

Assistants to the President at 18 Months: White House Turnover Among the Highest Ranking Staff and Positions

Martha Joynt Kumar, Director, White House Transition Project and Emeritus Professor, Department of Political Science, Towson University

“It’s a difficult pace for many to keep up with. Look at how many people no longer work here [White House] [now] I think it’s a much more sophisticated, streamlined operation with fewer people.” Kellyanne Conway, interview with Eric Bolling, CRTV, 7/31/2018

If the most important resource a President has is his time, in second place is his staff. For it is a well-functioning staff that allows him to have the time to spend on his priorities with quality information and advice to back up his decision making process.

Assistant to the President-level staff. By statute and by budget, the top-ranking class of commissioned White House officials are titled Assistant to the President. Currently limited with some flexibility to 25 staffers, Assistants to the President form the principals who provide policy recommendations to the President and constitute the most influential group of White House advisers a President has. Over the years, the numbers of Assistants provided for by statute has grown from 17 in the Reagan years to the 25 of recent years. Among those with Assistant to the President titles in most White Houses include the National Security Advisor, the Chief of Staff, the White House Counsel, the Press Secretary, top domestic and economic advisers, and other aides at the top of the staff ladder. The turnover of the Assistant-level staff and the continuity of the titles assigned to them carries important weight in the stability and permanence of the staff and the functions they perform as well as the ability of a President to get a quick start once he comes into the presidency.

*** At the 18 month mark, President Trump had the highest turnover of Assistant to the President-level staff of any of the most recent six presidents.** Kellyanne Conway is correct that “many people no longer work here.” The figures for losses at the 18 months point for Assistant to the President-level staff members appointed during the first calendar year follow [January 20, 2017 – January 20, 2018 and comparable dates for the five other presidents]. The numbers may seem small but the impact of the loss of an Assistant to the President can be high in terms of the stability of the White House operation. The percentages of loss and the numbers are: Trump 61% [25]; Obama 16% [5]; George W. Bush 14% [3]; Clinton 50% [13]; George H. W. Bush 18% [3]; Reagan 26% [5].

As of July 31, 2018, during the first 18 months, 53 people titled Assistant to the President served in positions on the Trump White House staff. That figure far surpasses those of the earlier presidents in a comparable 18 month period: Obama 32 George W. Bush 23, Clinton 29, GHW Bush 18, and Reagan 20. See Table 1 on Assistant Staff Turnover on page 5 and Appendix A for those who have held Assistant positions in the Trump White House, who left and who remains. The turnover theme is repeated throughout the staff with a high turnover of jobs from high [\$179,700] to low [\$40,800] salary. Reuters reports the July 2017 and 2018 “Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel” demonstrate the lack of continuity throughout the White House with 40% of the approximately 375 people included in the lists in the 2017 Report no longer on the staff as of the 2018 Report. See Table 1 for Assistant to the President staff turnover.

*** Position title turnover of Assistants to the President reflects a similar disruptive replacement pattern.** The Trump White House has gone through a much larger number of

Assistant to the President position titles than was true with the earlier presidential Assistant staffs. With restrictions only on the number of Assistants to the President and none on the composition of Assistant titles a President can create and use, there have been 43 different Assistant titles used in the Trump White House while, except for Clinton with 32, other recent presidents used no more than 26. Trump White House titles such as Assistant to the President and Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison; Assistant to the President and Chief Strategist and Senior Counselor; Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental and Technological Initiatives; all fell into disuse once the original staff members left their White House positions. While the other five presidents had five or fewer titles that were not reused in a similar 18 month time period, Trump had 13. For Assistant to the President title information, see Table 2 on page 10 for Assistant to the President position title turnover and also Appendix B.

*** White House staff stability is linked to effective early presidential transition planning.** Out of the six presidents studied here, those who extensively prepared for their transitions, faced few staff resignations and almost no Assistant title changes. They knew what their agendas were, how they planned to spool them out and implement them. Additionally, they thought through the qualities the staff they hired would need in order carry out these responsibilities and do so swiftly in order to take advantage of the good will that exists in the early days. With well-planned transitions, Presidents Obama and George W. Bush had among the most effective early months of the modern presidency, which is reflected in their low staff and title turnover. On the other hand, Presidents Clinton and Trump had early staff turmoil. President Clinton focused on selecting his Cabinet and only announcing his senior White House picks six day before the Inauguration. President Trump fired Governor Chris Christie, his transition director, the day after the election and then with Vice President-elect Pence in charge, planning began almost anew. The result of their lack of a well-planned White House entry was that both presidents had high staff turnover at the Assistant level and, in Trump's case, title turnover as well.

With both presidents, the staff turnover point to early leadership staffing decisions focused on who to appoint, especially campaign workers, rather than concentrating on the functions associated with White House operations. Once a President is in for a few months, he and his top staff realize, if they haven't before they came in, that White Houses follow particular organizational patterns no matter which party controls the executive branch as many of the needs are similar.

*** Positions related to function are central to a stable White House operation.** At some point during their first 18 months, presidents and their key advisers realize the top ranked positions that preceded them are going to be important for them as well. They look at the posts related to the decision making process [Chief of Staff; Staff Secretary, Personnel, Counsel], the key policy offices [National Security Council, National Economic Policy, Domestic Policy Council], and those that concentrate on managing a President's outside relationships. Those offices are: Legislative Affairs; Public Liaison; Intergovernmental Affairs; Press; Communications. These offices are key to a stable White House because they organize the decision making process, handle presidential policy, and manage a President's critical relationships. Gradually as they work through a large staff bench, the Trump White House staff have followed their predecessors and focused on meeting the twin needs of satisfying the President and appointing people with experience required to carry out a needed function.

*** Chaos or Energy: White House staff organizations reflect the choices of the President they serve.** What some see as staff chaos, President Trump views as staff energy. Presidents view staff success on their own terms, where their highest priority may or may not be their capacity to develop and carry out policy sustainable among the branches and levels of government. Having a hierarchical system with clear lines of authority was an organizational priority for both Presidents Bush and, to a lesser extent, for Reagan as well. That has not been the case with President

Martha Joynt Kumar - Director, White House Transition Project and Emeritus
Professor, Department of Political Science, Towson University

Trump. Under Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, many of the Assistants to the President and some of their deputies as well, reported in to the President without first going through the Chief. Similarly, today there are also people inside and outside of the White House who speak directly with the President. President Trump often acts and speaks publicly without first consulting his staff as he did recently on the status of white landholders in South Africa where the President relied on Fox News's Tucker Carlson for his information than on his State Department and intelligence community.

While most presidents have chaffed at the idea of having high staff turnover, President Trump has defended his staffing system and commented on his satisfaction with it. August 30th, he attacked news organizations for their portrayal of the White House. "They love to portray chaos in the White House when they know that chaos doesn't exist – just a 'smooth running machine' with changing parts." That is a Trump theme he has emphasized throughout his presidency. What others see as chaos, President Trump views as energy produced by competing voices. "It's got tremendous energy. It's tough. I like conflict. I like having two people with different points of view, and I certainly have that. And then, I make a decision. But I like watching it, I like seeing it, and I think it's the best way to go. I like different points of view." He feels little of the pressure previous presidents have felt to create a hierarchical system with clear lines of authority for permissions and reporting. In a recent interview with Bloomberg News, President Trump declared his White House "is a smooth running machine with some changes." A lot of changes.

Assistants to the President at 18 Months: White House Turnover Among the Highest Ranking Staff and Positions ¹¹

Martha Joynt Kumar, Director, White House Transition Project and Emeritus Professor,
Department of Political Science, Towson University

"It's a difficult pace for many to keep up with. Look at how many people no longer work here [White House] [now] I think it's a much more sophisticated, streamlined operation with fewer people."
Kellyanne Conway, interview with Eric Bolling, CRTV, 7/31/2018¹²

In varying degrees, all government institutions are hierarchically organized with a key group of staff at the top managing the decision making structure and personnel carrying out the orders coming from the top. In that way, the White House is no different from other institutions with a core of approximately two dozen people atop a framework of around 450-500 paid White House staff, plus detailees assigned to the White House from other government agencies. The top-top-ranked White House staff are commissioned officers who carry the title Assistant to the President. Among people traditionally holding the title are the Chief of Staff, the National Security Advisor, the directors of the National Economic Council, the Domestic Council, and the Press Secretary. The group of approximately two dozen plus a few additional staff form a president's core leadership team making turnover at this level particularly important for the stability and direction of the presidential decision making process. I do not count Detailees from other parts of the government in my counts of Assistants to the President as they are not regular employees of the White House Office.

