



STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, December 7, 2016
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

President Fraser called the Tech Staff Senate to order on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 10:03 a.m. in Doc Bryan Senate Room 180.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Rachel Alexander
Sandra Anderson
Brandi Collins
Pam Cooper
Shawna Davis
Andrea Eubanks
Rhonda Fleming
Lindelle Fraser
Tammy Guarino
Tiffany Henry

James Higgs
Margie Link
Brittany Martin
Annie McNeely
Jeff Mumert
Jeff Nichols
Julia Pope
Bettye Williamson

Senators Absent:

Brittany Flippo
Heather Taylor

Visitor(s):

Dr. David Blanks, Head, Department of History and Political Science and
Professor of History
Jennifer Thomas, Ozark Campus Representative

On December 7, 2016, the minutes from the November 2, 2016 meeting were distributed electronically and approved as corrected (meeting location changed).

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Anderson announced that she is moving to a new position with the Center for Leadership and Learning. Senator Anderson agreed to keep her position on Staff Senate as a representative for Facilities Management, and all Staff Senate members unanimously approved.

Dr. David Blanks, Head, Department of History and Political Science and Professor of History visited the Staff Senate meeting to discuss the creation of a super committee for Diversity and Inclusion to represent faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Blanks wanted everyone to know about the committee and purpose. The Diversity and

Inclusion Committee was originally created in response to the Strategic Plan, specifically Goal I: Human Core. In September, 2016, the University requested volunteers for the Diversity and Inclusion Committee; however, there were not enough staff members represented. University President, Dr. Robin Bowen, requested that Dr. David Blanks implement a Diversity and Inclusion plan to make sure that faculty, staff, and students are equally represented.

Dr. Blanks explained that the Diversity and Inclusion Committee will consist of several working groups to include review of curriculum and policy/procedures with a focus on recruitment and retention. Dr. Blanks also indicated that the committee will look at both internal and external communication standards.

In an effort to make sure that everyone is comfortable providing input, University President, Dr. Robin Bowen, has requested that the committee work with focus groups versus public forums.

Mid to late Spring 2017, Dr. Blanks plans to have the focus groups established and approved. By Fall 2017, Dr. Blanks plans to meet with the focus groups and develop an action plan. The action plan is tentatively scheduled to be complete by Spring 2018.

Dr. Blanks understands that there are numerous issues that must be addressed and the timeframe may not move as quickly as desired, but he asks for patience in that it is important that the Diversity and Inclusion initiative be developed and implemented in the best way to ensure success.

Senator Link asked about the number of faculty/staff that are currently represented and Dr. Blanks indicated that 80% of the campus is not represented equally. Specifically, the University does not have adequate diversity represented in faculty/staff, and everyone needs to be included and have a voice.

Dr. Blanks also indicated that the Diversity and Inclusion Committee is outside of the scope of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. While Dr. Blanks will be working closely with Dr. MarTeze Hammonds, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, the purpose of the committee is to ensure that faculty/staff are represented in the same way that students are. All faculty and staff are encouraged to volunteer.

Dr. Blanks will be meeting with Dr. Jeff Mott, Chief of Staff, in the next week for formal approval to develop the focus groups and will then come back to Staff Senate with more details going forward.

For more information about the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, please contact Dr. David Blanks (479-968-0266 or dblanks@atu.edu).

ATU Phishing and Fraud Policy

President Fraser distributed the current Phishing and Fraud Policy for review of requested changes to remove the statement regarding disciplinary action. Staff Senate unanimously approved taking out the statement.

Space/Offices assigned for Doc Bryan Student Services Bldg.

President Fraser brought forth an anonymous complaint regarding the condition of some offices on-campus, specifically the office of Mr. Heath Whorton, University Emergency Manager. The complaint was directed toward the condition of Mr. Whorton's office as a representative of Tech because his office had exposed pipes and was very unprofessional.

The question was raised as to utilization of empty space in Doc Bryan Student Services Bldg., and why Mr. Whorton's Office could not be relocated. President Fraser distributed the floor plans for Doc Bryan Student Services Bldg., showing the current office allocation (first page is 1st floor and second page is 2nd floor). According to the plans, all of the space in Doc Bryan Student Services Bldg., has already been allocated for other offices (Tutoring Center, Office of Career Services, Office of Disability Services, Health and Wellness Center, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and a Student Union).

President Fraser indicated that many of the offices listed have been underutilized due to lack of adequate space and will now have the room needed to expand and offer enhanced services. For example, the existing Health and Wellness Center has three nurses and counseling services with records stacked from floor to ceiling in the exam rooms.

The empty space in the Card Office will be used for Veteran's Services, as a student meeting room. Room 105 is currently used as an African-American meeting room and will remain. Senator Higgs asked about the space that will be available when the Health and Wellness Center moves, but President Fraser did not have specific information about plans for other possible open spaces on-campus in the future. Bids for renovating Doc Bryan Student Services Bldg., will start in Spring 2017 with plans to have all offices moved by Fall 2017 at the earliest.

Early Holiday Dismissal

The question was raised regarding early dismissal for staff who do not work 8 a.m.-5 pm. as early holiday dismissal at noon is not applicable for employees who work earlier or later shifts. The same courtesy of early holiday dismissal should be extended to cover employees who work a different shift so that they are not required to work a full shift before early holiday dismissal at noon.

Senator Anderson was thankful for the announcement on One-Tech for the previous holiday year (2015-2016), but she asked that the announcement be made each holiday year (no announcement was posted on One-Tech for 2016-2017).

Senator Collins indicated that early holiday dismissal for employees who do not work 8 a.m.-5 pm. was previously addressed with the inclement weather policy; however, the previous administration decided not to change the early dismissal at noon to include other shifts.

Senator Martin indicated some confusion over holiday pay requirements in that she had a scheduled surgery for her son that was approved two weeks in advance to include the early holiday dismissal (4 hours of holiday pay). Right before submission of her leave she was told by Payroll that the employee must work the day before holiday break to receive 4 hours of holiday pay and she was required to submit 8 hours of leave.

Senator Cooper indicated that she received two different answers regarding holiday pay when she contacted Human Resources and Payroll. She was told by the Payroll office that Ms. Bernadette Hinkle, Vice President for Administration and Finance, changed the policy right before holiday break.

Senator Collins stated that she is under the impression that holiday pay will be addressed by University Counsel, Mr. Thomas Pennington, as part of the Staff Handbook revisions.

President Fraser asked that a committee look at holiday pay standards at other in-state colleges/universities. Senator Martin and Senator Anderson will complete the requested research and report their findings.



ARKANSAS TECH
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Fraser indicated that she now has a scheduled meeting with University President, Dr. Robin Bowen, and will also speak with University Counsel, Mr. Thomas Pennington, to see if Staff Senate can obtain a working copy of the Staff Handbook after January 2017.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, January 4, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 204 of Baswell Techionery.

ADJOURNMENT

President Fraser adjourned the meeting at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Pope, Secretary

