

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2025

2024-2025 Officers: T. Nupp (Chair), M. Rogers (Chair elect), M. Hankins (Secretary)

Senators in attendance: J. Aulgur, A. Black, S. Bhambhwani, C. Brucker, C. Capen-Housley, J. Clements, D. Dunnick, P. Dykema, J. Enderlin, S. Esobar, J. Grosskopf, S. Huss, V. Jones, M. Amjadi Kashani, T. Limeris, S. Meerza, L. Moody, M. Murphy, S. Reed, K. Waid-Jones, S. West, E. Treadway, X. Xiao.

Guests: ATU President R. Jones & VPAA/Provost A. Santos

Outgoing chair Dr. Tom Nupp spoke briefly before introducing Dr. Mike Rogers as the 2025-2026 Faculty Chair and Dr. Carl Brucker as the Chair Elect. Faculty senate members introduced themselves. Congrats to Lucas Moody who is now Dr. Lucas Moody!

Business Items:

1. The May 1, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved (Black moved, Huss seconded)
2. The following 2025-26 Committee Assignments were announced:
 - a. Faculty Senate Secretary – Virginia Jones has offered to served & was approved
 - b. Budget Advisory Committee (Senate Rep) – Siddharth Bhambhwani
 - c. Campus Space and Utilization (Senate Rep) – Virginia Jones
 - d. Emergency Management & Safety Committee (Senate Rep) – Shanna Esobar
 - e. Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee (Senate Chair or Rep) – “Murph” Murphy
 - f. General Education Committee (Senate Rep) – Jeff Aulgur
 - g. Graduate Council (Non-voting Senate Rep) – This was open; Jeff Aulgur volunteered to serve.
 - h. Institutional Aid Committee (Chair-Elect) – Carl Brucker
 - i. Institutional Scholarship Appeals Committee (Senate Chair or Rep) – Murph Murphy

- j. Professional Development Committee (Ex officio appointment) – Matthew Hankins
- k. Shared Governance (Senate Chair or Rep) – Sean Huss. Please note that with the formation of the new ATU Campus Council, it was recommended to strike this committee. See below for more information.
- l. Technology Prioritization and Impact Committee (Senate Rep) – Lucas Moody
- m. University Wide Recruitment & Retention (Senate Chair) – Mike Rogers
- n. UPTC (3-year term) – Jon Clements
- o. Campus Council: Sean Huss was elected to serve. As a reminder, the council has the following Senate Representation:
Faculty Senate Chair & Chair Elect
Faculty Senate Elected Member at large

Other Notes: Mike Rogers announced that the Senate would be moving to Room 312 in Rothwell effective September. He also reminded everyone that Faculty Senate meetings are open to everyone via Webex.

New Business

A. President Jones Update:

- 1. We have 1850 students in our dorms which is 90% occupancy.
- 2. As of August 19, we are even at SSCH.
- 3. ATU will see longevity bonuses in the September paycheck. These will be based on the number of years of Higher Education teaching at Arkansas public institutions. As there is currently no data on this, your department chair may be contacting you for that information.
- 4. Health insurance costs are an ongoing concern. ATU has an open bidding process but cost will probably increase. The university will look at salary adjustments for this year, but rising insurance costs could affect future salary adjustments.
- 5. Campus Council is new for this year and he is looking forward to working with that group. They will meet ahead of Executive Committee meetings.
- 6. Dr. Jones reiterated his support for a Distinguished Professor (DP) rank.

NOTE: Per Dr. Huss: The senate did pass a DP policy last year. The Executive Committee (EC) was dissatisfied with that policy and we need to revisit it to make adjustments so this new rank can be implemented.

- 7. President Jones also noted (1) the great response to the Involvement Fair, (2) the new buildings on campus that will be opening this year – The Agriculture building in November and the student union on March

18th of 2026. He also noted the addition of sponsored benches, pickleball courts, and the addition of sod between the new student union and the library.

B. VPAA/Provost Santos Update

1. ATU met the Higher Learning Commissions, Pathways to Learning review with no recommended monitoring. He thanked everyone involved with the process with a special shout-out to Amanda Gardner.
2. National survey on student engagement results have been released and will be shared at a future senate meeting. The survey addressed freshmen and seniors with a smallish sample size of 300, but it does provide a sense of year-to-year changes in students' views as they move through the college experience.
3. Legislative updates include the ACCESS bill (ACT 341).
 - a. The Post-Tenure Review policy must be in place by January 2026 which means it must be written and passed by the senate and go to the Board of Trustees for their approval. Dr. Huss and his writing group worked all summer and are refining the policy for senate approval.

Note: According to Dr. Huss, the main difficulty at this point, lies in the differences in contact percentages for different areas (teaching, scholarship, and service).
 - b. There are changes in concurrent enrollment policies. First, high school teachers will no longer be required to a Masters Degree to teach concurrent classes. Second, ATU will need to have a concurrent policy on the books, per the ACCESS bill. We rank #2 in the state for concurrent and this fall we will see a share of those enrollment dollars.
4. Technology improvements – approximately 30 new computers for this year and 140 next year.
5. New band uniforms have been purchased.
6. Hull will be revamped to serve as an event venue.
7. Dr. Santos discussed the importance of retention numbers; please this in mind as we work with our students.

NOTE: Susan West asked for a timeline for the General Education updates from ADHE given enrollment of students. Dr. Santos replied that (1) he responded to a survey from ADHE and (2) any new guidelines will not go into effect until the entering freshman class of 2027. (So current ATU students will not be affected by those changes).

C. Mike Rogers (Chair Update)

Recommended that the Senate initiate a “Faculty of the Month,” recognition that would honor ATU faculty members for work “above and beyond,” their assigned duties. He asked for a committee to be formed. This initiative will be forthcoming

Open Forum:

- The library would like to see a question about the library added to the student surveys (Angela Black).
- We need to look into the formation of a committee to help with the planning and organization of summer camps. More about this will be posted on Webex for discussion (Jacob Grosskoph).

No announcements or informational items

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10.