1. Land acknowledgement

2. Presentation: Update on Waterloo’s Equity Data Survey by Tara Sutton, Communications and Engagement Specialist and Jermal Jones, Manager Equity Office, of the Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (HREI) office
   - Introduction by Steve Bradley
   - Presentation (slides will be made available)
     - What is “equity data”?
       - Self-reported socio-demographic information including intersectional lived experience. Data equity is important when collecting, analyzing and distributing equity data
     - What is Waterloo’s equity survey?
       - Confidential collection of equity-related data
       - Takes about 5 minutes to complete, participation voluntary, questions can be skipped or prefer not to answer. Participants can return to answer skipped questions later. Does not ask for personally identifying information
       - This is a starting point for UW’s commitment to equity
       - If you require assistance: equitiesurvey@uwaterloo.ca
     - Purpose
• Understand our community, use results to inform, improve equity outcomes
  o When is the survey taking place?
    ▪ A continuous survey that started in June 2021. Will have a pause in Oct so can complete a report. Survey will be repeated annually
    ▪ June – initial data collection, Fall 2021 – continuation and refinement, Late Fall 2021 – initial report
  o How was the survey developed?
    ▪ Community input, best practices, draft, and review
  o Implementation team and responsibilities
    ▪ Equity office, IAP, Communications team, IST
  o Communications
    ▪ Events (e.g. ‘Ask us about anything about data collection’ – Sep 14, 2021, 3-3:45pm https://ticketfi.com/event/4252/equity-survey-ask-us-anything-about-data-collection-security
    ▪ Internal Comms – (e.g. memo from Provost)
    ▪ Social Media and the Web – (e.g. Equity Survey | Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion | University of Waterloo (uwaterloo.ca))

• Q&A
  Q: Have you any sense of response rates so far?
  A: As of Aug 2021, Staff response rates: 38%

  Q: What’s the response rate needed for it to be useful?
  A: as many as possible. 50% is key for the upcoming report

  Q: Will reminders be coming to staff?
  A: Yes, a memo is coming soon and then then the link

*Area Reps: please push Equity Survey info out to groups*

3. President’s report (attached)
• Governance Project update
  o Governance committee work has continued and in strong position to adapt to non-profit legislation
  o By-law document will be presented to members at the upcoming Annual General Meeting. Board Chair and Vice Chair roles to be created.
• Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
  o Draft agreement in principle is with Senior Administration
  o Hopeful feedback is in time so we can bring to October Board of Governors meeting
  o Keep eye out for invitation to vote on new MOA
• 2021 Election
  o Call for nominations for UWSA Board of Directors coming out this week
  o Info sessions are forthcoming
  o If you’re interested, consider running. If you know of someone that might be interested, connect them with me
  o Please share announcement with others in your area
  o Next Area Rep meeting will be one week earlier to accommodate the Meet the Candidates event
• UWSA Events
  o Volunteer Appreciation Lunch. RSVP by Friday, Sept 10 at noon to do so
  o Columbia Sports sale for members-only ends next week
  o Order subsidized toys from Santa this year; order form will be sent this month
  o Did you participate in any cool virtual events over the past year-and-a-half? Your Fundraising & Social Committee would love to hear about these as possible Member events!

• Staff Issues
  o Vaccine mandate on campus
    ▪ Contentious issue on campus, supporting members during this
    ▪ Vaccine Q&A for UWSA members on Sep 28. Details out next week
  o Workforce Planning
    ▪ Conversations about the future of work are taking place
    ▪ UWSA has a seat on the Return to Campus Task Force. Meets every two weeks.
    ▪ 2nd phase of the Task Force’s mandate is to examine and consider principles and guidelines for flexible work at UW. This work will begin in January

• Notes of gratitude for:
  o Stephen Markan, Dave McDougall, President Elect, Gail Spencer, and Area Reps

• Q&A:

  Q: Why is policy 18 not mentioned in the MOA but policy 33 is?
  A: Policy 18 is a class S policy and wasn’t included in the MOA as it was felt we didn’t have the problems with 18 as we did with Policy 33. Policy 18 is slow, but it works.