The Assistants to the President are the most significant staff people a president appoints as they reflect his leadership and management styles as well as his policy priorities. Additionally, it is this group of aides who form the principals group making recommendations to the president on policies and initiatives as well as coordinating and implementing his decisions from the White House level. Staff losses at the top level bring about disruption at the levels below.

Commissioned Officers: Assistants to the President Rank Highest Among Aides. The top White House staff in both pay and responsibilities are commissioned officers who get their positions from and are responsible to the president who signs their formal commission. There are three levels of commissioned officers at the White House: Assistant to the President, Deputy Assistant to the President, Special Assistant to the President. The Assistants form the highest paid (\$179,700 for 2017 and 2018) core leadership group of principals making recommendations to the president while the Deputy Assistants are those who develop alternatives for the Assistants to whom they report. The Special Assistants are the specialists who make arrangements and carry out plans decided on by the commissioned officers at the two levels above them. A president is currently restricted by law and budget to 25 Assistants to the President, 25 Deputy Assistants to the President, and approximately 70 Special Assistants though there is some room to add a few more at the top levels.¹³

Congress has gradually increased the numbers of Assistants to the President from 17 in the Reagan years. In President Trump's case, in 2017 there were staff at the top level who are not or did not take a salary (Ivanka Trump, Jared Kushner, Reed Cordish) and two who took \$30,000 instead of the top salary (Chris Liddell and Gary Cohn). While Cordish and Cohn left, in 2018 the remaining three aides have the same pay practices. The staff list in Appendix A

includes those who hold or have held the Assistant to the President or equivalent title at the highest pay level [Counselor to the President, Senior Advisor] along with the announcement dates of their appointment and, if relevant, their resignation dates as well as the type of office [process, policy, relationships] where they served. Unless the White House formally announced when people were appointed or left, there are sometimes inconsistencies among sources on announcement dates. Some staff members, Sean Spicer and Hope Hicks, for example, stayed on for several weeks after their resignations were announced. Others did the same making it difficult to say when individuals left the White House complex. Where I can, I include the announcement dates for staff resignations because once people know you are leaving, the staff reshuffle begins. The jockeying for position doesn't wait until people walk out the door.

White House Staff Turnover at the 18 Month Mark

Assistant to the President level turnover is much higher in the Trump White House than was the case in other recent administrations. Comparing six administrations, the turnover rate for the Trump White House among Assistant to the President top-rank positions is extraordinarily high. There are two aspects of turnover: leaving the Assistant to the President position a person is appointed to and, second, leaving the White House rather than taking another position there at the Assistant to the President level. Basically, a change in White House jobs represents a lateral move where the staff person continues to hold the title Assistant to the President. Having the same people even if they are sitting in different chairs represents less disruption to White House operations than having the staff leave the building and new people take their places.

President Trump had the highest turnover of Assistant to the President-level staff of any of the most recent six presidents. Kellyanne Conway is correct that "many people no longer work here." The figures for losses at the 18 months point for Assistant to the President-level staff members appointed during the first calendar year [January 20, 2017 – January 20, 2018 and comparable dates for the five other presidents] follow. The numbers may seem small but the impact of the loss of an Assistant to the President can be high in terms of the stability of the White House operation. The percentages of loss and the numbers are: Trump 61% [25]; Obama 16% [5]; George W. Bush 14% [3]; Clinton 50% [13]; George H. W. Bush 18% [3]; Reagan 26% [5].¹⁴ As of July 31, 2018, at some point during the first 18 months, 53 people titled Assistant to the President served in positions on the Trump White House staff. That figure far surpasses those of the earlier presidents in a comparable 18 month period: Obama 32, George W. Bush 23, Clinton 29, GHW Bush 18, and Reagan 20. See Appendix A for those who have held Assistant positions in the Trump White House, who left and who remains.

Table 1: Turnover of Assistant to the President Staff at 18 Months

	A	B	C	D	E	F
President	% and Number of Assistants to the President Appointed in Year One Who Left Positions by 18 Months	Number Assistants to the President Hired in Year One	Number of Year One Assistants Staff Remaining in Position at 18 Months	Number of Assistants Leaving Original Assistant Post and Remaining in Another Assistant Position at 18 Months	Number Assistants Hired During the 6 Months Following the One Year Mark	Total Number of People to Serve in Assistant to the President Positions in 18 Months
Trump *	61 % / 25	41	16	1	12	53
Obama	16 % / 5	32	27	0	0	32
G. W. Bush	14 % / 3	21	18	0	2	23
Clinton	50 % / 13	26	13	8	3	29
G.H.W. Bush	18 % / 3	17	14	0	1	18
Reagan	26 % / 5	19	14	0	1	20

* Year One runs from January 20, 2017 to January 20, 2018 and a comparable 18 month time period for earlier administrations.

The turnover theme is repeated throughout the staff with a high turnover of jobs from high [\$179,700] to low [\$40,800] salary.¹⁵ The July 2017 and 2018 “Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel” demonstrate the lack of continuity throughout the White House with 40% of the approximately 375 people included in the lists in the 2017 Report no longer on the staff as of the 2018 Report.¹⁶

With the exception of Keith Kellogg, who works at the same Assistant level, but with reduced responsibilities, 61% of those who held the title of Assistant to the President when they came into the White House during President Trump’s first year in office are no longer there. During his first 18 months in office, President Trump lost 25 people who held the title of Assistant to the President or the equivalent. He lost 17 of his Day One group of Assistants to the President who came into the presidency with him plus eight of those replacing original Assistants. There are 10 Day One Assistants to the President who are in their positions at the end of 18 months into President Trump’s tenure. That high turnover brings with it an instability in how a White House operates, an outcome that leads to lack of policy and communications coordination as well as disruption in an established decision making process. Effective planning for events several months out is difficult to do when top staff leaders are in flux.

Since the President and his Chief of Staff have trimmed their top-ranked staff to people they know and trust, the operation has slowed down the turnover. Since February, there are 12 Assistants to the President who have come into the White House.¹⁷ Of those 12, six began their White House work only in the last two months. Thus, one would not expect them to leave in such a short period of time. I have settled on observing at the 18 month mark what happened to those coming in during the first full year President Trump held office.

The Impact of the Loss of Assistants to the President

In order to assess the impact of White House staff turnover, the staff is divided into three basic types of positions that form the White House staff. They are process offices, policy ones, and those devoted to relationships outside of the White House. Process offices are those devoted primarily to managing internal White House issues and decision making, such as the Staff Secretary, the Counsel, the Chief of Staff. Policy offices are ones dedicated to handling substantive issues as is the case with the National Economic Council, the National Security

Council, and the Domestic Policy Council. The third group of offices are ones devoted to relationships with those outside of the White House, including the Press Office, the Office of Communications, Legislative Affairs, Cabinet Affairs, Public Liaison, Intergovernmental Affairs, and Political Affairs.

Process Offices – ones dealing with the creation and management of the decision making system as well as with its implementation – have been particularly hard hit with changes in the Chief of Staff's position and his deputies as well as with the Staff Secretary leaving, a new Personnel director, and soon there will be a new White House Counsel. In the earlier administrations compared here, Presidents Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush all had one person serve continually through the 18 month period as Assistant to the President heading each of four key process offices: Chief of Staff, Counsel, Personnel, and Staff Secretary. That has not been the case with President Trump who is the only one of the six to lose a Chief of Staff at the six month mark. The only other President to lose a Chief in the 18 month period was President Clinton whose Chief of Staff, Mack McLarty became Counselor to the President at the same title level just at the 18 month mark. While Obama had a change in his Counsel and director of Presidential Personnel, the other two offices were headed by the same appointee through the period. Clinton had changes in Personnel and Counsel as well as Chief of Staff.

When you change a Chief of Staff, you bring in a new management team with an altered decision making and enforcement structure. There are changes in the Chief's office beyond moving from Reince Priebus to John Kelly as Chief of Staff. The position of Deputy Chief of Staff with responsibility for carrying out the Chief's orders has passed to four people within 16 months. Katie Walsh had the position when Reince Priebus was Chief, and it passed to Kirstjen Nielsen when John Kelly took over the post. While she was there, the position was renamed to while she was there to indicate her role as Principal Deputy Chief of Staff. After Nielsen left the White House in the fall and became Secretary of Homeland Security in early December, the position remained vacant until February 2018 when a White House press release announced the appointment of James Carroll to the deputy position.¹⁸ Then in June, Zachary Fuentes, the other aide Kelly brought with him when he came from the Department of Homeland Security, took over the position shortly after Carroll left for an administration post outside of the White House. Without a settled core leadership group of his own, Kelly has had difficulty coordinating White House offices and staff. When Staff Secretary Rob Porter left the White House, Kelly lost a key lieutenant who knew well how a White House functions, and how to coordinate policy and people. He also had first-hand experience on the Hill, which Kelly does not.

