



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

Staff
Advisory
Council

**Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council
(NUSAC)**

Annual Report 2010-2011

ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council (NUSAC)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council is a group of volunteer staff members appointed by the president to promote a positive work environment and serve as an advocacy group and communication channel between staff and university administration. The council represents the diverse staff of Northwestern University and collaborates with the president, senior administration, faculty and members of the university community in our shared pursuit of excellence.

Chartered by Northwestern University's president in 1973, NUSAC provides service to the university community by representing the opinions, concerns, and experiences of its nonexempt and exempt staff. This service is facilitated through networking and educational outreach by way of our newsletter, brown bag seminars and sponsorship of the Conversations with the President events. NUSAC also provides representation of staff concerns at our meetings with Human Resources personnel and university administrators, as well as our participation on university committees and task forces.

In 2010-2011, NUSAC (also referred to as the Council) was comprised of 25 staff employees drawn from Northwestern's Chicago and Evanston campuses. Each of these NUSAC members served on one of four standing committees: Benefits, Communications, Human Resources and Outreach. These committees met independently of the regularly scheduled monthly NUSAC General Council meetings and much of the planning of events took place there; in addition, these committees are the main communication channel for relaying staff concerns about benefits, compensation, and employment to the relevant departments. Some members also participated in ad hoc committees set up to focus on specific issues or events. The list of council members and their committee membership is presented at the end of the report. The following report is a summary of the Council's activities in FY11.

GENERAL COUNCIL DESCRIPTION

NUSAC Officers 2010-2011

Lynn Steiner, Chair
 Kyle Delaney, Vice Chair
 Bianca Ramirez, Secretary
 George Nejme, Treasurer

In 2010-2011, the Council was comprised of 10 members from the Chicago campus and 15 members from the Evanston campus. The various schools and departments represented in the Council's makeup included departments in the Feinberg School of Medicine (the Cancer Center, Department of Medical Social Sciences, Department of Otolaryngology, Department of Psychiatry, Department of Surgery, and Payroll & Financial Services); the Kellogg School of Management; the Law School; Marketing, and the MEM and MSIT Programs (McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Sciences); Center for Talent Development and MSEd Program (Education & Social Policy); Norris University Center Admin; Northwestern University in Qatar Evanston Support Office; NUCATS; Office for Audit & Advisory Services; Benefits, and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (Human Resources); School of Continuing Studies; Tech Support Services/ Project Café; Transportation Library; and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

Involvement and Accomplishments for 2010-2011

This academic year the Council was constantly in action, and in addition to sponsoring or co-sponsoring our annual events, NUSAC also introduced an event for staff to meet and talk with President Schapiro called “Coffee with the President”; we also launched the employee to employee assistance fund called NU Cares. Both are described below.

Meetings with University Administrators

This year, the NUSAC Chair and Vice Chair met quarterly with President Schapiro. At these meetings, NUSAC updated the president on its activities, worked with the president and his assistant to plan staff-related events with the president and discussed the current status of the university and where NUSAC should focus its efforts. President Schapiro, Gene Sunshine (Senior V.P. for Business & Finance) and Pam Beemer (A.V.P. for Human Resources) joined the Council for an annual meeting in November 2010. We discussed the role of staff in the strategic plan, where the president had been focusing his efforts this year and reviewed the first “Coffee with the President.” The Council met with Pam Beemer regularly throughout the year: this included her frequent attendance at HR and Benefits committee meetings, and quarterly phone calls with the executive committee. The Chair and Vice Chair met with Gene Sunshine to review Council activities and discuss NUSAC’s review of employee tuition benefits.

Coffee with the President

In order to increase opportunities for staff to interact with President Schapiro, NUSAC was motivated by the president’s remarks at his first Conversation to create an event with the assistance of the Office of the President and HR called “Coffee with the President.” We envisioned these as one hour meetings with a randomly-selected small group of staff (about 15), NUSAC and HR representatives, and the president, where attendees could talk about issues and ideas. This first year, we planned six coffees alternating between the Evanston and Chicago campuses in October and November 2010 and February, March, May and June 2011. These coffees were considered successful, for though they were not always fully attended, there was much discussion on a variety of issues, and staff feedback indicated that they generally came away from the event glad to have been invited and feeling able to connect with other staff that they might not otherwise have an opportunity to meet. Throughout these coffees NUSAC collected feedback, and we will be deciding how many coffees we will have in FY12.

