Staff Senate’s 2019 ATU Staff Senate Survey

The below scores are reflected as an average. The scores are **bold** and underlined.

(1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent)

* How would you rank the Staff Senate presence on Campus? **3.3607**
* How would you rank the Staff Senate’s representation of staff to the university administration? **3.3852**
* How would you rank the communication from your area’s Staff Senator? **3.6885**
* How would you rank the ease of the Staff Senate election process? **3.5328**
* How would you rank the publicity of the Staff Senate election process? **3.2295**
* How would you rank the Fall and Spring staff update presentations by Dr. Bowen? **3.3770**
* How would you rank ATU’s work culture? **3.2869**

(1 = not important at all, 2 = less important than other things, 3 = important, 4 = very important)

* How important are social events like the Staff Appreciation Night and the Staff picnic for social morale? **2.6148**

The below were presented as yes or no questions.

* How supportive are you of the Staff Senate and Faculty Senate working together?
  + 95% - supportive; 5% - not supportive
* Are you aware that the Staff Senate meetings are open to the public to attend?
  + 57% - no; 43% - yes
* Are you aware the minutes and agenda for each meeting are posted on the Staff Senate website?
  + 69% - yes; 31% - no
* Are you aware of the staff senate’s online feedback form?
  + 56% - no; 44% - yes

