



Faculty Senate

## **Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

**December 8, 2025**

Officers in attendance: M. Rogers, President; Carl Brucker, President-Elect; Virginia Jones, Secretary:

Senators in attendance: A. Black, S. Bhambhwani, C. Capen-Housley, J. Clements, D. Dunnick, P. Dykema, J. Enderlin, S. Escobar, J. Grosskopf, M. Hankins, S. Huss, T. Limeris, T. Malone, S. Meerza, M. Murphy, S. Reed, K. Waid-Jones, E. Treadway, S. West X. Xiao.

Guests: Ashlee Leavell, Disability Services

President Mike Rogers called the meeting to order  
The November meeting minutes were approved

### **VPAA/Provost Santos provided updates on the following:**

1. The new Associate Vice-Provost (AVPAA) is Dr. Dan Clark. He starts January 2.
2. Talks with ADHE concerning new General Education requirements continue but one of the Legislative Mandates for additional history courses will result in three hours of US History AND three hours in American Government. ATU's Political Science will suffice for the American Government requirement.
3. Inclusive Access will continue (per support of SGA) with the following reminders to faculty:
  - Deadlines for declaring a course as I.A. will be enforced. Moreover, whatever option the original professor of the course selected, should another professor inherit that class for a given semester, the selected option cannot be changed.
  - It was noted by Dr. Dykema that students have the option to opt in or out of I.A. early in the registration process (i.e., October 2025 for Spring 2026).
  - There will be no I.A. option during summer school
4. ATU Faculty LIFE center will lead a statewide Professional Development Book Event with Dr. Sarah Cavanagh (Simmons University), on Wednesday January 28 between 2:00 – 3:00. The meeting is on Zoom. Dr. (Gini) Jones asked if a room could be reserved for the event. Dr. Santos will check into this with Dr. Johnson of the LIFE center.
5. Dr. Santos also announced that the January 7 PD will center on Assessment with a January 9 session on Retention. More details will be forthcoming.

### **New Business:**

Faculty of the Month Award: (Dr. Huss moved that this award precede the discussion of New Business; seconded and approved. Dr. Cheryl Monfee was recognized for her work with the "Linus Project." (Please see the write-up and photo by ATU's Sam Strassner on OneTech)

Service Dog Protocols: Ashlee Leavell from Disability Services covered (in short form) information regarding (1) what constitutes a service dog (2) how faculty can comfortably ask students about service dogs in the classroom (3) the responsibilities of the “handler/student” in controlling the service dog in the classroom or lab setting. Faculty are encouraged to consult the ATU Service and Assistance Animal Polior call Disability Services (479) 968-0302.

**Old Business:**

1. Faculty Sick Leave Policy:
  - Dr. Jones is open to giving up to 6 months of sick leave to new faculty and staff. His continuing concern is one of equity between faculty and staff. Several senators voiced concerns about this including:
  - Faculty are not hourly employees but are contract employees whose standard workload is determined by 12 hours of spring and fall classroom instruction (or equivalent); faculty does not just “do” office work. Senators (including Sean Reed, Mike Rogers and others) voiced concerns over low morale, and whether or not faculty would have to log their hours. Mike Rogers urged a revision of the standing Faculty Senate Handbook policy (adopted in 1980) and asked for a committee to take this up:
    - Dr. Debra Murphy volunteered to chair the committee. Serving with her will be Senators Cass Capen-Housley, Sean Reed, and Senate Secretary Virginia Jones. Sean Huss volunteered to serve as advisor.
2. Distinguished Professor Rank revisions. Done and moving to Board of Trustees for approval
3. Merit Pay Discussion: Awards would be weighted by college size with any leftover to be left to Deans’ discretion. Debra Murphy moved to affirm. Jon Clements on record as opposed due to morale issues. The issue was tabled for the February meeting.

**Committee Updates: The following committees reported:**

Campus Council/ Angela Black: First meeting of 2026 will be the first Friday in February. The new office of campus events released the Usage Policy and Procedures for the Ferguson Student Union.

Campus Space & Utilization Committee/Virginia Jones: December meeting to be held on Thursday, December 10. She will report on that meeting in February.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30