In the Trump White House, at the end of Year One the Office of White House Counsel and the Office of Presidential Personnel were the two offices headed by an Assistant to the President to have their original appointee serving as head of the office. In February, though, Johnny DeStefano, who headed Personnel, was given a significantly expanded portfolio and the Personnel position was reduced to the Deputy level. For the Counsel's Office, President Trump tweeted on August 29th that White House Counsel Don McGahn would be leaving in the fall.¹⁹ While there are losses in the Counsel's office, some Assistant-level staff left for other positions within the administration or in the judiciary. Now that McGahn will soon be leaving, the pace of resignations can be expected to increase.

The Trump White House has few senior staff with White House experience from earlier administrations, but one person who does, Joe Hagin, left July 20th. His loss is a particularly important one because as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations in the George W. Bush White House as well as holding the same position in the Trump one, Hagin knows the rhythms of a White House. He is an expert on security measures and arrangements and was at the center of White House structural and organizational changes in the Trump and George W. Bush administrations as well as knowing how to arrange events and presidential travel. He organized

the Singapore trip where President Trump met with Kim Jung-Un, for example. Former Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten said of Hagin and his time in the Trump White House: "As turbulent as this White House often appears, without Joe Hagin there, I think it would be considerably more turbulent."²⁰

Policy Offices in the Trump White House have witnessed a sharp turnover at the Assistant to the President level more so than was true of Presidents Obama, George W. Bush, Clinton, and George H. W. Bush. President Reagan experienced changes in national security and domestic policy areas somewhat similar to what Trump has experienced. There are four basic policy offices in a contemporary White House: The National Security Council, the National Economic Council, the Domestic Policy Council, and the Homeland Security and Counterterrorism adviser. In his 18 months in office, President Trump has had leadership changes at the NSC (3 National Security Advisors or 4 if you count Acting National Security Advisor), NEC, Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, which NSC adviser John Bolton has brought into the NSC and not filled. Only the Domestic Policy Council has the same Assistant to the President, Andrew Bremberg, leading the office.

Four of President Trump's predecessors – Presidents Obama, George W. Bush, Clinton, and George H. W. Bush – had no changes in who headed the four offices. While the National Economic Council and the Homeland Security and Counterterrorism adviser did not exist for all of those years, their White House leadership teams in these economic and security areas was consistent with no changes in the first 18 months. President Reagan, however, made leadership changes in both the National Security Council and with his domestic and economic policy office. There were two offices then that cover the four current ones. He brought in a second National Security Advisor when Richard Allen left before the end of Year One and a domestic and economic policy adviser when Martin Anderson went back to California in early 1982.

Of all of the policy offices in the Trump White House, the National Security Council staff has seen a constant swirl in its leadership level. With a third person, John Bolton, or four when you count Keith Kellogg serving in February as the acting advisor, now serving as President Trump's National Security Advisor, the turnover in the position represents the highest 18 month turnover in the history of the National Security Advisor position. For an office that requires consistency in managing foreign and national security policy, the staff changes represent a disruption in policy direction. In Bolton's case and to a lesser extent when H. R. McMaster came in, both replaced many of the Deputy Assistants to the President, and the Special Assistants heading the dozen directorates, which meant a real change in direction for the office. Though not as dramatic as the NSC example, there is also a change in leadership at the National Economic Council where the president chose Larry Kudlow to replace the original director, Gary Cohn. Kudlow's title – Assistant to the President for Economic Policy - differs from Cohn's Assistant to the President and Director of the National Economic Council. Kudlow's role has more of a public side to it than Cohn's did. Kudlow is explaining administration policy in his regular television appearances. Key support staff have left or are leaving, such as Shahira Knight, Deputy Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Deputy Director of the NEC, who was planning to leave the White House in June to join the Clearing House Association.²¹ In the end, she was promoted to the Assistant level to take over the Office of Legislative Affairs once Marc Short left at the end of the 18 month period.

One of the factors complicating policy development in the Trump White House is the overlap that exists between offices sharing responsibilities as well as ancillary councils the President created. The Domestic Council staff, headed by Andrew Bremberg, is stable with little turnover, but Bremberg shares policy responsibilities with Stephen Miller who is Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Policy. Immigration policy, a signature item for President Trump, is one of Miller's responsibilities. Councils have been an alternate policy center as well. President Trump disbanded three policy councils he established: the business oriented

Strategic Development Group [later renamed the Strategic and Policy Council], the American Manufacturing Council, and the Advisory Council on Infrastructure. That still leaves others that are operating, such as the National Space Council, the National Council for the American Worker.

Offices Managing a President's Relationships focus on White House connections with external institutions and groups. President Trump has had difficulty settling on an organizational framework and finding suitable leadership for offices dealing with a president's outside relationships. Of the six key offices dealing with external groups and institutions – Legislative Affairs, Communications, Press, Public Liaison, Political Affairs, and Intergovernmental Affairs – President Trump had leadership changes that impact all of these offices. These offices have been hard hit in part as well because there are multiple overlapping authorities. While these are offices managing the President's political, legislative, intergovernmental relationships, the Trump White House layered over them two staff members dedicated to watching over their work. Reince Priebus gave his deputy, Rick Dearborn, the title of Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative, Cabinet, Intergovernmental Affairs and Implementation. Once Dearborn left in mid-spring, Kelly did not replicate the same responsibilities for the Deputy Chief of Staff position, but rather had Chris Liddell become a deputy for policy coordination retaining the title of Assistant to the President. At the same time, though, President Trump wanted someone to oversee some of the relationship

Unhappy with the way the offices were working, in December President Trump charged Johnny DeStefano, the director of the Office of Presidential Personnel, with overseeing Political Affairs, Public Liaison, and Intergovernmental Affairs. In February, he made permanent DeStefano's role focusing on the operation of several offices. His title changed to from Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel to Assistant to the President and Counselor to the President. The announcement of the February 9, 2018 change described DeStefano's unusual role: "Mr. DeStefano will oversee the Office of Presidential Personnel, Political Affairs, and Public Liaison."²² With this appointment, President Trump is making permanent an overseer function for an area that has been particularly troubled in delivering what the President wants from the offices. In effect, DeStefano is the Assistant to the President for all three of these offices as each is now headed by a Deputy Assistant to the President, not someone at the Assistant level. That makes a difference for the leaders of these offices as they are not routinely members of principals meetings as Assistants are.

With changes to all of the six offices, President Trump's experience is very different than that of his recent predecessors, except for President Clinton. Clinton had leadership changes in four of the six – Legislative Affairs, Communications, Intergovernmental Affairs, Political Affairs – with both Presidents Bush at the opposite end with no changes. Obama had one change – Communications – while Reagan had two, Congressional Affairs and Political Affairs. Consistency in the leadership of these offices is important for developing long range strategy to get initiatives adopted by Congress and elsewhere through long and short range communications and political strategies.

Until he left the White House on July 20th, Legislative Affairs headed by Marc Short provided an example of a stable structure and staff while other offices are experiencing changes in leadership. By appointing Bill Shine as Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications, the president has created yet another official in the communications area but not in a position that previously existed. Not only is Trump experimenting with people, he also is creating a new way for his White House to organize the communications function. Shine's appointment means a change in leadership for a seventh time beginning with the pre-inauguration announcement of Jason Miller as the first director followed by his withdrawal and then sequential appointments of Sean Spicer, Michael Dubke, Spicer for a second time, Anthony Scaramucci, Hope Hicks, and now Shine. Having so many communications leaders in a short period of time has resulted in

poor communications strategy development and implementation. The same has been true of the turnover in the Public Liaison operation, which is focused on coordinating outside groups to support the president’s initiatives. Turnover has consequences in presidential planning operations and in the effectiveness of strategies coordinating and implementing initiatives.

Assistant to the President Position Title Turnover

Title turnover of Assistants to the President position titles reflects a similar disruptive replacement pattern as staff change. Accompanying the turnover in staff is the pattern of positions not being filled after the original occupant left. While recent presidents followed the hiring practices they came in with to choose their Assistants to the President for the first year or so, the Trump White House has a different pattern. No recent administration has chosen to discontinue so many positions that it originally established for the top ranked staff. The Trump White House has run through a much larger number of Assistant to the President titles than was true with earlier presidential Assistant staffs. With no restrictions on the composition of Assistant titles a President can create and use, there have been 43 different Assistant titles used in the Trump White House while, except for Clinton with 32, other recent presidents used no more than 26.²³ While other presidents had five or fewer titles that were not reused in a similar 18 month time period, Trump had 13. See Appendix B for Assistant to the President Position Titles.