Open-Ended Responses

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| All feedback below is from scores of 2 or lower: |
| I just never hear anything about the senate unless it's election season. More communication is key. |
| The Fall and Spring updates are long and often times redundant. It seems to be information that could be emailed out instead of having to sit and listen to speakers for an extended amount of time.  Campus morale is low. Information is not communicated or dispersed well. The public knew before the campus of the head football coach's resignation. It is embarrassing to be asked by a community member about it and not even know because I had not seen the press release yet. People are upset that our insurance committee did not work very well to get us the best rates. When you compare our insurance to other state schools, it is pathetic what we have to pay. |
| I don't even know who my staff senate representative is, much less receive updates - I found out about this survey by reading through The Scoop. Every staff member should know who their representative is and at the very least receive an email a few times a year - very difficult to feel connected or represented. Social events are more of a challenge, as many employees have families and outside work commitments that make it difficult to attend functions. For myself, I would rather have a boss who is approachable, can deal with conflict, listens and supportive versus a picnic. |
| Social events just aren't things that personally interest me, or that I would attend. |
| I did not rank anything that low. However, I wish you would announce when Minutes are posted and where to access them each time they are posted. Remembering where to access the information is difficult. |
| I feel like the appreciation nights and picnics are just a way to say that appreciation is being shown. They are more for show than they are to really be something that the staff wants or needs. The last thing that most of us want to do after work is hang around at work. Better ideas might be to give out gift cards to Chambers or BazTech for food that we can get when we want it. It wouldn't have to be on a certain day at a certain time. It would be when it is convenient for the staff member. The way it is now if you are out sick or on vacation you just miss out on whatever is being done. Other options might me an extra day off. This might be a day of the staff members choice so that the campus is not closed. This technically costs nothing extra! |
| On the second question, I wanted to put unsure, because I don't know if the senate meets with university administration or not. Communication from my area's representative is pretty much non-existent. I only know what is going on, if there are announcements posted. I feel like the representative should send out an email with notes on what has been discussed and decided. The work culture right not seems like staff has no support or backing and that brings down morale. |
| I do not feel that I receive any communication from my staff senator and I am not included in any way. I do not feel that the staff senate represents me as a staff member. I receive no information about anything that the staff senator does. The only time I am informed about goings on is during Dr. Bowen's spring and fall updates. |
| I think the Senate does what they can with what they have, but in comparison to the Faculty Senate, they do not get anything accomplished. Faculty Senate gets things done, and the administration backs them. Administration seems to shut down everything that the Staff Senate presents, and sometimes without any answers on why. I think the Staff Senate is a facade to make it look like we have a self-governing body, but really nothing comes of it. I don't think that is the Senate's fault. I think that letting us be able to make a difference on this campus through our Senate would be worth more for morale than picnics and appreciation nights." I think that supervisors should be able to vote for their senators. Dr. Bowen's update is always just a review of the things we see posted in Arkansas Tech News or in the OneTech announcements Ã¢Â€Â“ with the exception of budget updates which are appreciated. It's hard to not close our office and coordinate to send everyone at the times the sessions are offered in addition to lunch hours. Finally work culture - I think so many of our benefits as staff members are being taken away and it seems that trend will continue. In addition to that I feel like many of the agendas from the Staff Senate have been squashed by administration. I think it makes many of us bitter and feel like our work culture is the administration barking orders down at us and we are expected to do more for less." |
| Staff Senate does not have support from Administration to make changes. Social events are not helping with work morale |
| Only option that I'm aware of on voting during the election process is via blackboard or paper ballots located at Facilities Management. Have other options on voting besides blackboard and a central location for paper ballots. |
| Previous years we received emails, no emails this past year. |
| I would like to see staff receive a gift card to the cafe (any on campus) to use at any time, or an extra day off with pay would be so appreciated. The appreciation night and the picnic is not of service to me, staff are not always available to attend these events. I think a true appreciation gift would be the food gift card or the day off with pay without having to use vacation time and both would be cost efficient to the university as well. |
