

# 2025 P&S Constituent Communication Campaign Report

## Campaign Overview

In December 2024, P&S Councilors were asked to participate in the 3-3-3 Constituent Communication Campaign which involved:

- Engage with at least 3 constituents or P&S employees
- Ask at least 3 open-ended questions (see Appendix A)
- Take about 3 minutes after each encounter to record their notes from the conversation

At the February 2025 General Meeting, councilors were divided into 7 groups (5 in person, 2 online) where they were able to share their findings, discuss solutions, and then present out their major issues with the entire Council.

The goal was to encourage councilors to interact with P&S employees, gather information to enable anonymized feedback, and help identify actionable ways P&S Council could advance concerns or solutions.

In March 2024, members of the Community Relations and Advocacy (CRA) Committee met to compile all the notes from the February meeting (see select themes and actionable items and organize them into this report for consideration.

## Item 1: Onboarding

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Iowa State University's P&S Council hosted in-person onboarding for all new P&S employees. New P&S employees today are provided online orientation via Workday. Several groups noted that a return to in-person onboarding would be a positive proactive attempt to foster a positive work environment that could boost employee morale, retention and foster a sense of belonging within the ISU community. ISU offers in-person faculty onboarding with the Provost and the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), and students are provided programs like Destination Iowa State and Cyclone 101.

## Recommendation

P&S Council should request the reinstatement of full-day, in-person onboarding for all new P&S employees. This should be offered 2-4 times each year to capture new hires within the first few months of their onboarding. Managers should include onboarding training dates in their hiring communication. We also recommend that managers hired in new positions within ISU be provided with some type of evaluator training with their on-boarding.

## Committee Responsibility

We believe the combined **CRA and Peer Advocacy Committee** could take a lead role in working with UHR to design and host the onboarding events. Items that could be included are benefits selection, campus tour, parking, teams-based workgroups, ISU swag, and referrals to other campus resources. This would also be a good time for P&S Council members to explain what it means to be a P&S staff member and how Council's representation system works. We envision this being an expansion of the very successful new employee sessions that the P&S Peer Advocacy Committee currently offers twice a year.

## Item 2: UHR Transparency

Several groups identified inconsistencies across campus with respect to ISU's hiring and compensation model. Each year the P&S Council's Compensation and Benefits Committee compiles a report on this issue. The Professional Development Committee has hosted UHR workshops on the classification structure for the past two years. Nevertheless, there is still widespread dissatisfaction and confusion over UHR's classification and compensation structure. Feedback includes:

- Perception that UHR makes vital decisions about new hire salaries without requesting or considering input from the hiring unit;
- Clearer hiring guidance should be offered to the hiring unit;
- Guidance for supervisors on when it's appropriate to ask staff to take on responsibilities and roles above their pay grade; and ask that UHR review requests and responsibilities quickly. Could there be an appeal process to UHR when someone takes on more responsibilities but does not get compensated as "promised."
- Better communication regarding timelines for positions, roles, or organizational structural changes; and
- Availability of job descriptions at each level within a classification, and guidance on opportunities (process) for advancement.
- Employees need to know the process for either an appeal to a negative evaluation, or how to report other supervisor misconduct (i.e., documentation, reporting to UHR, other).

## Recommendation

We recommend that P&S Council advocate for:

- A workshop for supervisory (hiring decision makers) staff;
- Written reclassification and promotion guidance available via the website for all employees;

- Communicate timelines and expectations for decisions from UHR regarding reorganizations.

### Committee Responsibility

We believe the **Compensation and Benefits Committee** would be best suited to advocate with UHR for these items.

### Item 3: Supervisor Training

The quality of supervision for P&S employees is wildly inconsistent across campus. Some are supervised by staff and others by faculty. Feedback included that some long-time staff members have never received a performance review despite being required to certify receiving one in Workday. Some units on campus have set expectations that 40 hours per week are the minimum expectation for salaried employees. Expected work hours can be 50 to 60 hours per week with no extra compensation or workflex. There are inconsistencies within units on campus who do allow staff to workflex when responsibilities necessitate the extra time and/or the need to work remotely.