Table 2: Turnover of Year One Assistant to the President Position Titles at 18 Month Mark

	A	B	C	D	E
President	Total Number Assistant Titles Used For 18 Months	Total Number of Continuing Year One Assistant Positions at 18 Months	Number of Year One Titles Discontinued / Not Filled	Number of Year One Titles Altered	New Assistant Positions After One Year Mark
Trump	43	20	13	6	4
Obama	26	24	0	2	0
G. W. Bush	22	18	1	1	2
Clinton	32	23	5	0	4
G.H.W. Bush	16	14	1	1	0
Reagan	16	12	0	4	0

There are four aspects to the turnover of Assistant to the President titles that speak to the turnover of staff as well. First, some of the titles have not continued in use because the specific person they were designed for left the White House and there was no further need for it. Trump White House titles such as Assistant to the President and Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison; Assistant to the President and Chief Strategist and Senior Counselor; Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental and Technological Initiatives, all fell into disuse once the original staff members, Omarosa Manigault, Steve Bannon, and Reed Cordish, left their White House positions. Other posts, such as the combined one of Press Secretary and Communications Director, have not been repeated since Sean Spicer left. Dina Powell had two titles tailored for her – Assistant to the President and Senior Counselor of Economic Initiatives – and then when she went to the NSC, she had the title of Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategy. Neither title has been used after she left the positions. The full list of titles and changes is found in Endnote 6 as well as on the staff list in Appendix A.

Second, some staff continued in the same job but had an alteration in their title, which sometimes signaled changes in the emphasis in their relationships or their work. Ivanka Trump, for example, had a 2017 formal title of First Daughter and Advisor to the President. In 2018, her title changed to Advisor to the President and dropped her familial relationship as the defining aspect of her position. There were some who worked in the same office and in the same area of responsibility, but their title was either upgraded or downgraded. Marcia Lee Kelly heading Management and Administration moved from a Deputy Assistant to the President to the Assistant level. On the other hand, after the first occupants left, Presidential Personnel and Director of the Office of Public Liaison, the posts were downgraded from the Assistant to the Deputy level.

Third, the title turnover points to a focus during the transition of creating White House staff positions for those who the President-elect and his New York transition team wanted to reward. Rather than developing a staffing system based on functions associated with the patterns of past White House organizational needs, the Trump operation saw placing campaign and loyal Trump supporters as a top priority. Out of the six presidents studied here, those who extensively prepared for their transitions, faced few staff resignations and almost no Assistant title changes. They knew what their agendas were, how they planned to spool them out, and implement them. Additionally, they thought through the qualities the staff they hired would need in order carry out these responsibilities and do so swiftly in order to take advantage of the good will that exists in the early days. With well-planned transitions, Presidents Obama and George W. Bush had among the most effective early months of the modern presidency, which is reflected in their low staff and title turnover. On the other hand, Presidents Clinton and Trump had early staff turmoil. President Clinton focused on selecting his Cabinet and only announcing his senior White House picks six day before the Inauguration. President Trump fired Governor Chris Christie, his transition director, the day after the election and then with Vice President-elect Pence in charge, planning began almost anew. The result of their lack of a well-planned White House entry was that both presidents had high staff turnover at the Assistant level and, in Trump's case, title turnover as well. With both presidents, the staff turnover points to early leadership staffing decisions focused on who to appoint, especially campaign workers, rather than concentrating on the functions associated with White House operations. Once a President is in for a few months, he and his top staff realize, if they haven't before they came in, that White Houses follow particular organizational patterns no matter which party controls the executive branch as many presidential needs are similar.

Fourth, the titles and positions that survive are ones that earlier presidents have found were associated with the governing needs of a chief executive. Titles that have survived intact point to the continuing rhythms of a White House. Most often, the President and his staff opt for titles similar to ones an outgoing administration had. Those are the titles they found useful for carrying out the functions a President and those working for him needed to perform. Those are the ones associated with the three aspects of White House organization that we looked at earlier in this essay: process, policy, and relationships. Those are the key areas of White House organization.

Chaos or Energy: White House Staff Organizations Reflect the Choices of the President They Serve

What some see as staff chaos, President Trump views as staff energy. Presidents view staff success on their own terms, where their highest priority may or may not be their capacity to develop and carry out policy sustainable among the branches and levels of government. Having a hierarchical system with clear lines of authority was an organizational priority for both Presidents Bush and, to a lesser extent, for Reagan as well. That has not been the case with President Trump. Under Chief of

Staff Reince Priebus, many of the Assistants to the President and some of their deputies as well, reported in to the President without first going through the Chief. Similarly, today there are people inside and outside of the White House who speak directly with the President. President Trump often acts and speaks publicly without first consulting his staff as he did recently in an August 22 tweet about South Africa and the “large scale killing of farmers,” he said. “South African Government is now seizing land from white farmers.”²⁴ The President relied on Fox News’s Tucker Carlson for this inaccurate information that he tweeted before checking with his State Department and intelligence community.²⁵

While most presidents have chaffed at the idea of having high staff turnover, President Trump has defended his staffing system and commented on his satisfaction with it. August 30th, he attacked news organizations for their portrayal of the White House. “They love to portray chaos in the White House when they know that chaos doesn’t exist – just a ‘smooth running machine’ with changing parts.”²⁶ That is a Trump theme he has emphasized throughout his presidency. What others see as chaos, President Trump views as energy produced by competing voices. “It’s got tremendous energy. It’s tough. I like conflict. I like having two people with different points of view, and I certainly have that. And then, I make a decision. But I like watching it, I like seeing it, and I think it’s the best way to go. I like different points of view.”²⁷ He feels little of the pressure previous presidents have felt to create a hierarchical system with clear lines of authority for permissions and reporting. Ultimately it is the choices a President makes that shape his staff structure to suit his priorities whether they be political or policy ones. In a recent interview with Bloomberg News, President Trump declared his White House “is a smooth running machine with some changes.”²⁸ A lot of changes.

Martha Joynt Kumar, Director, White House Transition Project
Emeritus Professor, Towson University, Department of Political Science
whitehousetransitionproject.org

Assistant to the President Staff and Position Title Turnover: A Summary for Each President Trump Through Reagan

President Trump Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 61%. As of July 31, 2018, 17 of the 27 Assistants to the President who came in with President Trump on January 20th are no longer in their positions. Further, when taken together for the whole first year, 61% of Year One [January 20, 2017 – January 20, 2018] Assistants to the President have left. Recent picks for Assistant to the President positions, however, point to an increased stability as none of the 12 Assistants to the President appointed in the last six months has left. This contrasts with 2017 when nine of the initial Assistants left by the end of July.²⁹ A cautionary note here, though, is that half of the recent appointments were made in June and July, so those officials are only getting accustomed to their positions.

Sixteen of President Trump's Assistants leaving their positions have left the White House rather than moving laterally to another Assistant position. Only Keith Kellogg remains in the White House in a lateral move from the NSC where he was Executive Director and Chief of Staff. When John Bolton came in as the National Security Advisor, Kellogg shifted to Vice President Pence's staff as his national security advisor. In addition to the 17 original Assistants to the President he lost, President Trump had six Assistants leave who replaced those who left. None of the five other presidents experienced such a loss of replacement Assistants. In fact, the only president to lose any second Assistants appointees in the same post in 18 months was President Obama who lost an Acting Communications Director, Anita Dunn, who had committed to a short stay. The other presidents lost none.

Of the six presidents, President Trump had the largest number of discontinued / unfilled positions (13); title changes (6); and the most new positions (4) created following the Year One mark and before the 18 month one. Each category is listed with their staff members in Appendix B.

President Obama Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 16%. The turnover rate for a comparable time period for Assistants to the President in the Obama White House was 16% with five people of the 32 leaving (Greg Craig, Donald Gips, Ellen Moran, Anita Dunn, Jackie Norris) none of them taking another White House position. Obama had three title changes. John Brennan's Homeland Security and Terrorism position was at first a Deputy National Security Advisor position under General Jones and then became a separate National Security position. Both were at the Assistant to the President level. Susan Sher, the Chief of Staff for the First Lady, had Counsel added to Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff for the First Lady and Counsel. After Gips left Presidential Personnel, it was downgraded from the Assistant to the President level to the Deputy one. Obama did not add any positions between the end of the first year and the 18 month mark. No positions were discontinued.

