

Staff Senate

August 10, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Note: The remarks of the senators and others are summarized and not verbatim. The recording of this meeting is available in the Staff Senate Secretary's office.

PRESENT: Sandy Baldrige-Adrian; Lisa Bair; Matthew Barnes; Penny Bell; Jean Bennett; April Betsch; Roger Brown; Katherine Byron; Chris Carter; Brittany Donatelli; Vivian Ford; Brian Hutchinson; Geoffrey Insch; David Klauder; Michelle Lewis; Ebony McCray; Alexis McGarvey; Kelly Moore; Bradley Queen; Walter Showers; Wendy Singleton; Jennifer Stewart; Samantha Sullivan; Michele Varga; Sharlene Zwing

SUBSTITUTIONS: None

ABSENT: David Speiser

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Michael Benson; Dr. Dan Ennis; Travis Overton; Kim Sherfese; Jim Solazzo; Amanda Craddock; Sara Hottinger

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- June 2021 Motion by David Klauder; Second Matt Barnes; Motion passed
- July 2021 Motion by Sharlene Zwing; Second by Vivian Ford; Motion passed

SENATE PRESIDENT REMARKS:

- Welcome to all the new senators in attendance. I am glad you are all here and willing to serve.
- We had some members who had to step back from their role and we are working with the Membership Committee to fill those replacements.
- The Board of Trustees meeting was held last week and I gave my report.
- The Board of Trustees reviewed the University's mission, which they do annually, and it passed with no revisions.
- Executive Council had two meetings since our last Staff Senate meeting. They reviewed and voted on policies in the first of the two meetings. Those were already announced to the University, including the one from Staff Senate about the tuition waiver. Make sure you review those policies.
- A new change to the way policies will be reviewed is that the final approval will now go through the Board of Trustees. After that, it will go through the normal steps on campus.
- The office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has launched its Diversity Dashboards. Those are located on the University's website under DEI Diversity Dashboards. There is a lot of interesting information there.

- Mail delivery and pick up routes have been reactivated. There is one central delivery location per building. You can visit the Mail Services website to find your delivery location.
- The photography Department is holding open studio hours for head shots on the 24th and 25th of August. August 24th from 9am to noon and August 25th from 1pm to 4pm. First come, first served. If your entire department wants to be photographed you can reach out to Judy Johns for a special time for everyone to attend.
- The COVID-19 Vaccine initiative has been announced and students are already uploading their vaccination records.
- The email listserv process is currently being reviewed and adjusted to make sure that the correct individuals are on the right list. There will no longer be one centralized fac/staff listserv. Once complete, individuals will need to specifically select faculty and staff for communication to go to the entire University community.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is working with ITS to better the gender management system to ensure each person's chosen name and pronouns are displayed across campus systems. Your area may be getting questions from Emily Gaspar to figure out what systems you have and how they interact with the rest of the systems on campus.
- EPMS notices have gone out and the development of planning stages is currently in process for your supervisor. All of you that are supervisors, the review cycle has begun, so please make sure that you complete those items.
- Enhancements have been made to the EPMS and a tutorial is available. If you have additional questions or concerns, please reach out to HREO directly.
- One of the recent topics to come in was regarding the Tuition Wavier and when it was going to be announced. That was apart of the policy email that was sent out a couple weeks ago. Make sure you go to the policies page to see the update.
- There was also a question about a tuition wavier or free tuition for dependents. We've talked about this before and the information has been forwarded to the groups that have been working on it. We have to wait for state legislation to be changed, or to be modified or clarified in order to move to the next step.
- COVID operations has had a lot of questions over the last week. The Board of Trustees did discuss and approve the University's Fall Operations Plan that President Benson sent out in his email last Friday. Everyone is encouraged to find and read the email and click on the links. A lot of the questions submitted to Staff Senate have been answered directly in those emails.
- Staff Senate also received some questions regarding car charging stations; are we going to add more, is there a way to regulate the vehicles that are parked in there? The Department of Transportation, Public Safety, and Sustainability are all working together to put forward some suggestions and see what we can do. We are aware that one is not currently functioning that is easily accessible to faculty, staff and students. We are working on getting that one fixed.

