

**The University of Akron
University Council Satisfaction Survey Report
May 18, 2016**

Summary:

The University Council Satisfaction Survey was distributed to University Council and Standing Committee members on April 19, 2016. Survey responses were anonymous.

There were 99 University Council and Standing Committee members at the time the survey was distributed. The University Council Steering Committee received 54 responses for a response rate of 55%. Thirty-three respondents were Standing Committee members, eleven respondents were University Council members (35 member group) and ten respondents served both as a member on University Council and on one of the Standing Committees.

For the question, “Standing Committees have been focused on their goals during the 2015-16 University Council year (May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016),” 41% of respondents said standing committees have been somewhat focused on their goals, 22% said they have been very focused, 9% said they have not at all been focused and 28% didn’t know (page 2).

For the question, “Standing Committees I have served on have been focused on their goals during the 2015-16 University Council year (May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016),” 43% of respondents said their standing committee has been very focused, 24% said it has been somewhat focused, 15% said it has not at all been focused and 19% of respondents did not serve on a standing committee (page 2).

For the question, “University Council has been productive during the 2015-16 University Council year (35 member group, led by Stacey Moore and Harvey Sterns),” 43% of respondents said UC has been somewhat productive, 15% said it has been very productive, 11% said it has not at all been productive and 31% didn’t know (page 4).

For open-ended questions, responses were organized into the following categories: attendance, bylaws, communication, goals/priorities, meeting structure, operations, and other (pages 2 – 6).

Complete Survey Results:

I am a member of:

Answer	Response	%
University Council (35 member group, led by Stacey Moore and Harvey Sterns)	11	20%
Standing Committee	33	61%
Both University Council and a Standing Committee	10	19%
Total	54	100%

**Standing Committees have been focused on their goals during the 2015-16 University Council year.
(May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016)**

Answer		Response	%
Not at all focused on their goals		5	9%
Somewhat focused on their goals		22	41%
Very focused on their goals		12	22%
I don't know		15	28%
Total		54	100%

Standing Committees I have served on have been focused on their goals during the 2015-16 University Council year. (May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016)

Answer		Response	%
Not applicable (I did not serve on a standing committee)		10	19%
Not at all focused on their goals		8	15%
Somewhat focused on their goals		13	24%
Very focused on their goals		23	43%
Total		54	100%

Do you have suggestions to make the work of the standing committees more effective?
(Categories are listed by the number of responses received)

Operations

1	A better understanding of what we can do, what we need to do, what we should be doing. Also having someone with more dedicated to the committee be in charge.
2	Select members who are willing to commit and have the best interest of the University at heart.
3	Good to have reports given to entire body of University Council.
4	The UC by-laws have not been approved by the Board of Trustees. This interferes with the work of the committees. Rumor is that a revised version of the by-laws has been prepared that reduces the input of the committees. If true, the committees will become even less effective.
5	Remove the VP from the active committee. The VP may tend to guide the committee to projects they already approve of - and could be less responsive to new ideas from the members and constituency.
6	We should meet.
7	I feel it all lies with the administration taking action on the proposals presented, and passed thru UC. Too many projects, ideas, etc. are just sitting in a hold pattern for months or years.
8	Make sure all seats are filled, regular meetings are scheduled and minutes are posted.
9	Have upper admin. pay attention to the committees. Committees seem to exist in a parallel universe to upper admin. Although the structure exists for shared governance, that is not happening. It appeared at times that info. was provided to committees AFTER the admin. had already made decisions. Not always easy to get the info. that committees need in order to make recommendations or address goals.

Goals/Priorities

10	The goals seems unrealistic
11	The standing committee I serve on is dedicated to achieving their goals. We have subcommittees in place to come up with strategies to implement our goals.
12	Having to take time from meetings to redo things that have already been done and are still a working document, ie goals.
13	Often times, I am not sure what the role of the Committee is and whether it has any impact.
14	More guidance from University Council, University Administration, Deans, CPAC, SEAC, Faculty Senate, Department Chairs, students, faculty and staff about what the goals, directions and purpose is of UC and Standing Committees. Shared governance and policy decisions should be a vital role of UC and Standing Committees.

Communication

15	More meetings; better communication of when meetings are. I never attended a meeting after the one for the semester had been canceled.
16	Better communication. I was notified about 1 meeting that was then canceled and never notified about rescheduling. If progress will be made on committees, more meeting times must be established.

Meeting Structure

17	The committee on which I serve has met once over the past year (perhaps twice, I may have missed a meeting). At the meeting, the chair was absent and the vice chair was not permitted to run the meeting. It was instead run by an employee of the unit in which the activities of the committee reside. Virtually nothing was learned, and nothing was ever presented to us in terms of vision or movement forward. We were never asked our opinion, and meetings just stopped happening. Absolutely no shared governance was evident in that committee during the period 5/1/15-4/30/16. The previous leader of that group was very inclusive, so it was a shock to be excluded and never even given updates on goals and vision. Very disappointing.
18	It might be a good idea for the standing committees to commit to meeting on a regular basis. I serve on the Institutional Advancement standing committee and we have only met one time this academic year.