President George W. Bush Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 14%. In the George W. Bush White House, the turnover was 14% with three people (John Dilulio, Karen Hughes, and Margaret Tutwiler) leaving from the original 21 Assistants to the President. All left the White House. The one discontinued / unfilled position was the one held by Tutwiler, Advisor to the President and Special Consultant for Communications. John Dilulio's position, Assistant to the President and Director, Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, was downgraded to the Deputy Assistant level when he left. There were two new positions created after Year One and prior to the 18 month mark: Assistant to the President for Communications (Dan Bartlett) and Assistant to the President for Speechwriting and Policy Advisor (Michael Gerson).

President Clinton Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 50%. There were 26 original Assistants to the President. Thirteen of them were replaced, but eight of those 13 stayed on in the White House in other Assistant to the President positions. Only five people leaving the White House meant there was a stability in who the people at the top were, even if there was a significant shift in who headed which White House offices. There were no new titles and five discontinued / unfilled positions: Senior Advisor and Presidential Personnel (Bruce Lindsey) was decoupled with his Advisor role separated from his Personnel one; Counsellor (David Gergen); Assistant to the President for Communications (George Stephanopoulos); Assistant to the President and Counselor to the Chief of Staff (the position ended when Ricki Seidman left); Counsel – when Bernard Nussbaum leaves, Lloyd Cutler comes in as “Special Counsel.” That is a different spot; he only stays about seven months and then a regular Counsel, Abner Mikva, comes in. After the Year One mark and before 18 months, there are four news positions. They are: Special Adviser to the President for Foreign Affairs (David Gergen); Counselor (Mack McLarty); Special Counsel (Lloyd Cutler); Director, Presidential Personnel (Veronica Biggins).

President George H. W. Bush Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 18%. The rate was 18% with three staff members (David Bates, Richard Breeden, and Stephen Studdert) out of the originally appointed 17 Assistants to the President replaced and leaving the White House. That number includes Richard Breeden who left to become chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission. President Bush had no new positions after the Year One mark and before 18 months though he did have one discontinued one- Assistant to the President for Issues Analysis (Richard Breeden) and the Deputy National Security Advisor upgraded to the Assistant to the President level (Robert Gates).

President Reagan Assistant to the President Staff Turnover: 26%. There were 19 positions at the Assistant to the President level in the 1981 - July 1982 period and five of the Assistants (Richard Allen, Martin Anderson, Joseph Canzeri, Max Friedersdorf, Lyn Nofziger) left their positions and left the White House in the first 18 months. There were no added or discontinued positions at the 18 month mark. There were four positions upgraded from the Deputy Assistant to the Assistant to the President level: Staff Secretary (Richard Darman); Deputy Chief of Staff (Joseph Canzeri); Cabinet Secretary (Craig Fuller); and Communications Director (David Gergen).

APPENDIX A

Assistant to the President Turnover in the Trump White House – January 20, 2017 – July 31, 2018

- Indicates person who came in to a position where he or she replaced the original staff member to hold the post. I count the original person to hold the Assistant position even if the post is not created until several months into the administration, as was the case with Ty Cobb's position. While I include in the table the names and dates of those who replace the original Assistant appointees, they are not part of the turnover percentage for a White House. I include the information on those who replaced the original Assistants in order to give a sense of which positions in a White House were particularly vulnerable to change. "Day One" refers to those who began their service on January 20, 2017. "Title Change" refers to a change in a title, such as dropping a position down to the Deputy Assistant level or raising it from Deputy to Assistant to the President. "New Title" refers to a title created after the first year, January 20, 2018. "Title Discontinued / Unfilled" is used for titles that were assigned but left unfilled after a person left the White House Assistant position.

PERSON July 31, 2018	Senior Title	Type of Office: Process, Policy, Relationships	Announced Appointment	Announced Resignation
Left White House, or, in case of Kellogg, lost key parts of job				
Steve Bannon	Assistant to the President, Chief Strategist, Senior Counselor	Policy	11/13/2016 Day One Title Discontinued / Unfilled	8/18/2017
Tom Bossert	Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism	Policy: National Security	12/27/2016 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	4/10/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> James Carroll Jr [replaced Nielsen] 	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff	Process; management	11/2017	2/2018
Ty Cobb	Assistant to the President, Special Counsel to the President [replaced by Emmett Flood as of 5/31]	Relationship: legal community	7/31/2017	WH announced 5/2 Cobb would "retire" 5/31/2018
Gary Cohn	Assistant to the President and Director of the National Economic Council	Policy: economic	12/12/2016 Day One Title Changed	3/9/2018
Reed Cordish	Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental and Technology Initiatives; Office of American Innovation	Policy: economic; relationship: Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump	1/17/2017 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	2/16/2018
Ricky Dearborn	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative, Cabinet, Intergovernmental Affairs and Implementation	Relationships: institutions in White House orbit	1/4/2017 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	1/18/2018; final day 3/16/2018
Michael Dubke	Assistant to the President and Director of Office of Communications	Relationships: media, constituency media groups	2/17/2017	5/29/2017

	While Sean Spicer had the Director of Communications role, it was together with his Press Secretary job. This is a separate job.		Discontinued / Unfilled Announced and release March 6, 2017	
Michael Flynn	Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	11/11/2016 Day One	2/13/2017
Joe Hagin	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations	Process: management	1/4/2017 Day One	Early July 2018
Hope Hicks	Assistant to the President and Director of Strategic Communications	Relationships: news media	12/22/2016 Day One	2/28/2018
• Hope Hicks	Assistant to the President and Director of Strategic Communications and Acting Communications Director [Acting 8/16/17 – 9/12/17]		8/16/2017 and with permanent title of Communications Director 9/12/2017	2/28/2018
Joseph Keith Kellogg	Assistant to the President and Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Council [transferred to Vice President Pence's staff as National Security Advisor and no longer Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Staff. He remains an Assistant to the President.]	Policy: national security	12/15/2016 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	4/23/2018 [served as Acting National Security Advisor 2/13/-2/20/2017]
• Joseph Keith Kellogg [replaces Michael Flynn as Acting]	Acting Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs			2/13/2017 – 2/20/2017
Omarosa Manigault	Assistant to the President and Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison	Relationships: black community	1/4/2016 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	12/13/2017
K. T. McFarland	Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	11/25/2016 Day One	4/9/2017
• H. R. McMaster [replaced Michael Flynn.]	Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	2/20/2017	4/9/2018 scheduled handover to John Bolton as announced 3/22/2018
Kirstjen M. Nielsen	Assistant to the President and Principal Deputy Chief of Staff Nielsen was the only Deputy Chief of Staff to have the "Principal Deputy Chief of Staff" title	Process: management	7/30/2017 Discontinued / Unfilled	10/11/2017 nominated for DHS secretary; confirmed 12/5/2017 by 62-37 vote
Joshua Pitcock	Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the Vice President	Process: management	1/6/2017 Day One	6/29/2017
Robert Porter	Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary	Process: management	1/12/2016 Day One	2/7/2018
Dina Powell	Assistant to the President and Senior Counselor of Economic Initiatives Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategy	Policy: economic and national security	1/12/2017 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	to NSC 3/15/2017 1/11/2018

			3/15/2017 Discontinued / Unfilled	
Reince Priebus	Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff	Process: management	11/13/2016 Day One	7/28/2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthony Scaramucci [replaced Spicer in Comms role] 	Assistant to the President and Director of Communications [Scaramucci was announced as to serve as Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, but the staff plan was altered before they entered the White House. He did not get the job.]	Relationships: news media	7/21/2017 Discontinued / Unfilled	7/31/2017
Marc Short	Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs	Relationships: Congress	1/4/2017 Day One	7/20/2018
George Sifakis	Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Public Liaison Title Change: Following Sifakis leaving, the title has been downgraded from the Assistant to the President to the Deputy Assistant level.	Relationships: interest groups	3/6/2017 Following Sifakis, the title downgraded to the Deputy Assistant level	8/18/2017
Sean Spicer [has both titles twice]	Assistant to the President and Press Secretary and Communications Director; second time he is Acting Communications Director	Relationships: news organizations	12/22/2016 and 6/2/2017 Day One Discontinued / Unfilled	3/6/2017 and 7/21/2017
Sean Spicer	Press Secretary	Relationships: news organizations		3/6/17 - 6/2/2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ricky Waddell [replaced K.T. McFarland] 	Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	5/10/17 & 5/19/2017	4/12/2018
Katie Walsh	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff	Process: management	1/4/2017 Day One	3/30/2017

