



STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, April 5, 2017
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

President Fraser called the Tech Staff Senate to order on Wednesday, April 5, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in Baz Tech 204.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Sandra Anderson	Tiffany Henry
Brandi Collins	James Higgs
Shawna Davis	Margie Link
Andrea Eubanks	Brittany Martin
Rhonda Fleming	Julia Pope
Brittany Flippo	Heather Taylor
Lindelle Fraser	Hope Vilavanh
Tammy Guarino	Bettye Williamson

Senators Absent:

Rachel Alexander	Jeff Mumert
Pam Cooper	Jeff Nichols

Visitor(s):

Mr. Bruce Curl, Interim Director of Human Resources
Mrs. Christine Shuffield, Human Resources Representative
Jennifer Thomas, Ozark Campus Representative

On April 5, 2017, the minutes from the March 1, 2017, meeting were distributed electronically and approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Bruce Curl, Interim Director of Human Resources, addressed Staff Senate regarding recent changes to maternity and catastrophic leave as part of Act 182 of 2017. Mr. Curl introduced Mrs. Christine Shuffield, Human Resources Representative, in order to discuss the policy on Catastrophic Leave for Maternity Purposes (draft provided to Staff Senate).

Mrs. Shuffield indicated that mid-March, 2017, the Board of Trustees approved four weeks of paid maternity leave for full-time, non-faculty, female employees within twelve weeks of giving birth or adoption of a child. The eligible employee must



complete an application and be employed on a full-time basis for at least one year. Coverage will run concurrently with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Maternity leave will be paid for out of the catastrophic leave fund in accordance with provisions allowed by Act 182 of 2017.

Mrs. Shuffield stated that the Catastrophic Leave Committee receives six to seven applications per year leaving a surplus of available hours. Currently, there are 90,000 hours of catastrophic leave available. In addition, employees are asked to donate excess sick leave to the catastrophic leave fund upon completing an exit interview. Senator Collins asked for clarification on annual leave accrual during the four weeks of paid maternity leave. Mrs. Shuffield indicated that the employee will not earn vacation or sick hours during the time of paid maternity leave.

Senator Martin asked for clarification in regards to the monthly insurance premium. Mrs. Shuffield indicated that the insurance premium will be deducted during the four weeks of paid maternity leave. Senator Collins raised the question regarding specific wording of Act 182 of 2017 (female only designation) and whether the University would adhere to this designation. Mrs. Shuffield indicated that the University is using the exact language as it is written in Act 182 of 2017, and any additional changes must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

While the time frame for payment of eligible maternity leave is still being decided, Mrs. Shuffield said that any eligible employee currently on maternity leave has been notified as of March 16, 2017. The policy on Catastrophic Leave for Maternity Purposes will be available as soon as the draft is finalized.

Senator Pope provided details about a concern received by a representative regarding comp time for employee(s) who work outside of the 8-5 pm work day. The employee(s) in question works full-time (8-5 pm) Monday through Friday. Currently, the expectation is that there will be no compensation or time off for extra hours worked. President Fraser indicated that we need to find out if the employee is classified or non-classified as the policy on compensation for extra hours varies based on the classification. Senator Pope will try to obtain the requested information and report back to Staff Senate. All senators agreed that at the very minimum, supervisors need to be trained in addressing compensation for overtime, especially if the employee is not eligible.

Staff Senate initially listed compensation for extra hours worked in the top twelve items to be addressed. As of May 6, 2015, compensation for extra hours, excessive overtime, and weekend hours worked were under review as part of amendment 7 and 8, pg. 34 and 35 of the Staff Handbook.



Senator Davis asked about the possibility of restructuring staff titles in order to increase salaries, which would also facilitate promoting from within the University. Senator Davis will draft an email to send to Mr. Bruce Curl, Interim Director of

Human Resources, to find out if this is something that can be addressed by Human Resources and if possible under state regulations, especially for classified staff.

Committee Membership Updates

President Fraser is serving on the Safety Task Force and represents Staff Senate on the Budget Advisory Committee

Senators Eubanks, Link, and Cooper are serving on the Non-classified Evaluation Task Force

Senators Link and Guarino are serving on the Human Resources Screening Committee

Senators Collins and Taylor are serving on the Budget Director Screening Committee

Senators Henry and Pope are serving on the Service Obstacle Committee

Senator Pope is serving on the Faculty Senate/Shared Governance Committee

OLD BUSINESS

Emergency Training and Building Manager Program

President Fraser spoke with Mr. Heath Whorton, University Emergency Manager, regarding previous concerns from representatives about the need for more comprehensive emergency training and administration of the building manager program.

