

Staff Senate Meeting

February 12, 2024

Attendance:

Jacqueline Winters-Allen	Jenna Scanling	Jessica Redding
Qing Qing Norris	Melissa Lappe	Rob Bridges
Patrick Steimer	Molly First	Lindsey Jefferson
Kelley Price	Donald Spencer	Claire Rutte
Ryan Capps	Janice Malone	Mark Kirkley
James Stinchcomb	Jeannine Jones	Becca Cox
Amiee Kane	Caitlin O'Kelley	Savannah Lockman
Carla Budinsky	Sanjoosh Akkineni	Dana King (proxy)
Bonnie Acton (guest)	Kathy Rechsteiner (guest)	Andy McCanless
Daniel Terry (virtual)	Hadley Cottingham	

Approval of the Minutes

Motion: Sanjoosh Akkikneni

Seconded: Jacqueline Winters-Allen

Minutes approved as distributed.

Old Business

- Senators attending virtually are considered absent. Each senator is only allowed to miss three meetings a year.
- New Committees for 2024 Term
 - Need to regroup committees for next term.
 - Andy has a sign-up list. Please indicate your preference during the meeting.
 - Committees are similar so if you want to stay in your current committee, the duties will be similar.

Committee Reports

- Budget:
 - no change in the general account
 - \$3,012.08 (change) in the Foundation account.
- Bylaws: Committee has not met. They are meeting this Friday to start working on the changes with the new committees and will report at the next meeting.
- Communications:
 - They are working on a form for social media submissions instead of emailing a person on the committee directly.
 - They are working on the Shamrock fundraiser.
 - Developing language for an email that will go out to everyone.
 - The form allows you to send it to anyone, but they are working on linking the payment to the Staff Senate account.
 - Savannah said it can be run through NXT and linked it to the account. Strat Comm and Marketing rep will help.
- Policy: no updates since council has not met.
- Staff Development: meeting today to discuss Staff Scholarship. There is one application.

Open Forum

- Giving Day- Staff Senate will be featured on the main page.
- Question: Why are we meeting in person after years of meeting virtually?
 - Meeting in person provides continuity and engagement.
 - It also helps productivity since we were experiencing stagnation with meeting online. The Strategic Plan will also assist with engaging the senators and improving collaboration.
- Discussion of New committees
 - House: bylaws, budget/Treasurer, policies
 - Employee Well-Being: affinity groups, service, expectations/aides
 - Compensation/Benefits: connections with HR, employee engagement, Star Staff of the Semester
 - Event/Service: in-person meetings, mentor program
 - Communication and Collaboration: newsletter, social media, website, town halls
 - Environment: parking rep, sustainability rep
 - Executive Committee

These will allow for collaboration and will go into effect next term so senators rolling off should not sign-up.

- This will be a bylaw change. How will it be communicated to all staff?
- Andy will email it out and it's listed on the signup genius.
- USG Committees
 - A call for volunteers' flyer will go out with options will go out soon.
 - Please distribute to your departments.

Question: Will there be an Open Forum for all staff to go over committees?

- The Executive Committee will determine at the next meeting and communicate that.

College/Department Reports

- Senators share what is happening in their departments.
 - Registrar: new registration visual program is changing/ advising is testing. Videos will be posted online.
 - Wellstar: Having a network engagement day on Feb. 22 for recent graduates to get internships and jobs; sessions in the morning and afternoon. All students are encouraged to attend. Atlanta Braves/Hawks/ or anyone interested in sports and physical science.
 - Bagwell: Doing recruitment emails across Georgia to encourage students to consider education. Her department is hosting an ESOL Conference for teachers across Georgia.
 - Academic Affairs: how students are: faculty wanting help with students; uHoo; connecting once a week
 - Library: Feb.22; Scrappy Hour at Johnson Library with President Schwaig, and Root beer/Coke floats. It's from 1:30-3:30. There will be more events and attention for Johnson Library in the future. There's lots of construction with the new STEM building.
 - Education Abroad: deadline for proposals for study abroad programs. Staff can lead programs too. Contact them if interested. Email the office and they will walk through the steps. Leaders don't have to pay for their own way.
 - Bailey College of Music: Fresh Air concerts will begin again on April 5th at the gazebo. Visit the College of the Arts for details.

