

Staff Senate Minutes

February 6, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Kristian Thompson called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday February 6, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual online meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

**Senators Present:**

Sabrina Anwar  
Peggy Ayers  
Megan Bell  
Bethany Brown  
Kate Darr  
Shelly Hall

Connie Herring  
Kim Hilliard  
Katie Hook  
Kacie Lopez  
Whitney Moore  
Tanda Morrison

Cody Neal  
Cesiley Rideau  
Nick Schluterman  
Miranda Senn  
Kristian Thompson  
Scott Tomlin

**Senators Absent:**

Jenna Bradley  
Rachel Broussard  
Slade Dupuy

Bonnie Freeman  
Mackenzie Taylor

**Visitor(s):**

Alexis Scrimshire  
Amber Meeks  
Andrea Eubanks  
Ashley Bryant  
Chelsea Martin

Kathleen Martin  
Kim McKown  
Leigh Hill  
Marcia Brown  
Victoria Tomlin

## **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the December 5, 2024 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Ayers filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Rideau seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

## **Senate Discussion**

Dr. Jones has tasked Staff Senate (and Faculty Senate) to come up with some type of Longevity pay scale. So, the elections and governance committee met and came up with a drafted plan. The draft was presented to the senate and there were questions about how to count years of service when performance evaluations aren't positive. There were thoughts on having someone keep up with the years of negative performance evaluations and having them subtracted from your years of service. However, that got into conversations on who would keep up with that and how. We also talked about how that meant one bad year would basically haunt you for the rest of your career here, no matter what the circumstance was. Ultimately, we decided that a negative performance evaluation should and would take care of itself. Either the employee improves their work performance and is able to recover and continue on their career, or they don't and it should result in them being terminated. In either situation, their longevity pay shouldn't be altered. President Thompson asked if there was a motion to accept the proposed Longevity Pay as presented with the amendment to not deduct years of service for negative performance evaluation years. Senator Tomlin made a motion and Senator Darr seconded. The motion passed.

Additionally, Dr. Jones is wanting to create a new Shared Governance committee. The current committee geared toward that is only comprised of faculty members. Dr. Jones wants the new committee to be made with faculty, staff, and students. So that idea is being tossed around. If anyone is interested in being on that committee, please let us know.

### Committee Updates:

- Campus Space & Utilization
  - No update
- Emergency Management & Safety
  - No update
- Access and Equity Committee
  - No update
- International Travel Advisory Council
  - No update
- Technology Prioritization
  - No update
- Insurance, Benefits, & Wellness
  - The committee discussed that the claims were trending higher at the end of the year but that is actually quite common with people reaching their deductibles. However, it is quite a bit higher than the year before.
  - They also wanted to remind everyone that you only have 14 days to enter your activity for the Wellness Program. So don't think you can enter all of our activity at the end of the month or end of the year and it still count.
- Presidential Communication

- General updates
- Staff Senate Fundraising
  - Senator Ayers is working on gathering sponsors for the cookbook
  - Cookbook renamed to Tastes of Tech volume 2
  - We are going to do one last push for recipes on OneTech
  - Getting started on the draft
- Faculty/Staff Senate Waiver
  - Data request has been submitted and returned so the committee has data to review
    - Data goes back as far as 2007
    - Data has also been anonymized
  - Faculty Senate is looking for a representative to join the committee
  - Open forum thoughts have switched. The committee feels that an open forum may not be beneficial and people would rather say their thoughts in an anonymous way.

**Concerns & Questions brought to Staff Senate**

<p>As an employee, I have concerns over the fairness of the Child Activity Leave. While every employee gets 8 hours of leave every year, those without children are not allowed to use this leave. Some people cannot have children and, instead, would like to be able to use this leave to attend events for nieces and/or nephews. I don't feel that it is fair that each year, people with children are allotted more time off than those without children. I wonder if there is a way to expand the policy to include more than direct dependents or grandchildren, or to compensate those without children equally.</p>	<p>The leave is allotted according to a state law. ATU follows the uniform attendance and leave policy act. This can be found in the Staff Handbook on page 166.</p>
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**Meeting Adjourned**

At 9:40 am Senator Rideau made a motion to adjourn, and Senator Ayers seconded. President Thompson concluded the February 6, 2025 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Whitney Moore, Secretary