



## STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, July 6, 2016  
Meeting Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER

The Tech Staff Senate was called to order by President Collins on Wednesday, July 6, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 202 of Baswell Techionery.

### ROLL CALL

#### Senators Present:

Brandi Collins  
Pam Cooper  
Brittany Flippo  
Lindelle Fraser  
Tiffany Henry  
James Higgs  
Danny Jones  
Margie Link

Annie McNeely  
Jeff Mumert  
Jeff Nichols  
Julia Pope  
Lindsey Riedmueller  
Ryan Taylor  
Roger Trusty

#### Senators Absent:

Shawna Davis  
Rhonda Fleming  
Amanda Handley  
Betty Williamson

#### Visitor(s):

Thomas Pennington, University Counsel  
Jennifer Thomas, Ozark Campus Representative

On July 6, 2016, the minutes from the June 1, 2016 meeting were distributed electronically and approved as corrected.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Staff Handbook

Thomas Pennington, University Counsel, visited with the senate to share information about the newest version of the Staff Handbook. At present, the handbook is still in draft form. Per Mr. Pennington, the following peer comparisons were used when drafting the 2016-2017 version: UCA, SAU, Arkansas Highway Department, and the Arkansas Office of Personnel Management. The policies within the handbook are derived from law and should be applied consistently across the board. The new changes are pending board approval and must comply with



#### Staff Handbook (continued)

applicable statutes and regulations. Once the handbook is complete, it will be available online with active links to necessary forms. In addition, Mr. Pennington noted the 2016-2017 handbook is a working document and can be re-evaluated if necessary.

#### On-boarding

Mr. Pennington shared information about the recently adopted on-boarding process for new employees. Every 90 days, Human Resources hosts an orientation designed to connect new ATU employees with resources and information. May, June, and July new hires will attend the August 17<sup>th</sup> on-boarding sessions.

#### Vacation Buyback and Early Retirement Incentive

Senator Jones asked about the potential for vacation buyback, stating there was interest. Mr. Pennington shared the idea of early retirement incentive. An example would be a pay out of “x” amount for every year of service.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Sick Leave Cash-out

Presently, classified employees with more than 400 sick leave hours may cash-out up to \$7,500 upon retirement. The current ATU policy on sick leave cash-out does not extend to non-classified employees. The state of Arkansas allows institutions to determine policy on sick leave cash-out. President Collins has submitted a request to Dr. Bowen that the university extend the policy to cover non-classified employees as well.

#### Grievance Policy

The senate asked Mr. Pennington to look into options for extending the grievance policy to all employees, extending time limits for reporting, and the potential for bypassing a supervisor. Senator Pope also asked about options for creating a body to accept and review staff grievances, such as a staff welfare committee. Mr. Pennington will look into options and bring information back to the senate for consideration.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Insurance options are currently under review. Information will be available at a later date.

Beginning in October, employees will be notified when they are nearing sick leave and vacation leave thresholds.

### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

Our next regular meeting will be Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in Baswell Techionery, Room 202.



**ARKANSAS TECH  
UNIVERSITY**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m. by President Collins.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindelle Fraser, Secretary