July 31, 2018	Assistants to the President Currently Serving on White House Staff			
27 Currently on White House Staff – [Not Counting Keith Kellogg Twice as Staffer But All of His Titles Count]	Senior Title		Announced Appointment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nick Ayers [replaced Josh Pitcock] 	Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the Vice President	Process: management and politics	7/14/2017	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Bolton [replacing H.R. McMaster] 	Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	3/22/2018	2018 Appointed
Andrew Bremberg	Assistant to the President and Director of Domestic Policy Council	Policy: domestic	1/5/2017	Day One
Kellyanne Conway	Assistant to the President and Senior Counselor	Relationships: political	12/22/2016	Day One
John DeStefano	Assistant to the President and Counselor to the President [2/9/2018]; Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Personnel, [made Acting Director of Public Liaison, Political Affairs, Intergovernmental Affairs in December 2017, [assignment and title different than his Personnel role 2/9/18]	Process: management and Relationships: Washington community and state and local ones	1/4/2017	Day One Broadened Assignment 2/9/2018 2018 New Title: Appointed to Counselor position The Personnel position was downgraded to the Deputy Assistant level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emmet Flood [replaces Ty Cobb] 	Assistant to the President and Special Counsel [announced 5/2 that Ty Cobb would be leaving at the end of the month and Emmet Flood would replace him]	Policy: legal community	5/7/2018	2018 Appointed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zachary Fuentes [replaces James Carroll Jr., who replaced Katie Walsh who had this title] 	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff	Process: management	6/6/2018	Was promoted from his post in the Chief of Staff office as Deputy Assistant to the President. He was promoted from Special to Deputy Assistant 2/9/2018.

			2018 Appointed	
Jason Greenblatt	Assistant to the President and Special Representative for International Negotiations	Policy: Middle East	12/27/2016 Day One	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joseph Keith Kellogg [replaces Jon Lerner whose title was Deputy Assistant to the President] 	Assistant to the President and Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Council Title Change: [transferred to Vice President Pence's staff as "Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor to the Vice President" and no longer: "Assistant to the President and Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Council." He remains an Assistant to the President though his predecessor was a Deputy Assistant in the same position with the Vice President.]	Policy: national security	12/15/2016 Day One 4/23/2018 redefinition of his assignment 2018 Appointed as Vice President's National Security Advisor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Kelly [replaced Reince Priebus] 	Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff	Process: management	7/30/2017	
Marcia Lee Kelly	Assistant to the President and Director of White House Management and Director of the Office of Administration Position upgraded from Deputy Assistant to Assistant to the President	Process: management	7/6/2018 2018 Appointed Title Upgraded from Deputy Assistant level to Assistant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shahira Knight 	Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs	Relationships: Congress	7/12/2018 2018 Appointed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larry Kudlow 	Assistant to the President for Economic Policy. Title change: from "Assistant to the President and Director of the National Economic Council" to the broader title: Assistant to the for Economic Policy	Policy: economic	3/14/2018 2018 Appointed Title Change	
Jared Kushner	Assistant to the President and Senior Adviser	Policy: Middle East	1/9/2017 Day One	
Chris Liddell	Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives [1/17/17] Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Coordination [3/30/18] [was shifted to position that expands his original responsibilities with new roles]	Process: management	1/17/2017 Day One 3/20/2018 2018 Appointed to Deputy Chief of Staff New Title	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derek Lyons [replaces Robert Porter] 	Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary	Process: management	6/6/2018 promoted from Deputy Assistant position 2018 Appointed	
Donald McGahn II	Assistant to the President and Counsel to the President	Process: legal	11/25/2016 Day One	

Stephen Miller	Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Policy	Policy: domestic, immigration in particular	12/13/2016 Day One	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter Navarro 	Assistant to the President for Trade Policy This is a new title at the Assistant level and in September 2017 the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy moves to the National Economic Council. In February 2018, President Trump moves the Office back on to an independent footing and appoints Navarro to an Assistant position from the Deputy Assistant one he had.	Policy: trade	2/25/2018 2018 Appointed Position moved from independent operation to being housed in the National Economic Council. Navarro title raised from Deputy Assistant to Assistant level	
Lindsay Reynolds	Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady	Process: management	2/1/2017	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mira R. Ricardel [replacing Ricky Waddell] 	Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor	Policy: national security	4/20/2018 White House announced 2018 Appointed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brooke Rollins [replacing Reed Cordish] 	Assistant to the President [in the American Innovation Office]	Policy: prison reform	2/16/2018 announced; but doesn't join staff until end May-early June 2018 Appointed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah Sanders [replaces Sean Spicer and promoted] 	Assistant to the President and Press Secretary	Relationships: news organizations	7/21/2017	
Dan Scavino	Assistant to the President and Director of Social Media	Process; presidential communications	12/22/2016 Day One	
Mercedes Schlapp	Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications	Relationships: news organizations	9/12/2017	
William Shine	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications This position is different than the earlier communications ones as it is part of the Chief of Staff's operation	Relationships: news organizations	7/ 5/ 2018 2018 Appointed New Title	
Ivanka Trump	Advisor to the President Title Change: in 2018 Annual Report to Congress she was listed as "Advisor to the President", but in 2017 she was listed as: "First Daughter and Assistant to the President." There is no change to her Assistant to the President status	Policy: women's issues	3/29/2017 Title Change from First Daughter and Advisor to Advisor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David P. Walsh [replaces Joe Hagin] 	Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations	Process: management	7/6/2018 2018 Appointed	

--	--	--	--	--

APPENDIX B

WHITE HOUSE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT TITLED POSITIONS

January 20, 2017 – July 31, 2018

Assistant to the President Titled Positions in the White House of President Trump. January 20, 2017 – July 31, 2018.

The breakdowns of Assistant to the President positions into: positions consistently titled and currently filled; positions discontinued / unfilled; positions that have title changes; new Assistant to the President positions.

Twenty Continuing White House Assistant to the President Positions. [33 people have held the positions] *

There are 20 Assistant to the President positions created in 2017 where the post is filled, and the title has been consistent. There are 33 people who now serve or did earlier in these positions. * The positions and the staff members serving in them during that period are:

Senior Counselor – Kellyanne Conway

Counsel – Donald McGahn

Special Counsel - Ty Cobb, currently Emmet Flood

Chief of Staff – Reince Priebus, currently John Kelly

Deputy Chief of Staff – James Carroll, currently Zachary Fuentes

Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations – Joe Hagin, currently David Walsh

Staff Secretary – Robert Porter, currently Derek Lyons

Director, Office of Legislative Affairs - Marc Short, currently Shahira Knight

Press Secretary – Sean Spicer, currently Sarah Sanders

Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications – Mercedes Schlapp

Director of Social Media – Dan Scavino

Director, Domestic Policy Council – Andrew Bremberg

National Security Advisor – Michael Flynn. H. R. McMaster, currently John Bolton

Deputy National Security Advisor – K. T. McFarland, Ricky Waddell, currently Mira Ricardel

Special Representative for International Negotiations – Jason Greenblatt

Chief of Staff to the Vice President – Josh Pitcock, currently Nick Ayers

Chief of Staff to the First Lady – Lindsay Reynolds

Senior Advisor - Jared Kushner

Senior Advisor for Policy – Stephen Miller

Strategic Initiatives – Chris Liddell, currently Brooke Rollins

Thirteen Positions Discontinued / Unfilled. [12 people have filled the positions with two people having had two titles] Currently no one holds the title in 13 of them. Twelve people held the 13 positions.

Chief Strategist, Senior Counselor – Steve Bannon

Homeland Security and Counterterrorism – Thomas Bossert

Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative, Cabinet, Intergovernmental Affairs and Implementation – Ricky Dearborn

Director of Communications – Mike Dubke, Anthony Scaramucci

Director of Strategic Communications – Hope Hicks

Director of Strategic Communications and Communications Director – Hope Hicks

Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Council - Keith Kellogg

Principal Deputy Chief of Staff – Kirstjen Nielsen

Senior Counselor of Economic Initiatives – Dina Powell

National Security Advisor for Strategy – Dina Powell

Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison – Omarosa Manigault

Press Secretary and Communications Director – Sean Spicer

Intergovernmental and Technology Initiatives – Reed Cordish

Six Positions Created in 2017 Containing Title Changes. [7 people have held the Assistant-level positions] An additional six positions have title changes. Two alter the description of the role of the title holder and the other four raised or lowered the title from the Assistant to the President level down to Deputy Assistant to the President or from Deputy to Assistant.

Seven staff members have or did have these titles. The titles with varying degrees of alterations are:

* Director, National Economic Council was Gary Cohn's title. Larry Kudlow's title is: Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, which might imply more of a general economic role, such as a speaking one.