PRESIDENT AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

President Benson:

- The Governor maintained in his press conference that he would not walk back the Proviso that stipulates that we cannot mandate face coverings.
- We have 3 new Board of Trustee members.
- The Vax to the Max program that we rolled out has had a tremendous response from our students. The State Editorial was very complementary to our program. It could be a model for other institutions.

Provost Ennis:

- Provost Ennis is preparing a message to the faculty on instructional matters. The email will be sent to both faculty and staff. The key points will be that campus classrooms will look very much like Fall 2019. 75% of classes will be face-to-face only, 10% are hybrid, and 15% will be full distance learning.
- The Trustees affirmed that we can encourage mask wearing and the same for vaccinations. The University will not require proof of vaccination as a condition of attendance. We can collect information about vaccinations as a part of general public health and safety protocols and incentivize vaccinations.
- Thursday at 4:30pm will be an Academic Affairs Town Hall. The link will be sent out in an email.

Travis Overton:

- As of Friday, the University shifted out of emergency operations. The phases were associated with emergency operations and we are now in normalized operations.
- COVID-19 is no longer being identified as a pandemic, but endemic.
- University Convocation and the General Faculty Meeting will be on Monday at 10am in Wheelwright. A link will be sent out in an email. Pick up Lunch for Faculty and Staff will be available after the meeting.
- On Tuesday, our new class will be welcomed to campus with New Student Convocation at 4pm. Phase 1 will be at the HTC Center and phase 2 at Brooks Stadium.
- There will be another public meeting with DOT to discuss the median on 544. The campus will be updated, hopefully, by the end of August or maybe into September. We want to fully evaluate and hear our Conway community members.
- If you are using University Marketing Communication for any marketing or communication requests, they are shifting to a ticketing system like ITS uses. A formal announcement will go out.

Jim Solazzo:

- This coming Fall we have 2,515 first time freshmen coming in.
- 672 transfer students. This is a little below what we usually have.
- Overall enrollment is 9,967 students.

- As of yesterday, a little less than 1200 students have uploaded their vaccination records; that is more than 10% of our students.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

In an effort to streamline Staff Senate meetings, but also continue to collect valuable employee feedback data, the Senate will begin referring Topic Suggestions that relate to specific areas of operation to the appropriate person in those areas. The Senate will continue to collect these submissions and will review them in total each semester to determine if there are organizational patterns that should be addressed by the Senate as a whole.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Policy and Welfare Committee – no report

Membership Committee – no report. Sandy mentioned they are working to fill the seats of the senators who had to step down or found employment elsewhere.

Communication Committee – no report

OLD BUSINESS:

- none

NEW BUSINESS:

- none

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- New student move in starts Friday, August 13th and Saturday, August 14th.
- On both nights of August 13th and 14th there will be Fall Family Welcome in the HTC Center.
- University Convocation is being held at 10am on Monday, August 16th in Wheelwright with an option to livestream. Grab-and-go lunch will follow thereafter.
- New Student Convocation is at 4pm on Tuesday, August 17 in the HTC Center. They will move to Brooks Stadium after.
- Fall semester begins August 18th.
- Open studio hours on Tuesday August 24th from 9am to 12pm, and August 25th from 1pm to 4pm in Hampton Hall 113.
- The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion along with Faculty Senate and Staff Senate will be hosting a reception for new and returning staff of color on Thursday, August 19th from 4:30pm

to 6pm in the Singleton Ballroom. Everyone is encouraged to stop by. Light refreshments will be served. An invitation will be sent out soon.

- Next Staff Senate meeting will be September 14th at 9am in the Alford Ballroom with livestream available. The meeting link and agenda will be sent out and the link to livestream will be posted on the Staff Senate website.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:02 am.