

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Scott Tomlin called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid meeting held via WebEx and in RCB 355.

**ROLL CALL**

**Senators Present:**

Amy Anderson  
Joceline Argueta  
Megan Bell  
Jenna Bradley  
Madisyn Chance  
Kate Darr  
Andrea Eubanks

Matt Frasier  
Bonnie Freeman  
Amanda Gardner  
Connie Herring  
Kim Hilliard  
Katie Hook  
Kacie Lopez

Tanda Morrison  
Austin Norman  
Cesiley Rideau  
Nick Schluterman  
Melissa South  
Mackenzie Taylor  
Scott Tomlin

**Senators Absent:**

Rachel Broussard  
Bethany Brown

Shelly Hall  
Whitney Moore

Cody Neal

**Visitors:**

Valli Ashcraft  
Nichole Edwards

Marika Lederman  
Chelsea Martin

Kimberly Turner  
Eric Walker

A quorum was confirmed.

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the December 4, 2025 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes. Senator Herring seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

**Old Business & Committee Reports**

- Campus Space & Utilization
  - No update. Senator South inquired about how to contact the committee to determine the next meeting time. President Tomlin stated that the meeting does not meet regularly. Susan McCall, Drew Dicky, and Brendalyn Shockley were identified as points of contact for follow-up.
- Emergency Management & Safety
  - No update. Senator Anderson also inquired about how to contact the committee regarding the next meeting time. President Tomlin will investigate.
- International Travel Advisory Council
  - No update. President Tomlin will investigate current membership of the committee. Senator Gardner announced the Alumni and Friends Travel opportunity to Germany, scheduled for December 13-20, 2026. Information

about this trip is available at:

<https://www.atu.edu/studyabroad/alumniandfriends.php>.

- Technology Prioritization
  - No update. Senator Schluterman indicated that he has not received communication from the committee.
- Insurance, Benefits, & Wellness
  - Senator Herring reported that the January meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled in two weeks.
- Presidential Communication
  - President Tomlin reported that general campus updates were shared, including an upcoming boiler replacement at Baswell and a partial closure of the parking lot in front of Hull. New administrators, Dr. Dan Clark and Dr. John Lewis, attended their first Presidential Communication meeting. President Tomlin shared that he may explore inviting them to meet with Staff Senate in the future. Due to inclement weather, the Tucker Coliseum 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration was moved to Saturday. The Ferguson Student Union is scheduled to open on March 18. Drew Dicky offered to share blueprints regarding the parking lot closure.
- Budget Advisory
  - Senator Frasier reported that the committee is finalizing budget details and moving toward presenting a finalized budget to the Board of Trustees.
- Campus Council
  - Vice President Hilliard reported that the committee meets next Friday and has been charged with developing a formal definition of Shared Governance for ATU. They transitioned the Campus Camps Committee to a task force, chaired by Brian Fisher. The task force aims to provide training for individuals involved in hosting or initiating camps on campus.
- Faculty/Staff Waiver Committee
  - President Tomlin aims to finalize the recommended changes prior to the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting in May.
- Staff Senate Fundraising Committee
  - Senator Darr reported that ten books remain available for purchase. She has reached out to the bookstore to explore selling the remaining copies through their location. Senator South proposed selling the cookbooks at the Retired Faculty and Staff Luncheon April 23. The proposal was supported, and arrangements were made to transfer the cookbooks to Senator South for the event.
- Faculty Senate Collaboration
  - President Tomlin reported that this working group is continuing to explore options for developing an algorithm to normalize salary compression based on years of service. The group hopes to provide a report by the end of the term.

## **New Business**

- Staff Benevolent Fund

President Tomlin opened discussion regarding whether Staff Senate should continue investigating the establishment of a Benevolent Fund for staff or add it to the future agenda for incoming officers. He reminded senators that officer elections will take place in April and that all current officers are either up for re-election or rotating off. Senator Darr recommended forming a committee to further explore the idea and volunteered to chair the committee. Senators Morrison and South volunteered to serve.

- Staff Survey

President Tomlin opened discussion regarding the possibility of conducting a staff survey. The last survey was administered in 2024, and no formal guidelines exist regarding survey frequency. A Strategic Plan working group has requested access to data collected from prior surveys. Senator Herring recommended revising and updating the previous survey questions. President Tomlin, Senator Gardner, Senator Chance, and Vice President Hilliard volunteered to serve on a committee to establish guidelines for consistent survey timelines and to develop a survey for this term. Senator Darr recommended preparing the survey for distribution by April.

- Nominations for Staff Awards of Excellence

President Tomlin opened nominations for the third annual Staff Awards of Excellence. Senators may nominate staff members for three awards: ATU Service Award, ATU Community Service Award, and ATU Outstanding Employee of the Year. Nominations will remain open until February 18. Nominations must be submitted by staff senators but may be recommended by constituents. Nominations are anonymous. Winners will be announced on March 4 at Employee Appreciation Day. Award recipients receive a physical award and a monetary prize. The Service Award and Community Service Award recipients receive \$500 each, and the Outstanding Employee of the Year recipient receives \$750.

## **Announcements**

- Officer elections will be held in April.
- Nominations for senators will open in May, with results announced in June.
- Employee Appreciation Day will be held March 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Chambers Cafeteria West Dining Room.
- Additional information will be announced soon regarding appreciation events at a softball or baseball game.
- Senator Broussard will be hosting an informational session about booking summer camps on February 24 at noon in RCB 134.
- The Tucker Coliseum 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration has been rescheduled for this Saturday.
- Senator Eubanks shared the flyer for the Germany trip in the Staff Senate group chat on WebEx.

## **Meeting Adjourned**

At 9:30 a.m. Senator Rideau made a motion to adjourn, and Senator Herring seconded. President Tomlin adjourned the February 5, 2026 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanda Morrison, Reporter