Presentation for President Schwaig

James reminded senators to be respectful when presenting questions. Personal items should not be presented at this time.

- Introduction
 - Thanks for convening. It is important to have conversations.
 - Exec. Board is presented.
 - It is important that we work together and hear from you.

- Priorities for the University
 - Strategic Plan process- Tricia Chastain is one of the co-chairs. Did hire a consultant to lead the process.
 - Interesting time in higher education.
 - Important to pause and look at where we want to go in 3-5 years.
 - A lot of our work is focused on value to constituency – to tax payers; Need to be attentive to what the state needs – workforce since many universities have not focused on that in the past. Contribution from the university is necessary since our funding comes from the state.
 - Pressure due to lack of accountability and debt from students. The Feds are now holding state universities accountable.
 - Kennesaw State's Status
 - Comprehensive university with research focus.
 - Workforce research to help the community. Pragmatic research will escalate over the next few years linked to classroom.
 - R2: Carnegie decides on the level for each university based on how many research efforts and how much we spend.
 - KSU's status changed in Dec. 2018. Criteria continues to change.
 - Will KSU be an R1? No idea.
 - KSU will be an R2, so we need to be intentional about who we hire and what infrastructure the professors need to retain them.
 - KSU's goal is to be the best R2.
 - Student Success: Multiple aspects to student success
 - Graduation rates
 - Time to earn a degree.
 - Retention is especially related to first year experience and graduates getting jobs.
 - Graduation rates: Tied to classroom: 17% 4 years; 22% now in 4 years; 60% for 6 years; should be 65%.
 - Most parents hope that students finish in 4 years, but we have a different study body. Many are on Pell grants; Kat is content with 6 years due to the demographics of our student body.
 - KSU has been good with 1st year retention.
 - Provost leads on student success. He has a 20-point plan that deals with high DF rates, advising, avp in analytics so we can understand the data strategically.
 - All of us are working toward student success.
 - Student Affairs is about student experience; This is part of the change from a commuter school; 88% of students are now 17-24 so we need to understand that group. It's important that students feel connected, so they stay. Two components of that are:
 - Athletics
 - Residence Services
 - Focus on Community - Staff Senate are part of this.
 - External community (fundraising, relationships with community& alumni, KSU is expanding what community means to include national and international stage.
 - We cannot be all things to all people.
 - We will find areas to focus on various areas to strengthen.
 - Athletics is moving to a new level that will bring awareness of KSU.
- The Strategic Plan will have some values (five) that we rally around as an institution to build culture.
 - Leadership (Sonia Toson)
 - Main Focus: Integrity: same on the inside as on the outside. We need to have these conversations, so everyone is on the same page.

Questions

1. How can staff support students within their department with faculty? Need the unit to communicate to faculty and students and bridge that gap.
2. How are staff being trained to use AI? Kat has a group that is working on this and how best to disseminate the information.

3. What are the past and current opinions of the Staff Senate and what are future hopes? Let's be professional to each other. The perception is positive. We need to have conversations about how to move forward.
4. Thankful for her support in DEI with the political atmosphere. How do you advocate for our students while respecting political atmosphere? We deal with a whole continuum of ideas. She keeps it simple and focused on how we can help students – how to get students graduated. When she finds units doing that, she tries to replicate their actions in other places in KSU.
5. In the past we had legislative initiatives. Are those still on the website? Last year the initiative was the building funds that led to the STEM building (45 million funding). 6.2 million requested this year for equipment.
 - a. USG: state appropriations initiatives is the importance of higher ed in GA.
 - b. They offer classes and need to communicate that information to the KSU community.
 - i. Is there any plans to restart KSU Today? Looking at Populo. Becca Cox is helping with that. She can help with internal communication.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.