# Meeting Minutes - SSU Staff Council

**November 17, 2026**

### Call to Order

A meeting of the SSU Staff Council was held on November 17, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. Attendance: 46 participants.

### Chair's Report

- Sadie chaired the meeting in place of Kyle Falbo and reported that the Council is coordinating with Academic Senate on the timing of elections for staff representatives to hiring committees.
- Sadie announced that she will be absent from an upcoming meeting and will coordinate with Meredith to confirm when Academic Senate ballots will be distributed so the staff representative election can be scheduled appropriately.

### Staff Updates

- Mike Ogg announced the $6 Friday event at the Kitchens, where lunch will be available for $6 on Friday.
- In response to a question about an end-of-semester gathering, Mike confirmed that a holiday party is in process of being planned. Additional details and the date will be announced soon.
- John Lynch proposed offering AI and technology trainings for staff during winter break. Potential topics include new ChatGPT features, security, Adobe Express, and Google/Gemini Notebooks.

### Academic Senate Update

- Katie Musick reported that President Spagna shared increases in applications, admits, and deposits compared with the same period last year. She also reported that campus computers are being refreshed.
- An NAGPRA listening session is scheduled for November 30. The Provost was attending a conference in Mexico City related to the Mexico initiative.
- The Senate unanimously approved the name change from the Department of Music to the School of Music and approved a new Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies. History BA/MA proposals and other academic items were also discussed.
- The evaluation of the Athletic Coaching policy received a first reading. Internship policy and graduate thesis project policies remain under review, with some items scheduled for additional readings.
- The Council also noted promotion of Bring a Seawolf to Work Day and other Native American education initiatives.

### Career Services Presentation

- Derek Dowdy, the new Director of Career Services, introduced the Career Center's career-readiness framework: visible, embedded, and connected. He explained that the Center is intended to connect and amplify career development already occurring across campus.
- Derek shared recent engagement data, including 243 incoming-student check-ins, 350 resume reviews through Handshake, and 325 students connecting with employers at a career fair. The winter career fair included approximately 60 students and 20 employers.
- Current and planned resources include career advising, the Career Closet, two IRIS professional-headshot booths in Schultz Library, the furnished Career Den, and a Career Studio in Schultz Library targeted for a February 1 launch.
- Derek highlighted the Take a Seawolf to Work program and invited staff to refer students early, identify student talent, share employer and alumni contacts, ask questions, and co-host programs.
- In response to questions about academic integration, Derek explained that the Center is working with faculty fellows, deans, and academic departments to inventory career-adjacent courses and provide resources that can be incorporated into syllabi and classroom spaces. The Center will serve as a wayfinder for students navigating internships and other experiential-learning opportunities.
- Derek reported that the Center is developing program-specific LinkedIn groups with faculty fellows serving as ambassadors. The initiative has begun with a small number of programs, and additional support is needed to establish groups across all programs. Aidan agreed to connect with Aisha, the faculty fellow, regarding a LinkedIn group for their college.
- When asked about measures of success, Derek noted that the Center is working to establish baseline data on student internships and other career outcomes. CSU-level dashboard work is also underway, with Rob Eyler overseeing qualitative data.

## Enrollment Recovery Update

- Ed Mills, Interim Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management, reported that fall headcount was 4,526 students, exceeding the internal goal of 4,400. The new-student headcount was 1,060, and the annualized projection, including summer enrollment, was 4,974.
- For spring 2027, the university had 1,046 applicants, 891 admits, and 602 deposits at the time of the report. The figures included dual-enrollment students. The projected spring headcount was 4,450.
- Ed described a growth trajectory toward approximately 5,382 students by 2030-31, supported by new academic programs or program reorganization and potentially the addition of flag football and baseball in 2028-29.
- Recruitment efforts are focused on seven regions. High-yield regions include Sonoma, Marin, Mendocino, Lake, Napa, Solano, and Sacramento; medium-yield regions include the San Francisco Bay Area, Central Valley, and Los Angeles; and lower-yield efforts include San Diego and Western Undergraduate Exchange recruitment.
- Enrollment initiatives include the Sonoma State Promise, direct and guaranteed admission, dual enrollment, and outreach to returning students. Beginning in fall 2027, the Sonoma State Promise will cover tuition and mandatory campus fees for eligible Pell Grant students; housing and meals are not included.
- In response to a question about dual enrollment, Ed explained that high school teachers certified by university faculty teach most college-level courses, while some courses are taught by university instructors. Although dual enrollment may shorten the time some students spend at Sonoma State, it currently supports headcount and creates a pipeline to the university. Enrollment and budget projections are being managed conservatively.
- Ed also reported that the university is recruiting a Director of Enrollment Marketing. The position will support segmented marketing by region and academic program and coordinate with academic programs, outreach, and enrollment staff.

## Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

**Kelly Clark**

**Secretary**

Date of Approval 11/19/26