Strategic Planning Brown Bags

NUSAC partnered with the Office of Administrative Planning and AHEAD@NU to help plan and staff two forums (one on each campus) in November 2010 about the strategic planning process. Provost Dan Linzer led these discussions with the draft plan and invited feedback. Some staff feedback on earlier drafts of the plan had been incorporated into this version. These sessions were fairly well-attended.

NU Cares

After extensive work by the NUSAC Benefits Committee, the Office of Work/Life Resources and the Benefits Division, NU Cares (an employee to employee financial assistance fund) was launched in December 2010. We began to receive both one-time and recurring donations from staff and faculty. By spring 2011, the fund had reached its minimum goal of \$5,000 which was needed to begin accepting applications for assistance. During summer 2011, the Benefits Committee updated and finalized the application form and the application review committee – a mix of NUSAC members and staff-at-large and members of the Faculty Senate and faculty-at-large. The application process has been opened and we hope to begin awarding grants to Northwestern employees as approved.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Coffee Break

On January 17, 2011, NUSAC partnered with the Martin Luther King Jr. Planning Committee to co-sponsor the NUSAC Coffee Break in the Dittmar Gallery at Norris University Center on the Evanston Campus and begin a day filled with programs to celebrate the theme “Remember the Promise, Renew the Dream.” Over 50 faculty, staff, and students from across the University enjoyed a wonderful breakfast and socializing before attending the Tavis Smiley keynote address in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall.

Service Excellence Recognition Luncheon

On January 28, 2011, the Chair and Vice Chair attended the Service Excellence Recognition Luncheon where employees were recognized for their outstanding service to the University. This was the last annual luncheon; as a result of discussions between NUSAC and HR, the format of this luncheon was changed to smaller, quarterly luncheons in order to give the president the opportunity to talk with more of the staff during the event. The first quarterly luncheon was held in May, followed by a second in August, and we received positive feedback from attendees about this type of luncheon.

Conversations with the President

This year, NUSAC held two Conversations with the President. Under the leadership of the Vice Chair, the Conversations ad hoc committee was formed to plan one conversation each on the Chicago and Evanston campuses which would also be available as a webcast. As in previous years, NUSAC collaborated with University Relations, Academic Technologies and the Information Technology Department and the Office of the President to continue our recently revised format of conversations with President Schapiro. This year the Faculty Senate was a co-sponsor. About 100 people attended each event. The Chicago Conversations on January 11th had 180 webcast hits, while the Evanston Conversation on May 25th had 250 webcast hits.

Brown Bags

In addition to the strategic planning forums noted above, NUSAC planned another well-attended brown bag in July 2011 with 40-60 attendees on the Chicago and Evanston campuses. The topic was “Responding to out of the ordinary behaviors,” and two to three panelists on each campus – an HR representative, a representative from Perspectives, and a representative from CAPS – participated in a question and answer session (with some questions submitted in advance) concerning troubling behaviors they might see in their supervisors, supervisees or colleagues, along with what resources are available to assist. NUSAC served light refreshments; after each event, a short survey was sent to participants to solicit their feedback on the event.

Employee of the Year Selection Process and Length of Service Recognition Luncheon

NUSAC co-sponsored the Staff Service Recognition Luncheon with Human Resources. Three NUSAC members participated in the 2010 Employee of the Year selection process and Council members attended the luncheon on May 10, 2011 which was held at the Mid-America Club in Chicago. Employees who had served 20 or more years at the University were honored for their commitment and service. This year the employee of the year process was revised so that there were seven finalists leading to one winner of the Employee of the Year award, independent of campus affiliation. Members of NUSAC announced the length of service honorees and the finalists for the 2010 Employee of the Year awards.