* The position First Daughter and Assistant to the President is now titled Advisor to the President – Ivanka Trump. The original title identifies Ivanka Trump as President Trump's daughter first and as an advisor second. Her 2018 title focuses on the second rather than the first part of her earlier title.

* Director of Presidential Personnel – John DeStefano, then reduced to Deputy Assistant to the President when DeStefano became Counselor. The director is currently Sean Doocey.

* Director of the Office of Public Liaison – George Sifakis. Once Sifakis left office, the position was reduced to Deputy Assistant to the President, currently Justin Clark holds that title.

* Director of White House Management and Administration and Director of the Office of Administration is a title experiencing an upgrade from the Deputy Assistant level to the Assistant to the President one. Marcia Lee Kelly held the position when it was at the Deputy Assistant level and now as Assistant.

* National Security Advisor to the Vice President – Keith Kellogg is the first staff member to have the Assistant to the President title in this position as earlier it was at the Deputy Assistant level.

Four Assistant to the President Positions Created in 2018. [4 people have held the positions] During this calendar year in addition to filling vacant existing positions, the President has added five new Assistant to the President positions that are currently filled by the following staff members:

Counselor [overseeing Political Affairs, Intergovernmental Affairs, Personnel] – John DeStefano [

Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Coordination – Chris Liddell

Trade and Manufacturing Policy – Peter Navarro

Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications – William Shine

* Several people have held more than one position. Three who held more than one post who have left are: Hope Hicks, Sean Spicer, Dina Powell. An additional three people who remain from the beginning of the administration and have held more than one position are: John DeStefano, Keith Kellogg, and Chris Liddell.

¹ This study focuses on Assistant to the President level positions, including Counselor and Senior Advisor when those positions are at the highest level. My data comes from staff-level information including formal staff titles found in the relevant presidential libraries, staff member biographies, internal White House phone books that I have collected over several administrations, National Journal's *The Capital Source*, which I also have collected during the period it was published, and the *Federal Yellow Book* of the Leadership Directories. I do not count Detailees from other parts of the government in my counts of Assistants to the President as they are not regular employees of the White House Office. I have focused on Assistants to the President to chart turnover because they form a president's leadership team. By any measure – salary, responsibilities assigned to Assistants, statutory description – Assistants to the President rank first among a President's aides. Stability and continuity among the staff are important aspects of the value of a presidential team.

My study comes out of my work in two areas: presidential transitions and White House communications. There is a direct connection between the quality of a presidential transition and getting a White House staff up and running on January 20th. The more difficulties a President has assembling a staff that can make the transition from campaigning to governing, the greater his problems in governing. A stable and governing-appropriate leadership staff increases the possibilities a President has of taking advantage of early governing opportunities. Effective White House communications depend on a well-integrated staff where the three types of offices– process, policy, managing relationships - work together. A President's communications operation requires top-level integration of the teams working on policy, politics, and publicity. In order to craft action, a President needs to have accurate assessments of the politics of the policy- can it get through - as well as how the White House staff can effectively explain the policy benefits.

My Assistant to the President study is distinctive in its approach but its findings are similar to those of Kathryn Dunn Tenpas' Brookings Institution senior staff one that saw record-setting turnover among President Trump's most senior staff members. Her most recent study with a sample of 12 Assistants to the President is found here: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2018/06/27/trump-has-lost-the-vast-majority-of-tier-one-staff-members/> There are several key differences. First, I track the top segment of the commissioned group of White House staff – Assistants to the President – as defined in statute and budget as the highest ranking advisers a President has. For Trump that means tracking the 53 people who have cycled through his Assistant to the President positions and all of those who held Assistant positions in 18 months in the other five White House operations of Presidents Obama through Reagan. Second, I also track changes in position titles of Assistants to the President. I observe the continuity of titles and identify which ones get dropped as the President and his team make the shift from campaigning to governing through their first 18 months in office. Third, I look at all of the Assistant titled staff at the same moment in an administration: 18 months. That is true for the staffs of Presidents Trump, Obama, Bush, Clinton, Bush and Reagan.

The Brookings study is based, first, on *National Journal's* "Decision Makers" definition of senior White House and Executive Office of the President staff members that was published in the early months of an administration and staff identified by their reporters as potential influential voices and people. That means there are some Assistants to the President, but Deputy Assistants and others as well, including ones who may not have a commissioned title. The Tenpas study released in January with a link cited below, reaches beyond the White House Office to include several staff who are in the Executive Office of the President, such as the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Secondly, our studies differ in the points in time when staff members are tracked. President Trump's senior staff members in the Brookings study are tracked by month and then measured against the senior staff annual turnover of the staffs of Presidents Obama, Bush, Clinton, Bush and Reagan at their second year marks. Mine are tracked at a comparable point in time: 18 months. See Tenpas's description of her study: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/why-is-trumps-staff-turnover-higher-than-the-5-most-recent-presidents/>

² <https://twitter.com/CRTV/status/1024440663151017984>

³ The 25 people who left during the first year period of January 20 2017 – January 20 2018 are, first, the initial group of people who came in Day One, January 20th, as Assistants to the President: [Steve Bannon; Thomas Bossert; Gary Cohn; Reed Cordish; Ricky Dearborn; Michael Flynn; Joe Hagin; Hope Hicks; Omarosa Marigault; K.T. McFarland; Joshua Pitcock; Robert Porter; Dina Powell; Reince Priebus; Sean Spicer; Marc Short; Katie Walsh]. Additionally, those 8 staffers with the title of Assistant to the President and came in after January 20th, 2017 but left prior to January 20th, 2018 are: James Carroll; Ty Cobb; Michael Dubke; H.R. McMaster; Kirstjen Nielsen; Anthony Scaramucci; George Sifakis; Ricky Waddell.

⁴ Three Assistants to the President did not take salaries – Ivanka Trump, Jared Kushner, and Reed Cordish – while two others – Gary Cohn and Chris Liddell – took only \$30,000. Putting them aside, the lowest salary was \$40,800.00 and the highest \$179,700.00.

⁵ Not all of the staff people who work in the White House are on these lists as some employees are provided for through the Vice President's Senate staff salary and others through the National Security Council budget arrangements. These lists reflect a particular point in time: June 1 of each year. They do not include people who came into the White House and left before that date.

Roberta Rampton, "From top to bottom, Trump's White House churns through staff: Report," July 2, 2018, Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-turnover/from-top-to-bottom-trumps-white-house-churns-through-staff-report-idUSKBN1JS24D>

"2018 Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel," <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/07012018-report-final.pdf> and "2017 Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel,"

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/119OjfvU9Uf0lqfwu8VCjKsD73dMb5owmai5Nec1OFBI/edit#gid=0>

⁶ The 43 positions and those who now hold them or did earlier in the administration follows. Some people held, or have held, more than one position / title:

TWENTY CONTINUING POSITIONS: [33 people have held the positions] There are 20 Assistant to the President positions created in 2017 where the post is filled, and the title has been consistent. There are 33 people who now serve or did earlier in these positions. Those positions and the staff members serving in them during that period are:

Senior Counselor – Kellyanne Conway

Counsel – Donald McGahn

Special Counsel - Ty Cobb, currently Emmett Flood

Chief of Staff – Reince Priebus, currently John Kelly

Deputy Chief of Staff – James Carroll, currently Zachary Fuentes

Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations – Joe Hagin, currently David Walsh

Staff Secretary – Robert Porter, currently Derek Lyons

Director, Office of Legislative Affairs - Marc Short, currently Shahira Knight

Press Secretary – Sean Spicer, currently Sarah Sanders

Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications – Mercedes Schlapp

Director of Social Media – Dan Scavino

Director, Domestic Policy Council – Andrew Bremberg

National Security Advisor – Michael Flynn. H. R. McMaster, currently John Bolton

Deputy National Security Advisor – K. T. McFarland, Ricky Waddell, currently Mira Ricardel

Special Representative for International Negotiations – Jason Greenblatt

Chief of Staff to the Vice President – Josh Pitcock, currently Nick Ayers

Chief of Staff to the First Lady – Lindsay Reynolds

Senior Advisor - Jared Kushner

Senior Advisor for Policy – Stephen Miller

Strategic Initiatives – Chris Liddell, currently Brooke Rollins

THIRTEEN POSITIONS DISCONTINUED / NOT FILLED. [12 people have filled the positions with two people having had two titles] Currently no one holds the title in 13 of them. Twelve people held the 13 positions.

