



INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS WORKGROUP (ICWG)

ANNUAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

The CUCSA Internal Communications Work Group (ICWG) focused its energies and efforts in 2009-2010 on the following concerns:

- **Optimizing Communication Within CUCSA** in the broadest sense, including not only the current CUCSA delegates and officers, but also alumni (past CUCSA participants), guests, campus constituents and friends;
- **Maintaining and Developing the CUCSA Website**, refining protocols and further developing working relationships with UCOP IT staff, updating content and standardizing formats, and creating a new “look and feel” for the site;
- **Expanding CUCSA’s Branding Program** by featuring the new logo in every place imaginable (e.g., on agendas and reports, in PowerPoint presentations, and on name tents and badges at CUCSA meetings) and reviewing and revising the CUCSA website to ensure consistent use of the CUCSA name and logo; and
- **Exploring Virtual Meeting Options** to replace the three-day face-to-face CUCSA meeting in December of 2009 (agreed to by the previous year’s delegation in an effort to reduce costs in this year of severe cuts to UC’s budget), including a review of online conferencing options, interface with UCOP staff and meeting coordination support to CUCSA.

The ICWG also offered several recommendations to next year’s CUCSA leadership and delegation:

- **Create a quarterly electronic newsletter (“CUCSA Talk”)** as a vehicle for the CUCSA leadership to report to the delegates and their constituents on their activities at the systemwide level, and also initiate dialogue and solicit feedback on important issues;
- **Design CUCSA branded stickers and lapel pins** featuring the CUCSA logo;
- **Include a CUCSA button on local campus/lab Staff Assembly websites** so you can click on the CUCSA logo to go to the CUCSA website;
- **Archive CUCSA photographs and pictures using Google Picasa** in a single place for future use;
- **Update the procedures checklist for locations hosting a CUCSA meeting** annually to ensure that it is current and reflects the experience from the most recent meetings in sufficient detail (a suggestion for the Policies and Procedures work group);
- **Improve organizational communication strategies** to include more opportunities for delegates to interact with each other and hear each other’s points of view, so that new and better ideas can emerge from the discussion, both in face-to-face and virtual meetings; and
- **Examine the roles of the CUCSA ICWG members** to give each person a specific field of focus, and to ensure that the person who agrees to serve in a given role because of expertise s/he already has, such as webmaster or editor, is not deprived of the chance to grow and develop in new areas.

Optimizing Communication Within CUCSA

The CUCSA Internal Communications Work Group (ICWG) worked to further develop effective internal communication strategies and mechanisms to optimize communication among the CUCSA delegates and officers, and to establish and maintain contact with CUCSA alumni, campus constituents, guests and friends. To this end, the group established two e-mail lists (using Google Groups), one for the current delegation (CUCSA officers and delegates) and the other for alumni (past CUCSA participants).

These lists have enabled the CUCSA leadership and the delegates to communicate quickly and effectively with each other, especially important in light of frequent requests from University leaders for staff input on hot topics with very short response times. With the creation of the alumni list, the leadership has also been able to easily inform past CUCSA participants about special CUCSA events, such as the annual dinner and silent auction, held this year during the Spring meeting at the UC Davis Medical Center.

When delegates and officers come to the end of their CUCSA service, their information will be moved from the delegate list to the alumni list, at the same time that new members are added, so that these lists will remain current.

CUCSA also purchased Zoomerang, an online survey that was used for the first time by the Staff Morale work group to get feedback from members of local campus staff assemblies, thus adding another communication tool that can be used with campus constituents, guests and friends as well as the CUCSA delegation.

Maintaining and Developing the CUCSA Website

Prior to this year's first CUCSA meeting, Gerard Au, the incoming junior delegate from UCLA, agreed to take on the role of serving as the CUCSA webmaster and primary liaison with information technology staff (IT) at UCOP where the CUCSA website is hosted, and thus automatically became a member of the ICWG. During this second year of ICWG's existence, the group created a new website format, refined the protocol for making changes to the site and improved the effectiveness of CUCSA's communications and relationship with UCOP IT staff, making the process of getting updates posted far more efficient and seamless than in the past. Other accomplishments in this area included updating the website's "look and feel", standardizing the format of all files posted on the website (to PDF), and updating our file archives to be as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.

Expanding CUCSA's Branding Program

Having developed and obtained approval for the new CUCSA logo last year, the ICWG created many new CUCSA-branded templates to be used by both the CUCSA leadership and the delegate. Throughout the year, the new logo appeared on agendas,

reports, Powerpoint presentations, and name tents and badges at CUCSA meetings and events. The CUCSA website banner is also being revised to feature the new logo, and ICWG members have edited key sections (i.e., the Welcome message and the “History” section) of the website to ensure consistent use of the CUCSA name throughout (as opposed to “the Council” or other variations). CUCSA greeting cards featuring the logo were also produced that can be used for several occasions and purposes, such as sending thank-you notes to CUCSA guests and hosts, and accompanying gifts and awards from CUCSA.