Recruitment

NUSAC began recruiting in May 2011 to fill six open positions for FY12. Recruitment efforts included a bulk email sent out to all staff with a link to the application and targeted efforts reaching out to departments that were not represented on the Council. Applications were down this year compared to last year, with nine people applying to be on the Council; all were interviewed in June and the top six were selected. (Soon after this, one member of the Council left the University, so we accepted a seventh candidate.) The remaining applicants were placed on the waiting list. All new members represent departments that were not represented on the Council in FY11.

Publicity

After a lengthy development and approval process led by the Communications Committee, NUSAC updated, revamped and produced a new version of the NUSAC brochure. This brochure is handed out to all staff during new employee orientation as well as at all NUSAC-sponsored events, but it had not been updated in many years. With the assistance of University Relations, NUSAC now has a new brochure that looks professional, is engaging and will be current for many years to come.

Other Initiatives

In addition to successful drives organized by NUSAC's Outreach Committee (described in the committee summary section), NUSAC was involved in some new activities in FY11, including a virtual food drive (described in the Outreach section). We worked with a representative from Six Flags Great America to set up a discount program for Northwestern employees; beginning this summer, employees could purchase discounted tickets to Great America. We participated in Bike to Work week on the Evanston and Chicago campuses by staffing tables and raffling off six Kryptonite bike locks purchased from University Police. NUSAC also sponsored a Lunch on the Lake music event in Evanston in July 2011.

NUSAC Involvement in University-Related Groups

In the last year, NUSAC has continued to participate in University groups, including the NUPD Advisory Group and the Joint Planning Committee. We remain open to requests to participate in University groups and committees where staff representation is deemed valuable.

Members at large

In 2011, NUSAC created a Member at Large designation, intended to allow a limited role for former NUSAC Council members and University staff in good standing. The purpose of this designation is to provide access to skills and abilities that may be needed beyond what is available on the 25-member Council. Members at Large are not official Council members (do not attend meetings/nonpublic NUSAC events nor receive NUSAC internal correspondence). This designation is a way to increase the capacity of the volunteer council, expand the Council's expertise, capture the interest of those who may want to participate but who may not yet be eligible for NUSAC membership, and allow the Council to network and diversify its representation. Additionally, the Member at Large designation is a way to keep continuity and historical memory in a Council that, due to its structure, has frequent turnover.

Committee Updates

Benefits Committee

The Benefits Committee works directly with the Director of Benefits Division and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, conveying staff suggestions and concerns related to benefits elections, policies, and procedures, and responding to staff regarding these issues. NUSAC provides a liaison to the GFC Benefits Committee and meets with this committee regularly to collaborate on mutual interests.

Committee Members 2010-2011: Kyle Delaney (Chair), Erin Cikanek, Joe Ellison, Regina Gleyzer, Jonathan Greene, Lynn Steiner

- The Committee continued work on an employee-to-employee assistance fund, NU Cares. NU Cares officially launched in December 2010 with an initial goal of \$5,000 before launching applications. The fund reached this goal in spring 2011 and applications will be accepted in September 2011.
- The Committee focused on tuition benefits for employees. After several months of research, the Committee put together a full recommendation on tuition benefits. The recommendation was shared with HR, Gene Sunshine, and President Schapiro.

- Lastly, the Committee dealt with individual requests, bringing ongoing issues, such as the timing of Health Savings Account deductions, to the attention of the Office of Human Resources. The Committee plays an important role in linking concerned staff with HR staff that may be able to help.

Benefits Committee Priorities for 2011-2012

- Continue to build NU Cares into a sustainable fund, working with the Office of Work/Life Resources to coordinate the application process. The Committee will also seek additional ways to raise funds for NU Cares.
- Follow up with the Office of Human Resources to determine next steps for the tuition benefit recommendations. Work to prioritize benefits so that HR may allocate funds.
- Continue to communicate benefit questions to Human Resources/Benefits administration.

Communications Committee

A key component of NUSAC's mission involves exchanging information with staff on relevant issues. The Communications Committee is responsible for organizing all public relations and media for NUSAC. From creating the newsletters and monthly "NUSAC in Action" features to updating the web site, the Communications Committee helps maintain NUSAC's positive image at the University.

