

Staff Senate Minutes

December 5, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

President Kristian Thompson called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday December 5, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual online meeting.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Sabrina Anwar
Megan Bell
Jenna Bradley
Rachel Broussard
Bethany Brown
Kate Carter
Slade Dupuy

Bonnie Freeman
Shelly Hall
Connie Herring
Kim Hilliard
Kacie Lopez
Whitney Moore
Tanda Morrison

Cesiley Rideau
Nick Schluterman
Miranda Senn
Mackenzie Taylor
Kristian Thompson
Scott Tomlin

Senators Absent:

Peggy Ayers
Amber Jacimore

Katie Hook
Cody Neal

Visitor(s):

Alexis Scrimshire
Alisa Waniewski
Amber Meeks
Ashley Sheridan
Brandi Duvall
Eric Walker
Janet Carnahan-Lee
Jennifer Fleming
Julia Pope

Kathleen Martin
Kim McKown
Marcia Brown
Shanteal Scott
Susan Johnson
Tammy Weaver
Traci Halsted
Valli Ashcraft
Victoria Tomlin

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the November 7, 2024 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Hilliard filed a motion to accept the minutes. Vice President Herring seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

Special Guest

HR Representative Kim McKown

Special Report

Kim McKown brought a new Fact Sheet that was released by the state on Maternity Leave as well as our policy on CAT leave. She said she'd been having lots of questions regarding this topic lately and wanted to give some clarification. She also wanted to emphasize that if you ever have questions to come speak with her or Whitney. The CAT leave policy is in our handbook. You can find the FMLA request form on HR's website, as well as the CAT leave form for illness and maternity.

Senate Discussion

Dr. Santos has emailed and asked Staff Senate for a letter of support on a new course substitution policy for students with disabilities. President Thompson read the policy aloud and asked for questions and comments. The senate had a few questions regarding the policy that President Thompson is going to clarify. President Thompson asked if there was a motion to vote on if we want to write a letter of support for this policy. Senator Tomlin made a motion to vote via Webex once our questions were answered and senator Carter seconded.

President Thompson wanted to remind everyone to put in your vacation time for our winter break BEFORE you leave for break.

The senate discussed the upcoming raises and that the consensus is that people are concerned with the lack of transparency on why they are getting the dollar amount they have been assigned. Supervisors are also concerned because we keep telling employees to talk to their supervisors but not all supervisors have been looped in. Sometimes supervisors are still waiting on information from their supervisors to be able to disperse information. There was also a question that came up regarding long time employees. They feel they are being punished because they have been here so long that they are already up to CUPA so they won't see a raise.

At the end of the conversation, it was determined that, currently we are saying "I think this or that" and there isn't a clear message. President Thompson agreed that he should speak to Dr. Jones about it for points of clarification and transparency. (Please see below for minutes on the Staff Senate Special Called Meeting)

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
 - No update
- Presidential Communication
 - Contact your supervisor regarding your raises as they should now have that information
 - Raises will be given out separately in February to prevent several offices having to redo Notice of Appointments on the entire university. Your new pay will be fully reflected in your NoA in July
 - Raises still have to be approved by the board
- Staff Senate Fundraising
 - The committee is still pushing for a solid 50 recipes to be submitted for the cookbook before Christmas break.
 - Senator Carter brought some lovely templates for us to look at
 - Also, the last Staff Senate Cookbook was named Tastes of Tech so we are now considering new names.
- Faculty/Staff Senate Waiver
 - The committee has not met again.
 - The request for data will go out to OIS soon so that the committee can review that information
 - Thoughts of an open forum are being considered since there is such an interest in the topic across campus

Concerns & Questions brought to Staff Senate

<p>For some employees, “Summer Hours” are a negative change rather than a positive one. The change in hours cause difficulties for those with childcare. This is especially true for those that have to commute from farther away and now have to leave home earlier or get home later than they already do. Is it possible to advocate for making “Summer Hours” optional rather than mandatory?</p>	<p>“Summer Hours” have not been deemed mandatory. They are intended to allow employees more flexibility in their work schedule.</p>
---	---

Meeting Adjourned

At 10:03 am President Herring made a motion to adjourn, and Senator Tomlin seconded. President Thompson concluded the December 5, 2024 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Whitney Moore, Secretary