  Q: Some people are wondering it UW has plans to update the work from home policy. Is this something that will be discussed by the Return-to-Work Taskforce? The main concern is that in some areas there is not enough office space for staff and a hybrid model seems appropriate, yet the work from home policy only allows for 1-2 days per week.
  A: The Return to Campus taskforce will need to examine the current work from home guideline. As I have seen it, there are two pieces – the safety piece and the compassion piece (flexible work environments effect employees). Some have found remote work is good for us and some have found it is not. The current guideline doesn’t not allow for this flexibility. UWSA will bring flexibility piece to the Taskforce.

  Q: What does flexible work mean?
  A: This isn’t currently defined at Waterloo but we’re meaning flexibility in terms of meeting the wants, desires and needs of our workforce. Our current guidelines are not flexible and it’s felt the only way to consider needs of workforce is to apply flexibility.

  Q: I’d like to know what, if anything, is being done to support non-essential staff members being forced to return to work “just because”? There’s been significant change to personal risk since the campus return to work vision was outlined in the summer and that’s not really being addressed beyond being asked to talk to your manager. There seems to be little consistency across campus about reasons for mandating people back.
  A: I agree with the observations and points. Yes, this is happening and based on our understanding of employment law and understanding of what’s going on in the world, work from home is not something that is a right at this time. If there was a public health requirement then that is different. So, we’re being told that our current work location is campus. So going forward, the Return to Campus Taskforce needs to determine what our workforce is going to
look like and develop guidelines for what flexibility will look like.

Q: Flagging that some staff have been reminded/encouraged to fill out accommodation requests if they feel unsafe, which has the outcome flooding Occupational Health and undermines the entire accommodation system and medicalizes the process or feeling unsafe to return to campus.

Q: Certain departments that are promoting work from home. But others aren’t as accommodating. There doesn’t seem to be equality or equity.
A: There is a disconnect between staff and senior administration and a need for more transparent communications.

Q: It has been suggested that having everyone come back to campus is an equity issue, in that, if some people have roles that require them to be there, it’s only ‘equitable’ that non-essential staff be there too, presumably to be exposed to the same degree of risk? That’s not how equity works.
A: It might be equal but it’s not equitable.

Q: Forcing a non-essential worker that can work from home can be a constructive dismissal for the employee putting in the risk.
A: I don’t know if this is true. Perhaps this is something the UWSA should investigate

Q (follow-up): Does this mean unvaccinated staff are going to be able to work from home with no HR request, whereas vaccinated staff will have to apply to do that? Or are they risking their employment?
A: That’s exactly what we don’t know.

Q: Is there still the Oct 17 deadline to declare if vaccinated?
A: Yes, but we don’t know what happens after this.

4. Call for UWSA election committee members (Chief Returning Officer, Stephen Markan)
I am honoured to have taken on the role. The role is to ensure integrity of the election. I require 3 volunteers to join as part of the election committee (scope of duties provided in teams chat).

  o 3 volunteers stepped forward: Tim Ireland, Shelly Jordan and Shannon Taylor.

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Next meeting: October 7, 2021, 12-1pm: Meet the candidate for the Board of Director seats

Chair: Lisa Habel
Minutes: JM
Hello Area Reps!

Thank you so much for taking time in this hectic week to join us. There’s a lot going on right now, so I’ll get right to it.

**Governance Project**

I reported to you in February on the work that Governance committee is doing to improve the efficiency and long-term stability of your Staff Association. That work has continued, and we are in a strong position to adapt to the legislation change that was recently announced for non-profit corporations like ours. At the AGM, we will be seeking member support for an updated Constitution, which will now be called our By-law. This document neatly addresses many of the requirements of the newly implemented legislation, and documents some of our recent governance advances, such as the creation of the new Officer roles of Board Chair and Vice Chair. We hope that you will support the new By-law when it’s presented for decision at the AGM.

**Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)**

The MOA team is excited to report that, after some final wording adjustments, the draft agreement in principle has been sent to senior University administration. We’re hopeful that they’ll provide their feedback in a timely manner so that we might still be able to bring the updated MOA to the October Board of Governors. All UWSA members will be eligible to vote on the updated MOA, so keep an eye open for the MOA vote announcement. And if you have any lingering questions or concerns about the MOA, we hope you’ll bring them forward before the vote so that you’re able to vote yes when the time comes.

**2021 Election**

We also have an election coming up, and the Call for Nominations will go out next week. We’re seeking our next President-elect and two Board Directors. And, if our updated By-law is formally adopted at the AGM, we will immediately have an additional 3 Director vacancies. If you are interested in joining the UWSA Board of Directors, please consider running. And if you know someone who’s looking for an opportunity to try something new, please connect them with me! Watch out for information sessions for those interested in learning more about serving in the President or Board Director role, and please share these announcements with others in your area. *Note that the next Area Reps meeting will be one week earlier than usual to accommodate the Meet the Candidates event.*

**UWSA Events**

We have a few other events coming up that I’d like to quickly run through:
• If you haven’t yet RSVP’d for the Volunteer Appreciation Lunch, you have until Friday, September 10 at noon to do so. We’ll be handing out boxed lunches outside Fed Hall, and we’re looking forward to seeing your 3D faces when you stop by to pick up your lunch!

• The Columbia Sports sale for members-only ends next week (September 12).

• Members will once again be able to order subsidized toys from Santa this year; the order form will be sent this month.

• And finally, if you participated in any cool virtual events over the past year-and-a-half, please let us know! Your Fundraising & Social Committee would love to hear about these as possible Member events!

Vaccine Mandate on Campus

This is definitely a contentious issue right now. It’s the one thing we’re hearing about more than any other thing. And everybody has a very strong opinion.

From an advocacy perspective, things are very much up in the air right now. Not just at UW, but across sectors and communities. The unanswered question – what happens to those who don’t declare and prove their vaccination status – remains unanswered. We’re carefully following case law as new precedents are being set with regard to employee rights. And we’ll continue to support our members through this strange time.

We’ve heard from many Members who have specific questions about the vaccines; we’re not the ones to provide answers to those questions. But we recognize that there is just so much information out there that it’s hard to find reliable answers. So we’ve teamed up with Dr Kelly Grindrod from the School of Pharmacy to offer a Vaccine Q&A session for UWSA Members. We’ll be sharing an online form on Monday, September 13 that Members can access to submit their vaccine-related questions. Kelly will provide answers to the pre-submitted questions at a live event over lunch on September 28. Stay tuned for more details on this event.

Workforce Planning

At UW and other universities, conversations about the future of work are taking place. We have a seat on the Return to Campus Task Force, which meets every two weeks. The second phase of this Task Force’s mandate is to examine and consider principles and guidelines for flexible work at UW. This work will begin in January, and we will do our best to ensure that member interests are represented in those conversations.

I always like to end on a note of gratitude, and today I’m feeling very grateful.

Thank you, Stephen Markan for stepping up to serve as the Returning Officer for both the MOA vote and the upcoming election.

Thank you, Dave McDougall, our President-elect, for your engagement and support from the start of my Presidency. The past 10 months have gone by so fast, and it’s hard to believe you’ll be stepping into the role of President in just 8 weeks! But based on my work with you, I’m confident the Staff Association will be in very good hands.
And thank you, Gail Spencer, our Executive Manager and rockstar advocate, for the work you’re doing to support our members through this transitional time. Change is hard, and Gail, your dedication to our members is awesome.

And thank you, as always, to our Area Reps for helping keep us connected us to our Members.

Prepared by Kathy Becker