Committee Members 2010-2011: Erinn Odell (Chair), Susan Corwith (began mid-year), Susan Fox, Tracey Gibson-Jackson, Steven Lee, Ryan O'Mealey (left mid-year), Roseann Mark (left mid-year) and Bianca Ramirez.

NUSAC Website

- The website was updated to include information on NUSAC committees, members and membership; current and archived newsletters and NUSAC in Action articles; employee recognition; how to apply or donate to the NU Cares Program; and a list of links to university resources.
- The Communications Committee assigned to one member (Susan Fox) the responsibilities of managing and updating the website as webmaster.
- The website was made a priority this year and we were timelier with making changes.
- At each monthly committee meeting the website was discussed to see if there were any updates to be made or information to be added and the webmaster would make the changes.

Bulk Emails

- Managed the bulk email process so that emails to inform staff members of NUSAC activities and other University events were distributed regularly.
- Emails were distributed for NU Cares, Conversations with the President, the School Supply Drive, NUSAC in Action, newsletters and NUSAC recruitment.

Brochure

- Completed, printed and added the new NUSAC brochure to the website.

NUSAC in Action

- Developed and distributed monthly "NUSAC in Action" e-mails.
- Topics included: Information on flu shots; videoconferencing; NU Cares program; campus safety; Employee of the Year awards; University-wide computer changes; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center; and summer events.

Newsletters

- Sent out three newsletters: Winter 2011, Spring 2011, and Summer 2011.
- Continued to work with HR in order to advertise their events and workshops in the newsletter and on the website.
- Introduced and added information about the NU Cares program.

- Continued to feature “unsung” staff and highlighted staff from the Qatar campus to make them more visible.
- Gave updates on the “Coffee with the President” and recapped the Conversations.
- Added information about different groups and events on campus.

Communication Committee Priorities for 2011-2012

- Send out NUSAC-related communications in a timely and accurate manner.
- Keep NUSAC website up to date.

Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee works directly with the Associate Vice President for Human Resources to discuss policies and procedures, provide feedback, and communicate staff concerns related to matters overseen by Human Resources. The Associate Vice President, in turn, reports to the committee on pending matters of staff interest and solicits input from NUSAC on human resource issues and related matters.

Committee Members 2010–2011: Jennifer Malloy (chair), Dauphine Gregory, Megan Mason, Rosie Miles-Jamison, Tasha Shelton, Vera Shively

In FY11, NUSAC and the Office of Human Resources continued their fruitful collaboration. NUSAC’s HR Committee reserved part of its monthly meeting time for discussion with HR personnel about current HR-related issues and upcoming developments. This allowed the committee to work on some issues independently while also working with HR on goals that will require incremental change over time. A successful example of this incremental change is demonstrated by the 2009-2010 HR Committee focus on having salary grades and ranges for exempt and nonexempt staff positions posted on the HR job site. At the conclusion of the 2010-2011 year, HR announced all postings for nonexempt staff positions will include minimum and midpoint salary ranges. In the upcoming year, NUSAC’s HR Committee must continue to work towards similar requirements for many exempt staff position postings and salary grades.

HR Committee areas of focus in 2010-2011:

- **Coffee with the President:** See details of the coffees, above. To address issues brought up during the coffees or in planning for these events, an HR Committee member served on the Coffee with the President Committee and a discussion about the coffees was scheduled on the monthly HR Committee agenda.
- **Employee of the Year White-Out Committee:** The Committee coordinated with HR representatives in March to prepare for the Employee of the Year selection process. Four to five NUSAC members from each campus met, read through the nomination forms and removed any identifying content to ensure anonymity before returning them to HR for review and distribution to the Selection Committee. The Committee also assisted with organizing NUSAC members to volunteer as members of the selection committee and as bus captains for the luncheon.
- **Service Excellence Recognition:** This year, the Committee worked with HR to implement a change to the Service Excellence Recognition Luncheon that was proposed last year. The change was from an annual to quarterly luncheons in order to reduce the size of these events and to allow President Schapiro to interact with more attendees (depending on the president’s availability and the number of nominees for any given quarter). So far two quarterly luncheons were held; this committee will continue to provide feedback to HR on how this new format is working.

