

Staff Senate Minutes

February 6, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Lou Ann Reeves called the Arkansas Tech Staff Senate meeting to order on Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 10:01 am in Doc Bryan Student Services Center 108.

**ROLLCALL**

**Senators Present:**

Kelli Bates Angela Bell Michelle Bishop Josh Carey Pam Dixon Brandi Duvall Andrea Eubanks Megan Green Braxton Lay Chelsea Martin Marvin Mashburn Michelle McMinn Lou Ann Reeves Tera Simpson Charity Smith Denise Wallis

Karissa Web

**Senators Absent:**

Dona Kirkpatrick Chris Pearson

**Visitor(s):**

Dr. Susan Underwood, Dr. Hannah Norton, Dr. Jeff Robertson

**Visitor Presentation**

Representing the committee for the university’s re-accreditation process with the High Learning Commission (HLC), Dr. Susan Underwood, Dr. Hannah Norton, and Dr. Jeff Robertson presented information concerning the re-accreditation process, its importance to the university community, and how staff members can help in that process.

Being accredited is important because it allows for the transfer of academic credit to and from our institution, as well as qualifies the institution to receive federal financial aid monies. Our last review was in 2011.

The HLC will be visiting ATU November 9-10, 2020. To prepare for that visit the HLC Accreditation committee is preparing an argument and evidence to prove how ATU is meeting the HLC accreditation standards.

Between now and November 2020, the HLC committee will be holding open forums, poster sessions, and general meetings and invite the ATU staff to attend, give feedback and get involved. For more information, visit [www.atu.edu/hlc](http://www.atu.edu/hlc) or email Dr. Susan Underwood at sunderwood@atu.edu.

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the December 5, 2018 meeting, and the January 2, 2019 meeting were distributed electronically to the Senate and at the meeting. Senator McMinn filed a motion to accept the minutes and Senator Dixon seconded the motion. The Senate voted to approve the minutes.

**Committee Reports**

* Ethics Committee – Senator Martin reported that the Ethics Committee will be meeting soon.
* Official Function Committee – Senator Martin reported that the committee had met and discussed broadening the Official Function policy. More information will be available after the next meeting.
* Fees Committee – President Reeves reported that the Fees committee met to discuss several priorities, including the proposed Student Union and the possibility of a library fee and student health service fee in the future.
* Budget Advisory Committee – President Reeves reported the Budget Advisory Committee met to discuss several projects proposed for funding. A renovation for the Hull Building is being reviewed, this would include filling the pool in and using it as a large, multi-use space. The BAC committee is still hearing feedback on this idea. The BAC also reported that Spring 2019 enrollment is down 4.4%.
* President’s Communication Committee – President Reeves reported that she will send out notes from this meeting to Senators starting at the next PCC meeting. Senators can then cascade that information to their constituency. Updates from the PCC:
  + Faculty/Staff tuition waivers are now processed online.
  + The university brand study is entering the final stage.
  + Title IX annual training is mandatory and you will receive multiple emails concerning the training. Use the most recent email you receive to access that training because the links expire after two weeks.
  + Dr. Bowen spoke about meeting with the new mayor of Russellville. She stated that staff can support the university by continuing to support the new entrance to campus project as citizens of Russellville.

**Old Business**

President Reeves opened the floor for discussion of a survey to be sent to all Russellville staff to measure the knowledge and perception of the Staff Senate on campus. A sample survey was distributed electronically for review. Senator Bell proposed a change to the survey to align answers with a Likert scale instrument and add a question to assess if staff know they can view the Staff Senate meeting minutes online. President Reeves suggested the addition of a question to assess if staff are aware of the online feedback form. Senator Martin filed a motion to approve the survey with the changes suggested by Senator Bell and President Reeves. The motion was passed unanimously.

President Reeves opened the floor for discussion of the Fall/Spring Staff Update event. Senators reported that feedback from their areas indicate:

* The meeting is too long,
* The information is redundant considering the information is the same as what gets reported via the President’s Communication Committee
* Items that are reported on are not reported on in enough detail to give actionable context

President Reeves reported that the Faculty/Staff Fee Waiver committee added additional language to the policy after the Staff Senate’s review in December 2018. The Senate was unclear as to how campus-wide committees are charged to communicate with the campus when decisions or changes are made regarding policies.

President Reeves reported on the Staff Appreciation Night event. The event will be February 28 at Tucker Coliseum. Doors open at 5:30pm and employees and their immediately families will be able to attend the men’s and women’s basketball games for free with the presentation of a valid Tech faculty and staff ID. T-shirt and popcorn/drinks voucher will be presented to the first 75 employees to arrive. President Reeves requested volunteers for the event. Senators Dixon, Martin, Eubanks, Vilavanh, McMinn, Wallis, and Bishop volunteered to help with the event.

**New Business:**

President Reeves met with Dr. Bowen to discuss items on the Senate’s agenda. Dr. Bowen stated that she would like the Senate to work on staff morale and a staff awards initiative.

President Reeves opened the floor for discussion of increasing the size of the Staff Senate from 20 to 21 senators to account for the increase in staff hires at the Russellville campus since 2015. It was determined by the Senate that an accurate count of staff is required to make this decision. President Reeves stated that she would research an accurate count of staff. Senator Vilavanh filed a motion to table this discussion until the March Senate meeting. Senator Martin seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

President Reeves opened the floor for the discussion of adding a voting member to the Staff Senate to represent the Ozark Campus. The Senate discussed the benefits and detriments of adding a voting member to represent Ozark. The Senate was concerned that adding a member to represent Ozark would infringe upon the autonomy of the Ozark Campus Staff Senate. Vice-President Eubanks filed a motion to keep the Staff Senate representative of the Russellville campus and to not add a voting member to represent the Ozark campus. Senator Lay seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

President Reeves opened the floor to call for volunteer for Staff Senate sub-committees. The volunteers for the Senate Constitution & Bylaws Committee are: Senators Simpson, Lay, Wallis, Reeves, and Eubanks. The volunteers for the Staff Awards Committee are: Senators Reeves, Martin, Bell, Bishop, and Dixon. The volunteers for the Election Process Committee are: Senators Vilavanh, McMinn, Smith, Reeves, and Duvall.

Senator Vilavanh asked if there was any news about the possibility of paving the walkway between the Brown Hall parking lot and the Caraway/Browning/Public Safety parking lot. It was reported that a staff member has fell on that gravel walkway due to uneven terrain. President Reeves stated she would bring this up to the division of Finance and Administration.

**Announcements**

The university purchased the farm near The Wall on Phoenix Avenue.

New HAS enrollees need to complete account set up. It takes about a week to receive your card. New enrollees will receive $500 in seed money one time.

February 12 is the Legislative Assembly reception in Little Rock.

Insurance Committee will be meeting soon.

Staff Cookout is May 23, 11:00-1:00 in Tucker Coliseum.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Senator Bishop filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator McMinn seconded the motion. The Senate voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:50am.

**Next Meeting:**

March 6, 2019, @ 10:00 am in Doc Bryan 180

Respectfully submitted,

Tera Simpson, Secretary