

STAFF SENATE

September 3, 2021

Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The Ozark Campus Staff Senate was called to order on Friday, September 3, 2021 in Ozark TAS Room 174.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Shirley Bonner
Alina House

Jimmy Martin

Senators Absent: Jessica Spicer, Bethany Lucius, Katrina Young

Visitors:

MINUTES:

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Upcoming events: Staff Senate Breakfast in October**
 - Game ideas—Trivia with Halloween candy as prizes
 - Donations for Green/Gold cupboard. (Feminine Products) to be brought to the staff senate breakfast
 - Sign-up sheet and advertisement being sent to PR for publication about event by President Bonner.
- Meeting was short due to 2 members being out.
- **Report from Staff Senate in Russellville**

September 2, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

President Margie Link called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday September 2, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. in WebEx virtual online meeting.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Kaitlynn Beaird
Angie Bell
Rachel Broussard
Judy Crouch
Cynthia Dixon
Tanya Dougan

Susan Johnson
Margie Link
Teresa Lutz
Amber Meeks
Cody Parsons
Brittany Reves

Lydia Rogers
Tammy Rye
Lyndsay Simpson
Alisa Williams

Senators Absent:

Brandi Duvall
Cindy Hubbard
Susan Johnson

Krystle Manning
Cole Hendrix

Visitor(s):

Sabrina Billey
Sara Chronister
Diedra Dillard
Andrea Eubanks
Laury Fiorello
Stacy Galbo

Brandie Gibbs
Tammy Guarino
Tracey Hale
Kassidy Jones
Meredith Lawson
Allison Sheehan

Heather Taylor
Kerri Threlkeld
Alisa Waniewski
Jamie Young
Katrina Young

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the August 5th, 2021 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Crouch filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Rye seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

Special Report

Ms. Laury Fiorello:

- Rumors are going around that Arkansas Tech is going to be absorbed by the UA system, Ms. Fiorello said that was not in any negotiations and no talks of that behind the scene. ATU is an autonomous entity and it intends to stay that way.
- There is a proposal by the Earl Young Foundation for a bone marrow drive on campus. Participants would sign up to be a possible bone marrow participant. This is an opportunity for staff senate to sponsor the event on campus and could be lucrative financially for staff senate. Staff senate would be responsible for the getting the information out to the community and would get \$10 per participant. Staff senate will need more information about this event and will discuss again during new business.
- Meetings with the Executive Council (EC) is an avenue for staff senate to bring any matter that needs to be addressed. It is going to be a continued conversation and an opportunity for direct transparency.
- Strategic Plan Communication is in its 5th and final year. This was an extended year because they are going to be organizing a new committee going forward to create a new plan. This will probably be a 3-year plan instead of a 5-year plan. ATU requests that staff senate nominate someone from senate to be a direct member of the strategic plan and also an at-large staff position.
- A proposal concerning renewal of Blue Cross Blue shield insurance will be presented to the Board of Trustees on 9-23-2021. This should be a positive renewal, because ATU will be able to drop the deductible down to \$3000 for the PPO plan. Also, will be able to have co-pays for specialists. There will also be a slight reduction in the premium. There is a possibility of ATU going to self-insured next year.

Committee Reports

- **President's Communication-**
 - President Link reported that there was discussion of Covid. There have been 10 to 20 cases in the past 2 to 3 weeks and right now the people having to quarantine is doubling. There is 72% of faculty and staff that have been fully vaccinated and 76 % have had at least one shot. For students, only 39% are fully vaccinated and 50% have had at least one shot. The remote work policy got approved at the Board of Trustees meeting last month and there will be supervisor training. The applications for the Innovation grant are available on the Administration and Finance webpage. Coming up, the campus will be hosting the Saturday showcase before the football game. This will be an outreach of perspective students.
- **Budget Advisory – No report**
- **Scholarship – No report**

- **University Strategic Planning** – No report
- **Insurance Committee** –
 - Senator Bell had been asked why we didn't use state insurance, and it is because our risk pool was larger than they could accommodate and state insurance is a self-insured plan. Again, this is something that we could look into for next year or in the future. Senator Bell does have a PDF that she can send out that would further explain what self-funded is and how it works.
- **IT Prioritization and Impact** –
 - Senator Crouch reported that had met on Aug 26, 2021. They discussed the dual Duo 2 Factor authorization. 8,000 students and 1700 faculty and staff have registered for the dual duo. The committee also discussed a lack of official vulnerability scanning and a purchase of tenable to scan our systems and look for patches. This would be a purchase software and is a compliance necessity. The system will check for critical and high patches. The committee also discussed the move to the Allusion Cloud being closer to December 17th. It is called Experience and you will see channels or cards that you can rearrange for preferences. In addition, the committee discusses the Windstream. There have been so many going to the VoIP phones that they're paying too much for the circuit and they would like us to get off of that circuit. There is an end of life in December to get off completely, or moved to another circuit.
- **University Communication Working Group** – No report
- **Campus Space and Utilization** – No report
- **Green and Gold Cupboard** – No report
- **Staff Awards** – No report

New Business

Picnic table on south side of RCB (Brown Hall)-

- Staff Senate had a picnic table behind brown hall and it had been missing. President Link reported that the table has been located and is being utilized by students over by McEVer or the Library. We will be getting an old set from BazTech in the near future.

Executive Council Meeting Dates: September 22, November 22, November 10, February 16, April 13-

- President Link and Vice President Beard will be attending these meetings and to bring to them any questions or concerns that need addressed.