HR Committee Priorities for 2011–12:

- Continue to work with HR to post the minimum/midpoint salary ranges/grades for exempt staff.

- Continue to monitor Service Excellence Luncheons to ensure they happen on a quarterly basis where possible.
- Work with HR to develop a Brown Bag on the new HR website.
- Advocate for Northwestern University to participate in the Chronicle's Great Colleges Survey.
- Research the Workplace Learning Council and read the University's final Strategic Plan to determine if there is a role for the Committee in either of these endeavors.
- With HR, improve the internal hiring process to manage internal candidates and enhance promotion opportunities for these candidates.
- Work with HR to promote more transparency on the role that performance reviews play in determining staff increases by way of documentation and communication from managers.

Outreach Committee

In 2009, the Outreach Committee was adopted as a permanent sub-committee of NUSAC. The committee originated from the philanthropic goals of the NUSAC Gives Back ad hoc committee along with the desire to engage and collaborate with other Northwestern University staff, faculty, and student organizations in accomplishing common goals.

Committee members 2010-2011: Elizabeth Rauch (Chair), Laura B. Amsden (left mid-year), Natasha Dennison (left mid-year), Timothy Gordon, Margaret Mersch, Megan Mitchell, George Nejme, Patricia Rodriguez

Accomplishments for 2010-2011 include:

- The third annual **"Give the Gift of Giving"** was held in December 2010. In addition to last year's beneficiaries, the Committee added the Children and Family Justice Center (a program supported by the Northwestern Law School that offers support to neighborhoods, law enforcement, and youth-serving organizations to create community programs that keep children out of the juvenile justice system). On the Chicago campus, 21 children from CFJC, 90 children from Angel Tree, and 25 families for Heartland Alliance were sponsored. In addition, a total of 46 adults at Inspiration Corporation received gift cards. On the Evanston campus, 49 children for Rice Child and Family Center and 52 families for Family Focus were sponsored.
- The committee collaborated with the School of Continuing Studies' Student Advisory Board (SCSSAB) and the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) to organize a well-attended **Virtual Food Drive (March 25 – April 8, 2011) and Volunteer Day (April 9, 2011)**. Most volunteer spots were filled, with 3,000 boxes packed for emergency food packages during the morning session and 2,600 packages for senior care packed in the afternoon. Over \$2,000 was raised via the virtual food drive. The drive exceeded goals and feedback from students was very positive.
- The second annual **school supply drive** took place July 18 – August 1, 2011. The drive was held on both the Chicago and Evanston campuses and benefited school-age children from three worthy organizations as well as NU families who needed a little help with school supplies. School supplies collected on the Chicago campus were donated to Heartland Alliance and Marillac House, while those supplies collected on the Evanston campus went to the Youth Organization Umbrella (Y.O.U.). Twenty-five NU employees (some with their children) picked up pre-packaged supplies at Y.O.U. Center in Evanston and one staff member came to the HR office on the Chicago campus.
- The committee met with Marianne Moberly, director from the Youth Center of Evanston (Y.O.U.) to explore philanthropic opportunities with this organization, including service learning projects, mentor programs, work force development holiday drives and "quick response" activities.

Outreach Committee Priorities for 2011-2012:

- To continue to provide philanthropic opportunities for staff, faculty and students.

- To expand the scope of collaboration with other NU staff organizations and groups.
- To contribute to and foster involvement with the communities in which Northwestern University is a member.

General Council Priorities

NUSAC New Priorities for 2011-2012

This coming year, NUSAC has not chosen new priorities, but has decided to continue its areas of focus from the last year. NUSAC will continue to reach out to other groups and participate in new events as they fit with our mission and current priorities and as we have the resources to do so.

NUSAC Continuing Efforts for 2011-2012

- Promote NU Cares and begin to offer grants.
- Provide opportunities for staff to provide direct feedback to the University president and administrators (e.g., Coffee with the President, Conversations with the President, Brown Bags)
- Maintain or increase communication and collaboration between NUSAC and staff, university administration, and university and community groups.
- Investigate ways to improve staff retention and job satisfaction.
- Help inform staff of benefits options and raise awareness of under-utilized benefits.

