



Agenda
Staff Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 13, 2026
Microsoft Teams

Welcome and Overview of Staff Council – Crystal Hamon

Community Agreement

Introductions All Members

- Name
- Department
- Years of Service
- One quick reason why you chose to participate in Staff Council

Kent State University Staff Council liaison Katie Mattise, Executive Director, Learning, Engagement and Belonging

Overview of Committees – Crystal or Megan

- Committee Overview
- Committee Assignments

Meetings, Minutes and Discussion - Craig Berger

- Staff Council November/December Minutes Approval
- Committee Reporting Form
- Future Meeting Schedule

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Start Time: 2:02 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Kara Barnett, Craig Berger, Erin Beseda, Zachary Boggs, Matthew Cola, Matthew Craver, Patti Davis, Stephanie Evans, Sally Fadorsen, Carmen Grubbs, Melissa Halozan, Crystal Hamon, Aimee Johnson, Cheryl Kanis, Alice Kopunovitz, Madison Massey, Katie Mattise, Darcy McBride, Nikki Mills, Monica Morson, Phillip Nelson, Barbara Ozimek, Cassie Pegg-Kirby, Ruth Pittman, Jennifer Richmond, Shaunte Rouse, Jennelizabeth Sepulveda, Megan Smeznik, Heather Stupecki, Jen Villanueva, Tiffany Williams, Virginia Wright, Judy Yasenovsky

Absent: Anita Francisco, Mariah Taylor, Meagan Blake, Rachel Rundo

Welcome and Announcements

Crystal welcomed members to the meeting and emphasized the importance of ensuring that titles do not become barriers to full participation. She underscored the Council's commitment to empowering everyone to make a difference and noted appreciation that all members had their cameras on, reinforcing engagement and presence.

Overview of Staff Council

An overview of the purpose and structure of Staff Council was provided, with reference to the accompanying document shared with members.

Community Agreement

The Council reviewed the Staff Council Community Agreement, a set of collaborative guidelines that define how members interact and work together. The agreement emphasizes fostering shared responsibility and shared equity and was developed with Kent State University's core values of respect, compassion, and inclusiveness in mind. Members were directed to the agreement on the Staff Council website: <https://www.kent.edu/staff-council/staff-council-community-agreement>.

Key principles of the Community Agreement include a commitment to mindful and considerate non-verbal communication; showing up prepared to fully engage by asking questions and sharing insights from individual departments; creating space for all members to speak without interruption; ensuring that no individual or small group dominates conversation; providing opportunities for small-group discussion; valuing every individual perspective equally; and remaining open to new ideas. Members agreed that when disagreements arise, they should focus on ideas rather than individuals in order to maintain a respectful and non-hostile environment.

Introduction of Katie Mattise

Katie Mattise was introduced as the Staff Council liaison in this new iteration of the Council. Katie serves as the Executive Director, Learning, Engagement, and Belonging in the Division of People, Culture, and Belonging. In this role, Katie reports directly to Dr. Gooden to elevate higher-level staff concerns and helps ensure that Council members have access to the information they need. They expressed their willingness to assist with advancing projects, framing issues for discussion, and meeting individually with members who may need a more private or supportive space. Katie noted

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that they have been at the University for ten years and can help navigate institutional processes, and they also have proximity to Cabinet members when appropriate. They can be contacted via email, Microsoft Teams, or through the Staff Council Teams channel. There were no questions from members following the introduction.

Introductions of Council Members

Introductions were conducted with both outgoing and incoming members present. It was noted that the inclusion of outgoing members is intentional, supporting knowledge transfer and network-building among Council members. Introductions began with the Executive Board, followed by all outgoing and incoming members in attendance.

Overview of Committee Descriptions and Assignments (Megan)

Megan shared an overview of Staff Council committees and provided a link to the Council website for reference. Members were reminded that the Council's work is organized around specific priorities carried out through committees. Members were asked to complete the committee preference form by Friday, January 23rd, with the understanding that preferences will be honored whenever possible. Members were encouraged to contact Crystal directly if they feel particularly passionate about serving on a specific committee. The form also allows members to indicate interest in serving as a Chair or Vice Chair. Any issues with the form should be directed to Kara Barnett. Ruth noted that a separate form has been distributed to committee Chairs and Co-Chairs to report on the transition from one year to the next.

Meetings, Minutes, and Discussion (Craig)

Staff Council December Minutes Approval

Craig clarified that only outgoing members who were present at the December meeting were eligible to vote on approval of those minutes. The Kent State Staff Council Minutes from December 16, 2025, were presented for approval. Nikki Mills made a motion to approve. Judy Yasenosky seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 15-0.

Committee Reporting Form

Craig introduced the Committee Reporting Form, which is used to capture and document the work of each committee throughout the year. This information allows the Executive Board to share committee work more effectively and also provides a mechanism to track attendance at committee meetings. Members were directed to the Kent State Staff Council Committee Meeting Report Form.

Future Meeting Schedule

The future meeting schedule was reviewed. All meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams from 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET. On occasion, meetings may be extended by up to 30 minutes when complex topics are anticipated, though the additional time will be optional for members. Scheduled meetings are as follows:

Tuesday, February 10

Tuesday, March 10

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Tuesday, April 14

Tuesday, May 12

Tuesday, June 9

An in-person retreat is tentatively planned for July, with additional details to be shared at a later date.

Tuesday, August 11

Tuesday, September 8

Tuesday, October 13

Tuesday, November 10

Tuesday, December 8

Members were reminded that the Staff Council Teams channel will be the primary method for communicating with the full Council, and everyone was encouraged to adjust their notification settings to ensure they receive updates.

Next Steps

Members were reminded to complete the committee assignment form, after which the Executive Board will review submissions and communicate assignment decisions. Members were also asked to review the Community Agreement and bring forward any suggested changes at the next meeting. Additionally, members were encouraged to think about potential guests for future meetings, particularly individuals in leadership roles who could help advance the Council's goals, so that the Executive Board may begin outreach.

Several discussion points were raised during next steps:

- Nikki noted that the Finance Committee does not need a large number of members and may not need to meet monthly.
- Heather raised the question about whether alternates can serve on committees.
- Ruth suggested exploring the creation of a Treasurer position or absorbing those responsibilities within the Executive Board.
- Phil reiterated that the bylaws require all Council members to serve on at least one committee.
- Jen shared that she will be monitoring the staffcouncil@kent.edu email account.
- Crystal noted that she will be sending a letter to staff through the Faculty/Staff newsletter and expressed her intention to meet individually with each Council member, with invitations forthcoming.
- The next meeting, scheduled for February 10, will feature Shannon Driscoll, Faculty and Staff Ombuds, who will discuss available resources for staff and opportunities for collaboration, after which the Council may break into committees.

Adjournment Time: 3:25 p.m.