Attendance

19	Hold administrators more accountable to the work of the standing committees (attendance). Also change the UC year to run from September through May. Standing committees cannot work on goal-related initiatives without a full standing committee and the absence of 3 constituency groups makes it near impossible to have a quorum.
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Other

20	I'm very new to my standing committee and quite honestly the work demands are overwhelming.
21	It's a great deal of talk, and not a lot of action.

University Council has been productive during the 2015-16 year. (35 member group, currently led by Stacey Moore and Harvey Sterns)

Answer		Response	%
Not at all productive		6	11%
Somewhat productive		23	43%
Very productive		8	15%
I don't know		17	31%
Total		54	100%

Do you have suggestions to make the work of University Council more effective?

(Categories are listed by the number of responses received)

Operations

1	Members of University Council do not take the position seriously. When the Provost and other high ranking administrators are on their phones in meetings and not paying attention, it discourages new members (students) from paying attention as well. There is no reason that the bylaws of University Council should have taken so long to be adopted. Honestly, I don't know if they ever were adopted because I could not attend any meeting this semester due to my class schedule. If this governing board is going to be taken seriously and actually accomplish its goals, the permanent members (i.e. faculty and administrators) need to take their positions seriously.
2	Publish minutes listing names of administrators attending UC meetings -- publish comments made.
3	Get more Phd students involved to help with longevity and continuity.
4	Make sure seats are filled and expand technology to get more participation.
5	The UC would be more productive if feedback was received in a timely manner from Administration. From what I've observed, a lot of the work accomplished by Standing Committees is often stifled due to inactivity or necessary feedback from the Administration and BOT.
6	More University and College buy-in. More shared governance of faculty, staff, students, contract professionals, administration.

Goals/Priorities

7	Other than serving as a vehicle for shared governance, i am not sure of the purpose of a university council in the context of fairly decentralized colleges, departments, centers, etc., a reasonably strong faculty senate, multiple unions, a provost with multiple vice provosts, multiple vice presidents, a president, and a BOT. Perhaps it's time for some genuine streamlining and careful consideration of structures that could possibly complicate governance and unduly formalize participation..
8	Promote the "issue submission" system and call the committee only when an issue comes up. There's been a lot of "spinning of the wheels" for committees that struggle with goals - or getting enough membership to attend.
9	What does UC actually do? Does it have any influence or impact?
10	Making committees set goals was a great idea---but we need feedback from the powers that be for doing the research and coming up with solutions and then nothing happens.

Bylaws

11	Approving the bylaws.
12	We need to have the by-laws fully approved by the BoT. If there are revisions to the by-laws, these revisions should be discussed by all constituencies.
13	having bylaws.

Meeting Structure

14	Have more productive UC meetings. I attended one and nothing was accomplished, just a lot of objecting.
15	Leadership should make sure that all committees are meeting regularly, and reporting regularly to the Council as a whole. I don't know how my group fell off the radar, although I see in the new bylaws that the group has been eliminated. Not sure why, which is another problem. Poor communication all the way around with my group.

Attendance

16	Enforce attendance requirements and enforce professionalism standards from council members.
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Communication

17	Create a collaboration and share communications on goals and accomplishments.
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Other

18	Work positively together.
19	Yes. disband university council.
20	See previous comment space.

Additional Comments:

1	It seems that ideas and submissions are presented with high hopes to reflect a positive and/or needed change. But once the submission is proposed and review it only sits and it's a continuous waiting game - this of course only happens with the submission is not disapproved at the onset. I personally have not noticed one submission approved that was presented by my group of constituents.
2	The UC committee I serve on really has a lot of good ideas. We meet once a month and have a terrific Chair. I think we will accomplish our goals and have the students best interest at heart.
3	Thank you for the opportunity to serve.
4	The constant interjection of comments regarding the correct or incorrect following of procedural rules - whether Roberts or whatever rules, is truly after a while, quite redundant, interrupting to the thought and comment flow and just outright irritating in my opinion. If the current set of Bylaws is finally approved by the BOT - it will indeed be a cause for celebration! Given this current BOT, I am, unfortunately, not holding my breath!

5	Does the Board of Trustees really want shared governance?
6	A definitive show of support - backed up by real meaningful and timely action - from the administration would go a long way to towards shared governance. Without that, the progress of the University Council seems questionable.
7	It seems like a few members are highly combative rather than collaborative.
8	I have only been on a committee for a short time but we get a good bit covered/accomplished.
9	I think university council is an additional layer of bureaucracy at the University whose sole function is to placate HLC. With the faculty senate we have the structure in place for good joint governance. University council just gets in the way of this.
10	It is apparent that morale is at an all-time low on our campus. Perhaps it would be a good idea to focus on those employees that are on campus who have taken on added responsibilities with no compensation - just larger workloads and added hours. We need to make this University strong again ... provide some energy.
11	I hope that UC and the Standing Committees do not dissolve. It is a good model - it just needs administrative buy-in and more direction and it needs to be "University – wide."