



## STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, July 5, 2017  
Meeting Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER

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

### ROLL CALL

#### Senators Present:

Brandi Collins	Brittany Martin
Pam Cooper	Jeff Mumert
Andrea Eubanks	Jeff Nichols
Lindelle Fraser	Julia Pope
Tiffany Henry	Heather Taylor
James Higgs	Hope Vilavanh
Margie Link	Bettye Williamson

#### Senators Absent:

Rachel Alexander  
Sandra Anderson  
Shawna Davis  
Brittany Flippo  
Tammy Guarino  
Rhonda Rodgers

#### Visitor(s):

Angela Black, Assistant Librarian, and Fund Drive Coordinator for Green and Gold Cupboard  
Will Cooper, Student Development Specialist  
Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources  
Jennifer Thomas, Ozark Campus Representative

On July 5, 2017, the minutes from the June 7, 2017, meeting were distributed electronically and approved.



## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Green and Gold Cupboard Food Drive**

The Food Pantry, Because We Can, was previously introduced by Dr. Sean Huss, Associate Professor of Sociology and Faculty Senate, Chair, to help ATU students, faculty and staff (see minutes from November 2, 2016). Ms. Angela Black introduced herself to Staff Senate and provided some background on her role with the Green and Gold Cupboard outside of her duties as Assistant Librarian for the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center.

Ms. Black is coordinating the Green and Gold Cupboard Food Drive and needs help from Staff Senate to spread the word across campus (July 17 to August 18, 2017). ATU donated the building/house on West K Street and Arkansas Avenue, along with a \$67,000 grant from Tyson Foods to help purchase freezers and get the building/house ready. With creation of the Food Pantry, ATU joins over 510 other colleges around the country in providing help for those in need. The Food Pantry will have a soft opening in August, 2017 (exact date to be determined).

The Green and Gold Cupboard Food Drive will be a team competition with one point awarded for each non-perishable, non-expired donation (items in need will be awarded two points and cash donations will be given one point per each dollar). Senator Cooper, Development Office, indicated that cash donations can be accepted as long as it is clear who the money is coming from and can also be considered a tax deduction.

Teams will complete an online registration form and donations will be picked up each week. Angela suggested that offices/departments work with their supervisors to determine participation. Volunteers are needed to help stock the Food Pantry, pick-up donations around campus, calculate points, etc., so everyone is encouraged to provide support as an excellent service opportunity for Staff Senate. Ms. Black will be sending more information, including the online registration process <http://atu.edu/foodpantry/>, beginning July 17, 2017. President Fraser requested all Senators distribute to their representatives.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Grievance Procedure**

Mr. Will Cooper, Student Development Specialist, addressed Staff Senate as a representative of the current grievance ad-hoc committee and student conduct advisor. Mr. Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources, was also present to provide feedback regarding changes to the grievance procedure. In regards to the Student Conduct Process, Mr. Cooper indicated the process is designed so that the student does not have direct contact with the complainant. Mr. Cooper suggested Staff Senate look at the same guidelines, possibly eliminating the ten minute questioning between employee, supervisor and witnesses. Mr. Cooper also specified that most of the grievances he has



participated in have been after termination of employment or in regards to a salary dispute. Senators unanimously agreed that the potential for confrontation between employee and supervisor should be avoided and can be accomplished without direct contact. Senators unanimously agreed that there must be both an informal and formal grievance procedure to allow for mediation to occur prior to the formal process (formal grievance should be used if informal grievance is not resolved).

Under the definition of “employee,” the statement regarding full-time employees should be changed to include part-time and extra labor. Senators wanted to know how the three business day deadline was determined and suggested the need for a longer time frame in resolving the grievance at both the informal and formal level.

Informal grievance needs to include mediation with Human Resources representative, which protects both the employee and supervisor. Clearer definition of when the informal grievance ends and formal grievance begins is needed. Senator Collins asked about the exception made for sexual harassment and suggested that the exception be worded for all types of harassment.

Formal grievance should not include the nomination of one full-time ATU employee and an employee nominated by the administrator that reports to the President. Impartial parties should be selected from Executive council or members of Staff Senate (suggested two employees selected).

In regards to court costs associated with a formal grievance, funds need to be allocated by Human Resources or the appropriate Vice President in order to avoid conflict between employee and department. In addition, there are concerns that the cost may be used as an incentive to avoid a formal grievance.

Employee should be the last person to give the closing statement (change order of letter P and Q). Senator Henry questioned grievances brought up as a result of closing statements that are outside of the initial grievance. The suggestion was made to add a statement giving the Chair discretion over additional grievances that should be included or need to be addressed separately. Senator Collins asked for clarification in the language if the President is not readily available (need appropriate substitute, if applicable).

Opportunities for direct interaction between, employee, supervisor, and witnesses should be removed from the formal grievance procedure, again to protect both the employee and supervisor. Mr. Freeman indicated in his experience the employee filing the grievance is ultimately responsible for communicating their point of view, which can present a significant challenge. The intent is to make the process as efficient and objective as possible using discretion by the Chair in making decisions that are mutually agreeable to all parties. Senator Cooper requested the addition of the University’s statement regarding a zero tolerance policy for retaliation.



Senators unanimously support the need for a Human Resources representative to be an integral part of the informal and formal grievance procedure. Human Resources has the expertise needed in mediating conflict and can be objective in determining what constitutes a grievance and how the grievance should be handled. Mr. Freeman indicated that both he and Mrs. Christine Shuffield, Human Resources Representative, will serve as the Human Resources contact for the grievance procedure. Mr. Freeman also stated that Human Resources is committed to fulfilling their role as part of the grievance procedure.

Mr. Thomas Pennington, University Counsel, was not present. Salary/Payroll Policy will be discussed at the next Staff Senate meeting. President Fraser will summarize feedback regarding the grievance procedure and email to Mr. Pennington.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Brian Lasey, Director of Physical Plant, submitted an estimate to Ms. Bernadette Hinkle, Vice President of Administration and Finance, to fix the pot holes in the Old Tennis Courts/ Brown Hall Parking Lot.

#### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, August 2, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in Baz Tech 204.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

President Fraser adjourned the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Pope, Secretary