Exploring Virtual Meeting Options

Due to the severity of the cuts to the University’s budget for this fiscal year, the CUCSA delegation agreed to replace the December quarterly face-to-face meeting with a virtual meeting. The ICWG worked with the CUCSA leadership to review various online conferencing options, such as GoToMeeting, used extensively by the ICWG for its own internal communication, and ReadyTalk, used by UCOP and made available to CUCSA on a charge-per-use basis. The CUCSA officers ultimately decided to hold a meeting at UCOP to be attended by those in the northern campuses at which invited guests would speak, with delegates from southern campuses having the option of participating by videoconference at a facility at UCR. The ICWG provided meeting coordination support to CUCSA, booking a room with videoconference capabilities at UCOP and securing the services of UCOP staff to set up the meeting and communicate with their counterparts at other participating campuses. The Riverside site was only used by members of the delegation from UCR, while some campuses, such as UCLA, connected to the meeting via audioconference only.

Recommendations

The ICWG offers several recommendations to next year’s CUCSA leadership and delegation:

- **Create a quarterly electronic newsletter (“CUCSA Talk”):** This would provide a vehicle for the CUCSA leadership to report to the delegates and their constituents on their activities at the systemwide level, and also initiate dialogue and solicit feedback on important issues. This newsletter could be available with two levels of access, one for delegates only, and the other for the general public. The latter would be very useful in keeping staff assembly members at campus and lab locations apprised of CUCSA initiatives and events. The ICWG offered “CUCSA Talk” as a possible name for this proposed electronic publication because it could provide opportunities for dynamic dialogue in both internal and external settings.
- **Design CUCSA branded stickers and lapel pins:** By creating stickers featuring the CUCSA logo, the delegation would have the ability to create instant

CUCSA branded items, by affixing them to folders, mugs, and other objects. The ICWG also suggests that, at some point in the future, CUCSA may wish to replace its current lapel pins (featuring the letters of CUCSA on an image of the state of California) with a new design featuring the CUCSA logo.

- **Include a CUCSA button on local campus/lab Staff Assembly websites:** The ICWG displayed a pilot CUCSA logo “button” on the UCLA Staff Assembly home page. If you click on the CUCSA logo, it takes you to the CUCSA website. The ICWG encourages this to be incorporated on local Staff Assembly websites at all locations.
- **Archive CUCSA photographs and pictures using Google Picasa:** The ICWG recommends that all photographs taken at CUCSA meetings and events be archived in a single place for future use, using Google Picasa software. Other photographs of staff provided by CUCSA delegates could also be stored here. A standard consent form should be developed so that those photographed can give CUCSA permission to use the photos on the website, if desired.
- **Update the procedures checklist for locations hosting a CUCSA meeting:** The ICWG requests that the Policies and Procedures Work Group annually update the information provided to locations that will be hosting an upcoming CUCSA meeting, to ensure that it is current and reflects the experience from the most recent meetings in sufficient detail. For example, a recent location was unaware at first that the host committee is responsible for obtaining funds from their local administration to cover all costs of the meeting, and that CUCSA does not provide any funding for the quarterly meetings (with the exception of reimbursing the travel expenses of its senior delegates and officers). It would also be helpful to spell out how the agenda is developed for each meeting and clarifying the roles and interface between the officers and the local host committee.
- **Improve organizational communication strategies:**

CUCSA meeting interaction “around the table”: The ICWG received feedback from many of this year’s delegates that they would like to see more time set aside in the quarterly CUCSA meetings for shared discussion and interaction with each other. It was pointed out that hearing other points of view often leads to new and better ideas emerging from the group. An example of this kind of dynamic communication that was cited by delegates was the discussion of the leadership’s proposal to create a “Chancellor of the Year” award and the subsequent feedback that led to the concept of a “CUCSA Outstanding Chancellor Award” that would not need to be given annually or limited to only one awardee.

December virtual meeting: Since it is anticipated that CUCSA may again replace the December quarterly meeting with some sort of alternative “virtual

meeting”, the ICWG strongly encourages the leadership and next year’s ICWG to explore how to successfully implement this to include real-time interactions among the delegates and work group members.

Spontaneous “as needed” ad hoc virtual meetings: The ICWG advises next year’s delegation to take the next steps to employ available technology (such as GoToMeeting or iLinc, apparently popular with many at UCOP) to hold virtual meetings to discuss items with short response deadlines as a group, to provide the benefit of “around the table” insights noted above. Those not available to attend would be able to provide input via e-mail. Similar approaches could and should be adopted for work groups to work with each other between the regular CUCSA meetings.

- **Examine the roles of the CUCSA ICWG members:** This year’s ICWG recommends that next year’s work group develop other roles for individual work group members to take on, in addition to the CUCSA webmaster position. Examples might include having different members assigned their own “beats” to cover (such as the CUCSA Chair and/or Secretary, or the Staff Advisors to the Regents), or to serve as Newsletter Editor. The members of the ICWG note that an important part of being a CUCSA delegate is having the opportunity to develop new skills and explore new horizons, and cautions that care should be taken to ensure that the person who agrees to serve in a given role because of expertise s/he already has, such as webmaster or editor, is not deprived of the chance to grow and develop in new areas.