| The Staff Senate presence itself is not average." I feel like they do a good job however their resources are limited to allow for the type of presence they are capable of having for staff. If the Staff Senate is better supported then I believe they could do fantastic things for the staff they represent and the campus as a whole. Staff and Faculty senate should already be working together. "One campus" right? I had no idea when elections took place or how to even vote. Dr. Bowen's Spring and Fall updates tend to have outdated or irrelevant information for staff. Also the times of the presentations are a hardship on offices to ensure 100% attendance, stagger lunches, and keep the offices running. I understand this is part of the open communication initiative which is appreciated. ATU has a good Work Culture but there is certainly room for improvement. Employee moral is something that needs to be address. There was a good effort with the service awards. There are many other non-monetary incentives that could be implemented. Opportunities to "purchase" or earn days to wear jeans options for promotions/hires from within when there is a strong candidate already trained and available (Why is this not a thing? Do we not want to award our loyal employees that are capable of the job? This would help lower turnover rates and save money that we desperately need now with lower enrollment numbers). Budget is also a problem, and it always will be. Have you asked employees how much they spend on office supplies/extras from their own money? I don't mean just pens and highlighters, but office chairs and bigger items like that as well. Communication needs to continue to improve. An easy fix is to allow time for staff development within offices. 30mins to an hour a week would help tremendously in this area. Anyway, I digress... I had no idea faculty and staff meetings were open to the public. And it sounds like it would be odd to just show up. What if there were invitations sent out to employees each month to help encourage participation? Can they be streamed live with a link on the Employee tab on OneTech? " |
| I feel the president and executive committee haven't clearly communicated to the Staff Senate why a policy allowing promotion from within and advertising within the institution can't be an option. All 4-year institutions in the state have policies such as this. Why is this not an option at Tech if an exceptionally qualified applicant is already on staff? |
| I gave the Staff Senate's (SS) representation of staff to the university administration a 2 because a majority of the issues that the SS deals with are superficial. They tend more toward general complaints then actual policy grievances. One exception would be the handling of the proposed Drug Testing policy from last summer. I am supportive of more direct work with the Faculty Senate (FS) because they deal with much more substantive matters than oil diffusers in offices or drinking fountains in the Brown Building (just two of many examples).  I indicated that Staff Appreciation Night and the Staff Picnic are not important at all for social morale because the issues with moral are not about a lack of free hotdogs, popcorn, or even interaction with my peers. Morale is low in my area because of poor senior-administrative decisions. For fear of a loss of anonymity, l provide very general examples: going from the second cheapest 4-year public institution in the state to the second most expensive (in terms of tuition and fees) all the while adding three new assistant VPs and numerous other administrative positions; having four VP of Academic Affairs in five years, including one we paid $16,600 a month for two months while he was incommunicado; and the latest, spending 4.3 million dollars that the institution does have, then asking everyone to bear the burden, not just those who overspent. Trust me, the list for our office(s) can go on, and on, and on.  I ranked the Fall and Spring staff update presentations by Dr. Bowen a 1 because while the examples listed above (and many more specific ones in my day-to-day work) lay heavily on my mind, I am forced by my supervisor to attend a posturing pep rally full of half-truths and empty platitudes. Again, I provide examples: sorry your work load has increased through poor decision making, here's a water bottle, get lots of rest. A more telling example is the recent OneTech announcement about the budget fiasco gross.  Finally, I gave ATU's work culture a rating of 2. The main reason it was not a 1 was because I know my peers across campus are experiencing the same issues as I am. I try to remember that the reason I come to work every day is to help students better their lives. Despite inept administration, what the faculty and non-administrative staff do helps facilitate that goal. ATU is bigger than a bad choice(s) in administration, and it will live on after they are gone (though in as worse financial situation). To know I can help a student persist to graduation is enough to overcome the blatantly ignorant decision making and half-truths espoused by those who make my yearly salary in three months. |
| The work culture at ATU has continued to diminish. It is NOT about staff pay or raises. It is the culture that staff are not appreciated with the assumption that offices are overstaffed and underworked. When positions go unfilled, that sends the message to everyone else in the office they can and should take on that position's work without recognition. When new initiatives, directives, and expectations come, it sends the same message when no new means to get the additional work done is provided. |
| It seems like there is a lot of disgruntlement especially from faculty based upon my interactions with faculty senate. I have recently read faculty senate minutes in which departments on campus were criticized before faculty had even reached out to that department to ask for information or clarification. My suggestion is that before any complaints are made in the faculty or staff senate meetings, that senator is expected to have already reached out directly to that department head or director to express concerns and gain further information. If the concern isn't resolved and it needs to be brought to faculty or staff senate, then the senator would proceed. I should not be reading complaints (in faculty senate minutes) about my department that have never been brought to my attention by the faculty member. Had I not read the minutes, I would not have known that there was an issue. Professional, collegial, and direct communication can be improved on our campus. |
| I wish those who supervise could be on staff senate. As a manager, I am excluded and think I could lend support to the cause. |
| Staff senate needs to look into what can be done to add incentives to the staff. Wellness is overlooked, health insurance plans are terrible. There is no incentive for staff to care or become more involved in Tech. Staff exists and that's it we need to take of our staff for what they do and their dedication to Tech. |
| The appreciation events are after hours and the majority of staff are not going to come to the workplace on their time off. I feel there are other things that would be appreciated more such as: a discount for Chartwells or food vouchers for other places on campus. Another idea might be to provide pizza for one department a week until all departments have been treated. |