NUSAC's Long Term Goals (target: 2013)

- Foster university-wide community.
- Help improve transparency of job grade numbers and salary ranges.
- Help Northwestern's leadership understand staff concerns about workplace issues.
- When an issue is staff-related or may have an impact on staff, the administration automatically thinks of NUSAC as the go to organization for staff input.

Budget Summary

In FY11, NUSAC received its budget of \$4,641 from the Office of the Vice President for Business & Finance, and added in a Carry Forward balance of \$2,812. Expenses were incurred in the following categories.

<u>Category</u>	<u>% of budget</u>
Events	35%
Communications/Promotion	41%
Computer	2%
Misc	1%
Forward Amount	21%
Total	100%

Events included both internal meetings and external collaborations with other groups at the university; food was the main expense in this category. The *Communications/Promotion* category included new brochures, Conversations-related material (e.g., posters, ad in the Daily), giveaway items for Bike Week, new member name badges and promotional items with the NUSAC logo. *Computer-related items* such as software, batteries, and power cords for the NUSAC computers were purchased during the budget period and made up approximately 2% of the incurred expenses. *Miscellaneous items* included supplies and shipping. Twenty-one percent of the budget was left to carry forward and this was earmarked to be used to purchase NUSAC promotional items to distribute at events; items had not yet been ordered by the end of the fiscal year.

NUSAC Council Members 2010-2011

Erin Cikanek

Committees: Benefits, Brown Bag Ad Hoc, Conversations Ad Hoc
Northwestern University in Qatar
Evanston Support Office

Susan Corwith

Committees: Communications
Program in Biological Sciences
Weinberg College

Kyle Delaney

NUSAC Vice Chair; Benefits Chair
Committees: Benefits, Conversations Ad Hoc
Marketing
McCormick School of Engineering

Joe Ellison

Committees: Benefits, Coffee Ad Hoc
Transportation Library
University Library

Susan Fox

Committees: HR, Communications
MEM Program
McCormick School of Engineering

Tracey Gibson-Jackson

Committees: Communications, Conversations Ad Hoc
Norris University Center Admin

Regina Gleyzer

Committees: Benefits, Conversations Ad Hoc
Office for Audit & Advisory Services

Timothy Gordon

Committees: Outreach, Brown Bag Ad Hoc, Conversations Ad Hoc, Coffee
Ad Hoc
School of Continuing Studies

Jonathan Greene

Committees: Benefits
Tech Support Services/Project Cafe

Dauphine Gregory

Committees: Human Resources, Coffee Ad Hoc
Kellogg School Admissions

Steve Lee

Committees: Communications
NUCATS

Jennifer Malloy

HR Chair
Committees: HR, Coffee Ad Hoc
Department of Otolaryngology
Feinberg School

Megan Mason

Committees: HR
Law Dean's Office

Margaret Mersch

Committees: Outreach
Office of Human Resources

Rosie Miles-Jamison

Committees: Benefits
Comprehensive Cancer Center

Megan Mitchell

Committees: Outreach, Brown Bag Ad Hoc
Lurie Cancer Center
Feinberg School

George Nejme

Committees: Outreach
MSIT
McCormick School of Engineering

Erinn Odell

Communications Chair
Committees: Communications
Payroll & Financial Services
Feinberg School

Bianca Ramirez

Secretary
Committees: Communications
International & Area Studies
Weinberg College

Elizabeth Rauch

Outreach Chair
Committees: Outreach
Dept. of Medical Social Services
Feinberg School

Patricia Rodriguez

Committees: Outreach
MSEd Program
School of Education & Social Policy

Tasha Shelton

Committees: HR
Office of Equal Opportunity and Access
Office of Human Resources

Vera Shively

Committees: HR, Conversations Ad Hoc
Department of Surgery
Feinberg School

Lynn Steiner

NUSAC Chair
Committees: Benefits, Coffee Ad Hoc
Mental Health Services & Policy Program
Feinberg School

In addition, Laura Amsden, Roseann Mark and Ryan O'Mealey left the Council during this year.