approach IT leadership to ask if they could send out a reminder that any staff wishing to opt out of gemini features can. IT had to put in a work around to flip the feature. I do not recommend we push for an opt-in feature without hearing from a good portion of the staff.

d. Oct 15 - What are the Colleges rules on Stav dishes outside of the dining hall and Buntrock Commons? As a custodian, I don't mind picking up dishes off tables and returning them after the building closes. However, students should be able to return the dishes of their own accord. We find dishes, sometimes full plates, all over the building; in backpack cubbies, tables, the fire places, shelves and racks, bathrooms, etc. This is only one building. It is unknown to us what other building are like in this regard. Last school year, Buntrock put up signs urging students to not take Stav dishes outside of the building. This lasted for a month and then the signs were taken down. I know that this is an ages old issue but surely we as a college can find a solution that can last. Having food and dishes siting around during a college visit is not a good look when we are third in the state for highest tuition.

i. We need to respond to Sam, since he gave his information

7. Homework

a. Read Staff Council Roles and Responsibilities

b. Come to the next meeting on November 11 with any suggestions/changes/discussion

Minutes:

Attending: Kelli, Amanda, Jeanie, Ben, Lily, Matt, Jeff, Olivia, Steve, Mikaylie, Megan, Joey, Brittan, Natalie, Cindy, Erin, Claudia, Rebekah, Liz, Jon

Notes:

- Office Hours for each Staff Council Representative?
    - No one really takes advantage of those office hours.
    - Kelly asked a great question - did anyone approach you outside of those working hours?
        - No not really, a few people but not many
    - We could each send an email to our division and say that we are the representatives and to come to us at any point by Nov 6.
    - Meet your staff council members tabling event? Over a couple days, 11-1.
- November All-Staff Meeting
    - If not Tarshia and Kathryn, then maybe Fernando, as he reached out to Ben and Liz
    - Ask Tarshia if she has anything to add to an AI - maybe co-run something with Fernando. Dedicating more than 5 mins to this subject, it's important.
- Tarshia's Request for Futuring Technologies Committee
    - Tarshia has requested that we appoint 2 members to this committee
    - Joey and Jeanie have raised their hands
    - Claudia: struggle is part of what our council is engaging the campus and staff colleagues. Helping bring their voice to the table as well, not just someone on the staff council. Is this an opportunity to reach out and ask the broader community if someone would like to sit on this committee. It would make sense for people who were elected to staff council to sit on this committee.
    - Do we ask Fernando, who is already doing the work? Others who are already doing the work?

- Ben: Those who we appoint to committees should have a way to report back to us. Working with us in a way that we are informed and can get the word out there about what's going on.
- We should include which of us sits on what committees on our website
    - Could everyone please send Liz and Ben which committee you sit on by the end of the week?
- Email blast from Staff Council that gives updates?
- Jon: Can we have at least one of us on the committee and then reach out to have another staff member from campus sit on it as well?
- Liz to ask Tarshia how long the appointment is and reach out to the following individuals to ask if they have interest in sitting on the committee or know anyone else that would be.
    - Fernando
    - Nate Jacobi
    - Kirk Martinson

- Feedback form submissions
    - May 5 - During the faculty meetings, there was mention of having faculty participating in the implementation teams give periodic updates to the rest of the faculty. Could we do the same for staff participating on implementation teams, particularly in the spirit of greater collaboration?
        - Do they have written updates that we should be regularly looking at?
        - Do we include the Phase II implementation teams from the Implementation Teams website on our Staff Council site?
            - Yes - let's do that!
        - Charge the Staff members on the committees to reach out to us with important updates when they have them
        - Ask them how they would like to be contacted or interacted with?
            - Should we have a sub-committee within the staff council that is in charge of reaching out to the implementation teams?

        - Lily to head this sub-committee and Brittan to join her!
    - Oct 15 - At the September faculty meeting, faculty voted to have the Google Gemini auto pop-up assistance in Google Docs, Slides, etc. disabled by default for both faculty and students, and IT has now done so and created an "opt-in" option instead. However, the same option is not (from my understanding) available to staff. This highlights yet another example of how faculty have the power to vote on and change policies that affect their work, while staff do not. If Staff Council could somehow push for this opt-in option to be considered for staff, or at least petition IT to create a way for individual staff to turn off these Gemini "assistance" options, I think it would be much appreciated (at least by me)!
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        - I suggest that we approach IT leadership to ask if they could send out a reminder that any staff wishing to opt out of gemini features can. IT had to put in a work around to flip the feature. I do not recommend we push for an opt-in feature without hearing from a good portion of the staff.
        - Jeanie will take the lead on this and have them send an email!
    - Oct 15 - What are the Colleges rules on Stav dishes outside of the dining hall and Buntrock Commons? As a custodian, I don't mind picking up dishes off tables and returning them after the building closes. However, students should be able to return the dishes of their own accord. We find dishes, sometimes full plates, all over the building; in backpack cubbies, tables, the fire places, shelves and racks, bathrooms, etc. This is only one building. It is unknown to us what other building are like in this regard. Last school year, Buntrock put up signs urging students to not take Stav dishes outside of the building. This lasted for a month and then the signs were taken down. I know that this is an ages old issue but surely we as a college can find a solution that can last. Having food and dishes siting around during a college visit is not a good look when we are third in the state for highest tuition.
        - We need to respond to Sam, since he gave his information
        - This is a problem in the library and other places around campus. Guests notice it and it’s gross to see these dishes laying around.

- Is this a partnership with SGA?
- Do we reach out to Bon Appetit to work with them?
    - In one year they had to spend $50,000 to replace dishes!
- They are coming out of Stav, they can take them out of Stav but they have to stay in Buntrock, which obviously doesn't happen
- With DAC, they have people with accommodations and they pick them up from Stav but there isn't a good return option
- Can we have return spaces in a few places around campus?
- Custodial used to pick them up from dorms and drop them off at the dock and then Bon App would take care of them from there
- Do we reach out to custodial supervisors as well?
- Do we ask Bon App to have disposables available for people who want to leave the building?
- Kelli: there needs to be more discussion about this
- Liz: invite Bon App, SGA, Custodial Supervisor, and to a Staff Council meeting

Action Items:

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