Chief Strategist, Senior Counselor – Steve Bannon

Homeland Security and Counterterrorism – Thomas Bossert

Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative, Cabinet, Intergovernmental Affairs and Implementation – Ricky Dearborn

Director of Communications – Mike Dubke, Anthony Scaramucci

Director of Strategic Communications – Hope Hicks

Director of Strategic Communications and Communications Director – Hope Hicks

Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff for the National Security Council - Keith Kellogg

Principal Deputy Chief of Staff – Kirstjen Nielsen

Senior Counselor of Economic Initiatives – Dina Powell

National Security Advisor for Strategy – Dina Powell

Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison – Omarosa Manigault

Press Secretary and Communications Director – Sean Spicer

Intergovernmental and Technology Initiatives – Reed Cordish

SIX TITLE CHANGES: [7 people have held the Assistant-level positions] An additional six positions have title changes. Two alter the description of the role of the title holder and the other four raised or lowered the title from the Assistant to the President level down to Deputy Assistant to the President or from Deputy to Assistant. The president elevated Management and Administration from the Deputy Assistant level to Assistant to the President as he did with the National

Security Advisor to the Vice President. That position was at the Deputy Assistant level. Seven staff members have or did have these titles. The titles with varying degrees of alterations are:

Director, National Economic Council was Gary Cohn's title. Larry Kudlow's title is: Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, which might imply more of a general economic role, such as a speaking one.

First Daughter and Assistant to the President and is now titled Advisor to the President – Ivanka Trump. The original title identifies Ivanka Trump as President Trump's daughter first and as an advisor second. Her 2018 title focuses on the second rather than the first part of her earlier title.

Director of Presidential Personnel – John DeStefano, then reduced to Deputy Assistant to the President when DeStefano became Counselor. The director is currently Sean Doocey.

Director of the Office of Public Liaison – George Sifakis. Once Sifakis left office, the position was reduced to Deputy Assistant to the President, currently Justin Clark holds that title.

Director of White House Management and Administration and Director of the Office of Administration is a title experiencing an upgrade from the Deputy Assistant level to the Assistant to the President one. Marcia Lee Kelly held the position when it was at the Deputy Assistant level and now as Assistant.

National Security Advisor to the Vice President – Keith Kellogg is first to have the Assistant to the President title in this position as earlier it was at the Deputy Assistant level.

FOUR NEW ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT POSITIONS: [4 people have held the positions] During this calendar year in addition to filling vacant existing positions, the President has added five new Assistant to the President positions that are currently filled by the following staff members:

Counselor [overseeing Political Affairs, Intergovernmental Affairs, Personnel] – John DeStefano

Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Coordination – Chris Liddell

Trade and Manufacturing Policy – Peter Navarro

Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications – William Shine

Several people have held more than one position. Three who held more than one post who have left are: Hope Hicks, Sean Spicer, Dina Powell. An additional three people who remain from the beginning of the administration and have held more than one position are: John DeStefano, Keith Kellogg, and Chris Liddell.

⁷ Alex Wayne and Michael Cohen, "Trump Misleads Again with Claim of South Africa Farm Murders," Bloomberg News, August 23, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-23/trump-misleads-again-with-claim-of-south-africa-farm-murders>

⁸ President Trump Tweet, August 30, 6:44 am, at: <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/archive>

⁹ <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=129483&st=&st1=>

¹⁰ Interview with President Trump, Margaret Talev, Jennifer Jacobs, and John Micklethwait, Bloomberg News, August 30, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-31/president-donald-trump-interviewed-by-bloomberg-news-transcript>

¹¹ This study focuses on Assistant to the President level positions, including Counselor and Senior Advisor when those positions are at the highest level. My information comes from staff-level information sources including formal staff titles found in the relevant presidential libraries, staff member biographies, internal White House phone books that I have collected over several administrations, National Journal's *The Capital Source*, which I also have collected during the period it was published, and the *Federal Yellow Book*. I do not count Detailees from other parts of the government in my counts of Assistants to the President as they are not regular employees of the White House Office.

¹² <https://twitter.com/CRTV/status/1024440663151017984>

¹³ The relevant laws for White House staffing are: 3 USC 105. Assistance and services for the President. The numbers and salaries of Assistants are tied to the Office of Personnel Management's Executive Level compensation. Executive Level II Limits Assistants to the President to 25. Executive Level III has a maximum of 25 as well. Executive Level IV controls for Special Assistants and others covering a significant span of salaries and skills. Other laws relevant for White House staff hiring are: 3 USC 108. Assistance and services for the President for emergency needs; 3 USC 106. Assistance and services for the Vice President; 3 USC 107. Domestic Policy Staff and Office of Administration Personnel. 3 USC 3109 Employment of experts and consultants. The text of the statutory provisions can be found at: uscode.house.gov. The text of the statutory provisions is available at uscode.house.gov.

The USC sections are referenced in the annual budget request in the Budget Appendix and the annual appropriations act which includes the EOP appropriation, currently the Financial Services and General Government (FSGG)

Appropriations Act. The FY2017 Appendix is available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Appendix> . The FY2017 text of the FSGG bill, as passed by the House is available at [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) by placing HR 5485 in the search box and then reviewing the EOP section.

¹⁴ The 25 people who left during the first year period of January 20 2017 – January 20 2018 are , first, the initial group of people who came in Day One, January 20th, as Assistants to the President: [Steve Bannon; Thomas Bossert; Gary Cohn; Reed Cordish; Ricky Dearborn; Michael Flynn; Joe Hagin; Hope Hicks; Omarosa Marigault; K.T. McFarland; Joshua Pitcock; Robert Porter; Dina Powell; Reince Priebus; Sean Spicer; Marc Short; Katie Walsh]. Additionally, those 8 staffers with the title of Assistant to the President and came in after January 20th, 2017 but left prior to January 20th, 2018 are: James Carroll; Ty Cobb; Michael Dubke; H.R. McMaster; Kirstjen Nielsen; Anthony Scaramucci; George Sifakis; Ricky Waddell.

¹⁵ Three Assistants to the President did not take salaries – Ivanka Trump, Jared Kushner, and Reed Cordish – while two others – Gary Cohn and Chris Liddell – took only \$30,000. Putting them aside, the lowest salary was \$40,800.00 and the highest \$179,700.00.

¹⁶ Not all of the staff people who work in the White House are on these lists as some employees are provided for through the Vice President’s Senate staff salary and others through the National Security Council budget arrangements. These lists reflect a particular point in time: June 1 of each year. They do not include people who may have already left

Roberta Rampton, “From top to bottom, Trump’s White House churns through staff: Report,” July 2, 2018, Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-turnover/from-top-to-bottom-trumps-white-house-churns-through-staff-report-idUSKBN1JS24D>

“2018 Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/07012018-report-final.pdf> and “2017 Annual Report to Congress on White House Office Personnel,”

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/119QjfvU9Uf0lqfwu8VCjKsD73dMb5owmai5Nec1OFBI/edit#gid=0>

¹⁷ The 12 people hired in the last six months – January 31 – July 30, 2018 and who remain in their positions are: John Bolton; Emmett Flood; Zachary Fuentes; Marcia Lee Kelly; Shahira Knight; Lawrence Kudlow; Derek Lyons; Peter Navarro; Mira Ricardel; Brooke Rollins; William Shine; David Walsh.

¹⁸ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-announces-appointments-executive-office-president/>

¹⁹ President Trump, August 29, 2018, 9:30 am, <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/archive>

²⁰ Jeremy Diamond and Kevin Liptak, Trump’s Man with the Singapore Plan: Joe Hagin, June 4, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/03/politics/joe-hagin-north-korea-summit/index.html>

²¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/04/top-white-house-tax-advisor-to-leave-for-bank-lobbying-group.html>

²² President Donald J. Trump Announces Appointments for the Executive Office of the President,” February 9, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-announces-appointments-executive-office-president/>

²³ See Endnote 6.

²⁴ Tweet by President Trump, @realDonaldTrump, August 22, 2018. <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1032454567152246785>

²⁵ See Endnote 7.

²⁶ President Trump Tweet, August 30, 6:44 am, at: <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/archive>

²⁷ <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=129483&st=&st1=>

²⁸ Interview with President Trump, Margaret Talev, Jennifer Jacobs, and John Micklethwait, Bloomberg News, August 30, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-31/president-donald-trump-interviewed-by-bloomberg-news-transcript>

²⁹ The Assistants to the President who left by July 31, 2017 are: Michael Dubke; Michael Flynn; K.T. McFarland; Kirstjen Nielsen; Joshua Pitcock; Reince Priebus; Anthony Scaramucci; Sean Spicer; Katie Walsh.