There was some consensus that there are individuals placed in supervisory roles with little to no training. Currently there is no preliminary required training, nor continuing education required for supervisors on campus. Key qualifications for a supervisory role should include:

- Effective people management skills, including remote and hybrid workers
- The ability to set and communicate clear performance expectations
- Experience conducting performance evaluations
- Knowledge of Iowa State workplace policies and procedures
- Proficiency in conflict resolution and management.

### Recommendations

We encourage the P&S Council to advocate for the following, albeit not required, but highly recommended.

- Ask UHR to reinstate the 12+ Supervisory Leadership Seminar Series.
- Create a university-sponsored management series for supervisors that must include evaluator training.
- Compile and publish a list of all supervisor trainings available on campus live, via Workday Learn, professional development, etc.; and
- Collaborate with Faculty Senate to encourage faculty participation in supervisor training.

### Committee Responsibility

We believe the **Professional Development Committee** would be best suited to gather the resources currently available on campus, and partner with UHR to develop training

opportunities. We recommend that a member of that committee serve as a liaison with Faculty Senate as well.

## Item 4: Workday Support

We are six years into the transition to Workday across campus. While there was a lot of outreach and training at the start of each implementation phase, with staff turnover and frequent updates, many feel that ongoing support is insufficient. There can be confusion about who can help, i.e., Finance, IT, UHR, etc.

### Recommendations

- Provide in-person or hybrid training on Workday related to specialized needs (i.e., advising, grants support, finance)
- Advocate for Microsoft Teams workgroups to help new Workday users (i.e. the advisor model)
- Consider an easy reference guide for who to contact with questions.

### Committee Responsibility

We believe the **Professional Development Committee** in conjunction with the **P&S Executive Committee** would be best suited for this project.

## Item 5: Communication

Iowa State primarily uses a “waterfall” approach to internal communication, where important information is meant to flow from the top of the organization to the bottom, often using P&S Council and Inside Iowa State as an amplification tool for their messages. With the release of the new [Segal Group Report](#) as reported in the March 13 edition of [Inside Iowa State](#), this is a great opportunity to make sure the interests of P&S staff are included in this revised approach to communication on campus.

### Recommendation

We recommend that P&S Council work with the Office of Strategic Relations and Communications to improve processes as they continue to “strengthen. . . messaging across campus.”

### Committee Responsibility

We believe the **P&S Executive Committee** would be best suited for this task, in particular, the Communications officer.

We recommend there also be more transparency regarding what the P&S Council does and continue gathering feedback from our constituents. Ask for feedback and discussion with during the council meeting. Could this be a time for “open discussion” on the agenda?

## Item 6: Workflex and/or Work from Home

It bears mentioning that almost all the 3-3-3 groups brought concerns about Workflex being inconsistently applied even across the same job titles and functions in different colleges. Each group also had constituent feedback that there were concerns that Workflex could be eliminated entirely.

### Recommendation

Advocate with UHR to include Workflex availability clearly prescribed in position descriptions and open employment notices.

## **Appendix A: 3-3-3 Instructions**

### **3-3-3 Constituent Feedback Campaign**

1. Challenge for each councilor to have a brief in-person check-in with at least three (3) of their constituents in their representation area between now and the next General Council meeting.
2. Ask three (3) open-ended questions. Examples are:
  - a. What's been on your mind at work lately? Any challenges or frustrations I can pass along?
  - b. If you could change one thing about how things work around here, what would it be?
  - c. Are there any tools or resources you wish you had to make your job easier?
  - e. What's one thing about the workplace that could be better for you or your team?
  - f. Do you think there's anything the council should know or focus on right now?
  - g. How's your work-life balance these days? Anything that could make it better?
  - h. Do you feel like communication between staff and leadership could be improved? If so, how?
  - i. Are there any small changes that could make teamwork or collaboration smoother for you?
  - j. What's something great that's happened at work recently? Maybe there's an idea there we can build on.
3. After each conversation, take three (3) minutes to jot down notes from your feedback. Bring these notes with you to the February meeting. We will form groups to do an activity with the information you gathered.