Present:
Abigail Scholer
Agata Antkiewicz
Agata Jagielska
Andrea Santi
Angela Christelis
Angela Rooke
Beth Bohnert
Brenda Hebner
Carmen Peters
Catherine Bolger
Cherisse Mike
Christine Bird
Christine White
Christine White
Cindy Howe
Courtney Bremer
Dana Evans Laity
Dave McDougall
Dick Duplessie
Doreen White
Gillian McKenzie-Yorke
Gitanjali Shanbhag
Gosia Brestovacki
guest (Guest)
Heather Vo
Helen Simon
Jane Arnem
Jason Greatrex
Jennifer Costello
Jennifer Morgan
Jenny Conroy
Jenny Mackay
Jessica Reid
Jessica Rosa-Vecchiarelli
John Fedy
Karen Pieters
Kari Hueber
Kathleen StLaurent
Kathy Becker
Kathy Szegi
Katy McEwen
Katy Wong-Francq
Ken Manson
Krunomir Dvorski
Laura Frazee
Laura Maple
Laura McDonald
Lawrence Folland
Liam Morland
Lilin Li
Lillian Liao
Lisa Liu
Lorraine Quast
Maris Weiss
Mary Lou Jensen
Matthew Fries
Melissa Campbell
Murray Zink
Nancy Sej
Nick Strazzabosco
Nicole Reid
Priscila Carrara
Rachel Pridham
Robin Andrade
Robyn Landers
Rosemary Killeen
Sandra Keys
Sandy Wong
Sara Perkins
Scott Freeman King
Selena Santi
Shannon Taylor
Shelly Jordan
Sonya Walton
Stacey Koch
Stacy Reda
Steph Facca
Stephanie Boragina
Steve Bradley
Susan Oestreich
Terry Labach
Tom Barber
Tracey McKee
Tracey Stone
Tracie Wilkinson
Wendy de Gomez

1. Welcome – Vice Chair Maris Weiss

2. Land acknowledgement – Kathy Becker

3. Introduction of guest speaker – Steve Bradley

4. Presentation: Challenges of remote work and returning to in-person work by Prof. Abigail Scholer, Director at the Self-Regulation and Motivation Lab
Presentation: “Getting Motivated in these Decidedly Unmotivating Times: Lessons from Motivation Science”

- Prof Scholer is a Social Psychologist. Studies motivation and goals
- Research findings reflect averages and there are no magic bullets when it comes to motivation
- Thoughts on UW COVID-19 Employee Survey (Jan 2022)
  - Many people have concerns about coming back to work
  - Importantly, not everyone has the same concerns
  - Different concerns mean different solutions are needed
- Lessons from Motivation Science:
  1. Need to identify goals. Also need to identify obstacles and an “if-then” plan related to obstacles
  2. Stress can be construed as a challenge (resources are higher than demands) or a threat (demands are higher than available resources). There are strategies to help us construe something as a challenge versus a threat meaning less associated anxiety and better able to cope
  3. When commitment (or times) is uncertain, if can be helpful to keep your eye on progress-to-date (or the starting line)
  4. Be kind: Self-compassion is related to better performance and greater life satisfaction
- Q&A

Q: What about when the finish line is completely uncertain, like when we can’t imagine or visualize what the future will even look like. It seems impossible to know what progress we’ve made to date, or how much farther there is to go.

A: I agree that there are situations where we can’t even see the finish line so assessing the progress seems almost impossible. Focusing on progress-to-date is important then because this is concrete thinking on what you have done to-date, and something can hold on. So might not be able to reference the finish line but it does tell us what we have invested so far.

Q: I would love to learn more about tips for motivating students in the future. As an example, co-op students that aren’t motivated to even apply for jobs.

A: During the pandemic our perceptions of constraints as well as the situations in which we were living changed. Help students think and articulate about goals and obstacles and what are the new/variable obstacles in addition to the typical obstacles and give space from emotions. Separate like this can ease the anxiety.

Q: A lot of staff members’ stress comes from the sense they’ve lost autonomy over their work (or perhaps more accurately, workplace). Can you speak to the role of autonomy in motivation?

A: There are huge literature on autonomy. The more autonomy we feel the better – for example better well being and performance. Autonomy is critical and something we want to cultivate in ourselves and the workplace. The changes in how we have worked in the last few years has led us to reevaluate how we work and what we need to do good work. Difficult and important conversations with colleague and supervisors are needed. It is critical, and we need to pay attention to this in ourselves and our colleagues as we work to be keep people engaged.

5. President’s Report
- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) – is with the President and Provost for input/comments. Once approved by upper administration it will be brought to staff, UWSA members for consultation. After that would be a staff vote. If the vote is
successful, the MOA will be at Board of Governors June meeting. Expect to hear about upcoming virtual consultation sessions. Not anticipating any stalling.

- New UWSA staff position – approval and funding from University Administration. The role will involve UWSA member and volunteer engagement.
- Behind the scenes work
  - Providing input into the staff evaluation (performance assessment) process for 2021. Ensuring there is explanation on the numbers [ratings] on the bottom and emphasis it is staff choice with form/process is used for 2021 evaluations
  - Staff compensation as it relates to Bill 124
- Return to campus – if you have a difference of opinion with your supervisor/department on the return to campus strategy, can connect with UWSA for support/advocacy
- Working when kids/someone else in home has had close contact with Covid – advise staff to follow Region of Waterloo health guidelines and if not sure what to do in terms of calling in sick/using vacation days, can connect with UWSA for support/advocacy.

**Q&A:**

Q: What role in UWSA is playing in the workforce planning strategy?
A: We’re there and providing input and feedback. The current plan for return to campus between Feb 7-Mar 14 is moving forward but we don’t know yet the realities of how the workforce planning will be implemented.

Q: Is UWSA doing anything related to the UW’s recent staff survey about return to campus?
A: Yes, and this was the first thing on the Staff Relations Committee agenda. We’ve to receive all the data, details, slide deck, etc related to the survey. This is taking time.

Q: What are the long-term plans/future changes to the staff evaluation (performance appraisal) process?
A: I don’t think there’s been any conversations yet about next year. Within the new compensation agreement, it points to a review that is going to take place per PACSC (President’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation) commitment: [https://uwaterloo.ca/employee-communication/news/staff-compensation-recommendation-2021-2024](https://uwaterloo.ca/employee-communication/news/staff-compensation-recommendation-2021-2024)


6. Approval of Minutes January 13, 2022
Approved.

7. Open forum

8. Closing remarks
Next meeting: Thursday, March 10, 2022

Chair: Maris Weiss
Minutes: JM