Bone Marrow Drive-

- The overall of consensus from the senators was positive and agreed that this could be highly beneficial to Staff Senate. President Link stated that she would get with Ms. Fiorello and discuss information and details.

Old Business

Insurance

- This was discussed previously during this meeting.

Open Forum

Welcomed new Senators Cody Parsons and Cindy Hubbard, both from Administration and Finance.

Announcements

None

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 10 a.m.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting was not adjourned, due to a power outage that affected several buildings on campus.

Respectfully submitted,
Lyndsay Simpson, Secretary

Anonymous Submissions: June 2,2021 to September 27, 2021

6-21-2021	Staff	<p>I know it was said HR is looking into a policy, but I wanted to share my feelings on the meeting where the WFH policy was discussed.</p> <p>According to the mission the Staff Senate is here to fairly represent Arkansas Tech University's non-faculty employees.</p> <p>I do not believe creating a policy restricting employees options or discerning a supervisor's judgement falls under the purview of the Staff Senate or the aforementioned mission statement. By adding restrictions, the Staff Senate is implying they know better than each individual supervisor what is best for their department. Additionally, Human Resources is in place to address any FWA issues or complaints. I would encourage a policy that allows for non-faculty employees to have a flexible work arrangement (FWA) at the discretion of their supervisor.</p> <p>A Flexible Work Arrangement policy instead of a Work From Home policy would be more inclusive. For example, FAMA employees under a FWA could be allowed to start their shift an hour earlier/later or working a Sunday instead of a Friday. Additionally, research shows a FWA allows offices to keep trained, loyal, hardworking employees who have to move out of town for personal reasons.</p>
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		<p>There was a well thought out and researched Leadership Tech Group Project on this topic. It would be worth requesting the information prepared.</p> <p>https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/special-reports-and-expert-views/Documents/Flexible%20Work%20Arrangements.pdf</p> <p>Pg.4 The majority of HR professionals said that FWAs had a positive impact on several aspects of recruitment and retention, including retaining employees (75%), attracting employees (61%) and turnover (52%) (see Figure 6).</p>
7-06-2021	Staff	<p>I'd like to know why, for the second year in a row has the Governor given state employees a raise and ATU has decided not to pass that along to it's employees and to keep it for other purposes? I've not had a raise in years, along with many others, yet I continue to have an increase in work load. Can you not at least pass on what the Governor has allocated to those making \$75,000 and below? This is just another slap in the face for us, telling us we aren't worth it. I'd like my raise from last year as a bonus and my raise for this year in my paycheck. You can't run this place without staff. Why do you think so little of us?</p>
7-08-2021	Staff	<p>When reviewing the staff handbook, it does not dictate how 'non-classified' or 'provisional' (employees paid through external funds) positions are to handle extreme overtime hours. These employees are not paid overtime due to being a salaried employee, however, some of these employees can put in an additional 15-20 hours per week and are not compensated for their time through comp time. The staff handbook needs to be updated to provide guidance to employees and their supervisors how to compensate these employees for their overtime. Especially for employees who regularly work weekends and most job duties happen outside of the typical M-F 8-5 time frame.</p>
7-08-2021	Staff	<p>Regarding remote work, having this option would be a great benefit for many reasons. Even with the reduction in workforce, office space is at a premium, so allowing those of us that are not student-facing to work remotely would free up space and reduce electricity and water use. There are also quite a few staff members that have long commutes as well, so this option would be a pseudo raise for those in that situation. Another benefit is for people like myself that are immunosuppressed or have ailments that are not typically accommodated fully. Sometimes there are days where I have had to go home in an office setting because I did not feel well enough to be in the office but would have been able to work without issue from home since I have the accommodations I need already. Along with that, working remotely removes the constant concern of exposure to other's ailments for those that are immunosuppressed. With the adoption of DUO, we are also securing our access more thoroughly. Finally, after experiencing the benefits of remote work for the past year, the world seems to be opening itself up to the future of what work could be like. ATU blazing a trail in that regard</p>

		could present a bold new image of adaptability and openness to embracing the changing world.
7-21-2021	Prefer Not to Say	Would like to suggest ATU allowing Staff to have Fall break along with the students and close all offices.
8-31-2021	Staff	Can someone please let us know if the talk about UofA buying out ATU is true or not and/or if talks are in place for this to happen in the future?

- **December Staff Breakfast**

- Staff will bring pot luck breakfast
- Do a holiday trivia game after breakfast
- Ornament exchange
- Ask for donations for staff breakfast for green/gold pantry
- Christmas Poem to be read by Mr. Sikes for ornament exchange

- **Next meeting date/time:** January 7th 9:00 am will be our next Staff senate meeting.

- **Open Forum:**

- Pantry is running low on pre-made meals for students. Asking for donations of those at the staff breakfast.
- Make sure the website is updated with agendas and minutes from staff senate meetings. Get to Laura to get on the website
- Any PD updates—ideas for professional development.
 - True colors--- presented by someone for PD in February possible dates are 11th & 18th. Senator Bonner will reach out to Dr. Jacobs first about possible Enneagram presentation. If unavailable to do so, Senator House will reach out to Charleston High School Counselor Tawni Bowen to conduct True Colors personality traits presentation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Employee spotlight for September was drawn:

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Martin motioned, Senator House seconded, and all approve and motion carried to adjourn at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alina House, Senator standing in for Bethany Lucius, Secretary