The building manager program was initially established with two representatives per building, but lack of response and interest in some areas has complicated the process. While some first aid classes are available, the University is working on purchasing more defibrillators. Senator Link agreed that not enough employees in each building have CPR training or know how to use a defibrillator.

Senator Martin brought up concerns regarding the lack of emergency training specific to the individual building. For example, the differences in emergency procedures during “tornado season” for a single floor building versus a building with four floors, such as Brown Hall. In addition, building managers need to be selected and evaluated based on their work schedule, especially if the manager is in an administrative/supervisory position and likely to be out of the building on a regular basis.

The addition of a graduate assistant in the office of Mr. Heath Whorton will continue to improve the process of assigning and maintaining building managers. President Fraser indicated that she is serving on the Safety Task Force and requests for



additional emergency training have been made. In addition, a mobile emergency operations center is under development.

Along with concerns regarding emergency training, the issue of communicating safety threats across campus was raised because of a recent incident in which a student left “threatening” voice mails directed at specific offices. Many senators were alarmed to learn of the incident in the local newspaper two weeks later. Senator Link pointed out that she works in the Student Accounts Office, one of the offices included in the student’s voice mails, and she also learned of the incident through the local newspaper.

The concern is that all employees need to be aware of the threat as soon as possible. The suggestion was made to have public safety officers placed in the “threatened” buildings for 24-48 hours or at a minimum, distribute the student’s name for referral to public safety if the student is seen on-campus.

Senator Eubanks, Institutional Assistant for Academic Affairs, indicated that the voice mails were received through Academic Affairs and no direct threat was made by the student to come on-campus. The student is not currently enrolled and all supervisors for the impacted offices were notified by Academic Affairs in a timely manner. In addition, there are legal parameters that prevent disclosure of specific information until formal charges are filed and caution must be used in the notification process to prevent compounding the problem with undue panic or alarm. President Fraser indicated that she would contact Mr. Josh McMillian, Chief of Campus Safety, to work on the communication process and address specific concerns.

Senator Collins, Project/Program Specialist for University Relations, indicated that MARCOMM under the University’s Strategic Plan is also working on communication for the entire campus to include a campus newsletter, announcements on One-Tech, and using a text messaging service.

Senator Henry added that some of the emergency training and communication issues could be addressed using the service obstacle submission form. Currently, the Service Obstacle Committee is finalizing the service obstacle form to be used by all students, faculty and staff to assist in identifying service obstacles. Senator Henry will provide the website with access to the service obstacle form for senators to pass on to their representatives.

Book Adoption Process

Senator Anderson asked if it is possible for departmental secretaries to have view access for all book adoptions versus specific courses. President Fraser directed Senator Anderson to contact the administrative staff at Barnes and Noble.



Budget Advisory Committee

President Fraser indicated that the Budget Advisory Committee is working on education regarding the budget process to reduce or share costs across campus.

Currently, there is a Budget Office website, but the information needs to be more comprehensive. The Budget Advisory Committee will work towards offering informational videos online.

Director of Human Resources

Senator Guarino announced that the Human Resources Screening Committee will have on-campus interviews for potential candidates on April 14 and 17, 2017.

Electronic Time Sheets

Senator Martin asked Senator Flippo, Fiscal Support Analyst for Payroll, to give an update on the status of electronic time sheets for classified staff. Senator Flippo indicated that all new employees are using electronic time sheets upon being hired however, moving the entire campus to electronic time keeping will be a more involved and lengthy process.

Staff Handbook

President Fraser announced that Mr. Thomas Pennington, University Counsel, will attend the May 3, 2017, staff senate meeting to address progress on the staff handbook.

Student ID

Senator Link provided an update on student ID's for extra labor, as the policy has been changed to allow extra labor employees to request a student ID. Student ID's for extra labor will be yellow so that the ID is easily identifiable and door access to on-campus buildings will be allowed as authorized by the employee supervisor. Senator Link asked if a card reader using the blackboard system will be used to swipe the student ID. President Fraser indicated that she will contact Dr. Sean Huss, Associate Professor of Sociology and Faculty Senate, Chair, and ask for clarification.



ARKANSAS TECH
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GOOD AND WELFARE

Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in Baz Tech 204.

ADJOURNMENT

President Fraser adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Pope, Secretary

