

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Scott Tomlin called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid meeting held via WebEx and in RCB 355.

**ROLL CALL**

**Senators Present:**

Amy Anderson	Matt Fraser	Austin Norman
Joceline Argueta	Bonnie Freeman	Cesiley Rideau
Megan Bell	Amanda Gardner	Nick Schluterman
Jenna Bradley	Shelly Hall	Melissa South
Rachel Broussard	Connie Herring	Mackenzie Taylor
Bethany Brown	Kim Hilliard	Scott Tomlin
Kate Darr	Kacie Lopez	
Andrea Eubanks	Tanda Morrison	

**Senators Absent:**

Madisyn Chance	Katie Hook	Cody Neal
	Whitney Moore	

**Visitors:**

Hailey Addison	Julia Pope	Kim Tate
Vallie Ashcraft	Michelle Price	Jennifer Taylor
Marcia Brown	Eric Rector	Kimberly Turner
Brandi Duvall	Tammy Rye	Eric Walker
Susan Johnson	Shanteal Scott	Alisa Waniewski
Chelsea Martin	Alexis Scrimshire	Tammy Weaver

A quorum was confirmed.

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the March 5, 2026 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Vice President Hilliard made a motion to approve the minutes. Senator Darr seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

**Old Business & Committee Reports**

- Campus Space & Utilization
  - No report.
- Emergency Management & Safety
  - Senator Anderson reported there is a meeting scheduled.
- International Travel Advisory Council
  - No report.
- Technology Prioritization
  - No report. Senator Schluterman has not received communication from the committee. The status of this committee will be reviewed.
- Insurance, Benefits, & Wellness

- Senator Herring reported they are reviewing suggestions and researching options. The representatives will be meeting next month regarding claims statuses.
- Presidential Communication
  - President Tomlin reported during the meeting Dr. Clark announced the AI series. Shauna Thorup from NAC is presenting “Human in the Loop: AI Literacy meets Information Literacy” today, April 2. Dr. Clark may be on a future agenda to discuss AI at ATU. Mr. Solomon reported on Ferguson Student Union usage in the first few weeks. Mr. Bramlitt announced the Out of the Darkness walk scheduled for April 11. Ms. Galbo announced sexual assault awareness month activities. Ms. McCall discussed the upcoming inventory. Mr. Dicky announced that Witherspoon renovations will begin May 11, along with central green space updates scheduled for this summer. Mr. Fisher teased a concert for May 1. Ms. Kitchens talked about an alumni event in NWA, and announced October 9 and 10 as the Homecoming dates for 2026. Mr. Strasner announced Coach Fimple had his first press conference. Light the Night is April 8.
- Budget Advisory
  - Senator Fraser reported that the budget is under final revisions prior to approval.
- Campus Council
  - President Tomlin reported that the next meeting will be on April 23.
- Faculty/Staff Waiver Committee
  - No report.
- Faculty Senate Collaboration
  - No report.
- Benevolent Fund Ad Hoc Committee
  - Senator Darr reported that she has reached out to the people with the student version, the Fight on Fund, and she has collected information from other institutions on their requirements and policies.
- Staff Survey Ad Hoc Committee
  - President Tomlin is meeting with Dr. Jones next Thursday for feedback and collaboration.

### **Election of Officers for FY 26-27**

- Staff Senate went into executive session to nominate and elect officers for the next senate year. The results are as follows:
  - President: Melissa South
  - Vice President: Mackenzie Taylor
  - Secretary: Kate Darr
  - Reporter: Nick Schluterman

### **New Business**

- May Staff Senate Nominations
  - Nominations and elections for senators will happen in May. Eight senators are rolling off, and the new Enrollment Management division added 2 new senators, for a total of 10 senators. 3 in Academic Affairs, 4 in Admin & Finance, 2 from Enrollment Management, and 1 from University Council.

- Federal law concerning non-exempt employees
  - Staff Senate discussed potential impacts of the federal law concerning non-exempt employees' eligibility to teach in adjunct positions.

**Concerns**

- Campus Rec Center constituent concern

<p>I see where faculty/staff have free access to Ferguson Student Union campus rec center beginning May 11. It would be extremely nice if faculty/staff had free access. Period. That would be a great employment benefit that would cost the university nothing. The cost of the facility is already sunk. Let us use it. Again, this cost the university NO ADDITIONAL MONEY to give this benefit to all employees. I don't use Tech Fit as it is. I don't want to pay for it and the hours of operation are never great. It is all about money. We don't have money for raises, bonuses, insurance cost is up, cost of living is up, salaries have not kept up with inflation.....blah blah blah etc. This cost no additional money to the university to provide the weight room/rec room as a benefit to employees. Additional stuff like the spin classes/fitness classes should still cost money for employees. I am good with that. But give us the weight room facilities as an employment benefit.</p>	<p>The union operates as auxiliary units funded entirely through the student fee, no ENG or general university funds support the facilities. The current student fee is \$23.85 a credit hour, which is roughly \$358 a semester if enrolled in 15 hours, or \$715.50 annually for 30 hours. Annual student fee revenue is approximately 3 million, and about 1.9 is allocated to the bond that we took out to pay for the building. The remaining funds support utilities, operation, staffing, programs, and services. Staffing includes student workers, custodial staff, and select full time personnel.</p> <p>The student fee will remain in place for the foreseeable future, the bond is a 30-year note. Student fees were researched by SGA &amp; student committees. They looked at peer institutions and the fees were approved by SGA and subsequently by the board of trustees. The primary purpose of the campus rec center and the student union is to serve students, and usage will be monitored and future adjustments may be considered to expand access where appropriate.</p> <p>They are coordinating with payroll, HR, and other offices to determine access and payment processes for employees. Membership costs will be subject to applicable taxes and added to the approved rates. Payment options currently under consideration include payroll deduction, and a purchase method similar to how parking permits are currently purchased. No rate changes are anticipated for the coming fiscal year.</p> <p>Any future changes would require approval through SGA and the board of trustees. Any additional faculty/staff benefits related to the use of the campus rec center should be coordinated through human resources.</p>
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## **Announcements**

- Employee appreciation game day will be at the Baswell Field on April 7 at 3 p.m. to watch ATU play the Christian Brothers.
- An AI Literacy talk will be April 2 at 1 p.m., more information can be found on OneTech.
- Reminder to submit Tech Talk proposals by April 7.
- The next Staff Senate meeting is May 7, the same day as Tech Talks.
  - Senator Eubanks made a motion to postpone the next meeting until May 14 at 9 a.m. for senators to participate in Tech Talks sessions, and Senator Herring seconded. The motion was approved by Senate vote.
- The Fourth Annual Research Symposium, where students on campus present their work, is April 9.

## **Meeting Adjourned**

At 10:25 a.m. Vice President Hilliard made a motion to adjourn, and Senator Herring seconded. President Tomlin adjourned the April 2, 2026 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanda Morrison, Reporter