



STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, March 2, 2016
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The Tech Staff Senate was called to order by President Collins on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 202 of Baswell Techionery.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Sandra Anderson
Brandi Collins
Pam Cooper
Shawna Davis
Rhonda Fleming
Brittany Flippo
Lindelle Fraser
Amanda Handley
Tiffany Henry

Danny Jones
Margie Link
Annie McNeely
Jeff Nichols
Julia Pope
Lindsey Riedmueller
Ryan Taylor
Roger Trusty

Senators Absent:

James Higgs
Jeff Mumert
Bettye Williamson

Visitor(s):

Jennifer Thomas

On March 2, 2016, the minutes from the February 3, 2016 meeting were distributed electronically and approved as corrected. The minutes from the special meeting on February 24, 2016 were distributed electronically and approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Holiday Break and Vacation Hours

After researching holiday break schedules at peer institutions within the state, Senators Cooper, Fleming, and Fraser found Arkansas Tech's current policy to be better or comparable to most. The senators recommended this item of business be closed.

Pay Schedule

With nine yeas and six nays, the senate voted to recommend an annual election for individuals to select a monthly or bi-monthly pay schedule for themselves. President



OLD BUSINESS (continued)

Collins will bring the recommendation before Brooke Southard, Interim Director for Human Resources and Payroll, for further discussion and research.

TIAA-CREF changes

In February, senators Shawna Davis, Rhonda Fleming, Bettye Williamson, and Margie Link participated in a conference call with Nicollette Dixon of TIAA-CREF and Brooke Southard, Interim Director for Human Resources and Payroll. Senator Fleming shared her notes from the call:

The panel approved contribution rollovers for employees who leave Arkansas Tech.

The panel also approved hardship withdrawals using elective contributions (any amount above the 6% required employee contribution – this does not include the 10% employer contribution). To request a hardship withdrawal, the account holder must be an active ATU employee. Employees using this option may not make elective contributions for six months after the withdrawal. In addition, hardship withdrawals are subject to taxes and penalties. A final cap amount has not been set at this time, but it will not exceed \$50,000.

Loan terms are still being researched and discussed. Long-term impact is an issue of concern at this time. The senate is requesting more definitive answers on terms for individuals and potential effects on the overall ATU system. This item has been tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

Classified Salary

In the past month, President Collins has spoken with Dr. Bowen and has participated in the Budget Advisory Committee meetings. The State of Arkansas determines base salaries and salary caps for classified positions. To increase pay scales, the university must determine the institution is losing talent due to a lack of competitiveness via Fair Market Labor (FML) studies. So far, FML studies have been conducted for information technology and public safety positions. In addition, performance evaluations will be used to determine merit raise eligibility in the near future. Employees must meet expectations to be eligible for merit raises.

Communication methods

The senators discussed the current methods of campus wide communication and potential gaps. The senators agreed to reach out to constituents and ask about perceived communication gaps. Feedback will be shared at the next regular meeting.



NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Academic Accomplishments Booklet

Staff members are now eligible to submit accomplishments to be published in the Academic Accomplishments Booklet. Examples of accomplishments are published papers, journal articles, conference presentations, and funded grants. Vice Presidents for each division will review and approve submissions. To be included, submissions must pertain to profession and/or content area in which the staff member works. Employee recognition will be organized as follows: Russellville faculty, Russellville staff, and Ozark faculty/staff. Ozark submissions will be combined or split based on the number of submissions. The booklet will be printed in June, before the end of the fiscal year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moving Days for Brown Hall:

- 3/09/16 Budget
- 3/14/16 Payroll
- 3/21/16 Human Resources
- 3/23/16 Registrar
- 3/24/16 Student Support Services
- 3/28/16 Upward Bound
- 3/30/16 Veteran Services
- 4/04/16 Financial Aid
- 4/07/16 Student Accounts
- 4/11/16 Admissions

GOOD AND WELFARE

Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Baswell Techionery, Room 202.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m. by President Collins.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindelle Fraser, Secretary