| I only saw the information regarding how the staff senate process worked as the election was occurring, the information about staff senate is not well known in terms of the representation each area can receive/members at large  The work culture at ATU is extremely poor, there is an imbalance of the understanding by leadership of what is necessary to complete tasks/duties. Some Executive Council members are not available to their division, which then makes the appearance that those who work under them are only parts of the machine and not important contributors to the success of the university. Individuals who are in leadership roles who should take more action to push the university forward do not see the need to move past the current quid pro quo - this relates to all in supervisory roles not just EC members. Some parts of ATU functions as though if it ain't broke don't fix it." If ATU wishes to be a leader in not only education but a leader in the river valley for employment and provide a good working culture; then ATU needs to transparent and start making changes that progress it rather than just to continue to do something because "that's how we have always done it"" |
| Social events for staff that are after work hours are not conducive for staff members that have to pick children up from daycare and/or go home and help children with homework. Also with budget cuts being a reality, where does the money come from for things like the staff picnic? |
| Better communication and I did not know the minutes and agenda are posted on the website. |
| There needs to be MUCH more publicity during the nominations phase. A lot of people do not know when the nominations deadlines are approaching until elections are upon us.  Also, Dr. Bowen's staff meetings get longer and longer. We have actual work that needs to be done. The spring semester updates were almost all information that was already provided to us via Arkansas Tech News or in The Scoop. Please stop repeating things we should already know and give us real highlights that we want to hear, like staffing updates, insurance needs, etc. |
| Not being sure what is meant by Staff Senate presence on campus, but if you mean are they 'visible' then I have honestly never seen the Staff Senate around campus, if you mean something other than being 'seen' around campus, then still, I don't see them. I don't know their faces if I did see them around campus. Maybe a list with their photos and who/departments they represent. I know their is a photo on the Staff Senate website with the members, but I still don't know who they are or what areas they represent. |
| Election process: I have worked here for 4 years and had no idea how to vote until this year, and that was the runoff. I had no idea about the original election. |
| I think the Fall and Spring meeting that Dr. Bowen is a great tool to continue to communicate with the overall campus. In saying that, I feel that others do not attend like they should because employees want to hear what is new and upcoming instead of items that have already passed. |
| I do not hear feedback from meetings, and was unaware that there was a website and the minutes are posted on its website. I will view the website to become more aware of staff senate things. |
| Appreciation night is a fine gesture but when you have full time employees needing to visit the university pandry two or more times every month, the real appreciation would by a salary increase for those employees who make so little that they cannot feed their families. |
| What the Staff Senate does and why it exists isn't clear. |
| put minutes on the web site sooner. |
| Staff updates should be sent as a newsletter. I dont think that being out of the office for that amount of time is beneficial. |
| Any of my scores are not a direct reflection on the Staff Senate, rather my dissatisfaction with the toxic campus culture in general. Rather than spending money we don't have on pointless appreciation" nights and water bottles wouldn't we be better stewards of our money by using that money for things that matter- raises, helping pay a larger portion of our healthcare, etc. I find these token gestures insulting to those of us it is aimed at appeasing. Since we are so broke we should probably keep hiring VP's and AVP's because we obviously don't have enough of them. Each semester Dr. Bowen's staff update is a pathetic attempt to keep the ignorant informed. Her lies and misrepresentation of the "facts" are also insulting to our intelligence as if she thinks we are all too stupid or ignorant to find the actual numbers she sugar coats. I can appreciate the model of distributive leadership but in reality it has turned us into an administration heavy broke institution. Each VP is so far deep into their silo there is a massive waste of funds due to duplicate efforts. " |
| How would you rank the Staff Senate's representation of staff to the university administration?  I feel as if the staff senate has no real power. Ideas are shut down by the administration and not considered based on seemingly obscure reasons. |
| 3 I'm not too familiar with it |
| I don't care much for social staff events. It feels like something extra to add to my busy plate. I'd rather have flexible job perks as morale boosters, like a culture that welcomes schedule flexibility, freedom to check social media without a judging eye, etc. I know some departments are more flexible than others, but some of us are out here needing a break. I understand we're paid adults and we should be 100% devoted to our work, but it's a hit to the morale seeing other departments enjoy some lax while others fear walking into the office at 8:01am. |
| The good is that he presentations are informative, and it can be encouraging to hear about making progress and achieving goals. However, the presentations are long. Most of the information is good to know but is too detailed. Many staff work hard to keep up with issues in his/her own area of work making overall university concerns seem overwhelming. I enjoy the social events in smaller groups such as within a college or department. |
| The distribution of the Senate needs to be revised, as too large a number of staff come from FAMA. It would also be helpful if upper administration took Staff Senate's concerns seriously, instead of dismissing them. There is a growing perception among staff that they are not valued and seen as inferior to faculty. If administration would treat staff as assets instead of liabilities, morale would improve. |
| Do something more supportive to the staff instead of a Appreciation Night or a Staff Picnic that a lot of us can't attend. |