



STAFF SENATE MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 10/2/2025

PRESIDING OFFICER: CHAIR Phil Bridges

The Staff Senate held the October Session in Glass Hall, room 486. Chair Bridges called the session to order at 11:02am

Absences: Absences: JF1: Charles Babb, Austin Ball, Kelli Helton; JF2: Gene Brewer, Justin Daughtery, Ingrid Hintze; JF3: Stacey Stopczynski; JF4: John Bogue, Sharon Harter, Nicholas Horne, Rheanna Pulley

Guests: Holly Keehner, Serena Whorton, Gretchan Gawron, Hannah Smith, Tashiana Conklin, Denise Lofton, Angela Goerndt (and SGA Rep Jada Smith)

GREETINGS

GUEST SPEAKERS

I.

- a. Biff Williams, University President: Staff Senate Strategic Plan Update (Igniting Opportunity). Talked about vision of being the nation's leading Public Affairs University. Went over the goals (Desired outcomes) for 5 years out. Discussed Abundant vs. Scarcity mindset. Football: TV views went up a lot because we were on CBS for a while. Discussed the "Carnegie Great Colleges to Work For" list that we want to get on. When asked, Pres Williams says that the biggest strength of our staff is that they care about our students. Asked about doctorate programs and Clarinda was in the room, so she said that we are looking at interdisciplinary programs to start with.
- b. Tamera Jahnke, Dean of the College of Natural and Applied Sciences, speaking about the Higher Learning Commission review and site visit (joined by Mary Bohlen). Described how the review and visit will work. Listed other team members: Andrew Weber, Mark Woolsey, Egon Heidendal, Shawn Wahl, Kelly Wood, Algerian Hart, Clarendia Phillips (several were in attendance as well), and explained the info that has to be submitted in February: Assurance Argument, Evidence, Federal Compliance Report, Student Survey. Mary spoke next and said that they have 4 Criteria and went over the timeline and asked for feedback (Draft of complete assurance argument is posted until Nov 1st for campus review at https://www.missouristate.edu/HLC/Internal/criterion_drafts.htm). Executive Summaries will also be available in February of 2026. Please clear calendars for March 30-31(exact times coming later)
- c. Sen. Mary Bohlen and Dr. Christopher Herr, University Ombuds – took picture of slides, Mary and Dr. Herr introduced themselves and then went over what an Ombud is, the principles of Ombuds, the confidential nature of the office. They will have an office in the PSU. Herr went over the informal nature of this process. Mary went over the impartial nature of the office/sounding board. Shared contact info (Mary: 417-771-0102 and Chris:

417-576-6444). The office will open Nov 3. The Ombuds appointment is for 3 years – they are part time at 10 hours a week and they will have set office hours. Off-campus meetings are possible as well. They are required to report on Title IX and they will reveal that before info is shared. They are not counselors or therapists. At this point they are also serving students until they see what the demand is. The office is there to be helpful!

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

- Chair report: State of the University on 9/22, New Happenings (new buildings like Kemper and Blunt so explore campus), Census is mixed, asked Strategic Plan workgroups to share information, went over upcoming guest speakers, Board of Governors meeting is today and tomorrow (check that)
- Chair Elect: Nothing to report
- Past-Chair: Nothing to report
- Coordinator of Committees: Nothing to report
- Coordinator of Communications: Nothing to report
- Secretary: Nothing to report
- Parliamentarian: Nothing to report
- Historian: Nothing to report

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION REPORTS

- Academic Calendar – Chair Bridges: nothing to report
- Administrative Budget Committee – Chair-Elect Webster: nothing to report
- Employee Wellness –Senator Martin: New mental health practitioners that can be used by staff, Covid vaccinations are in (call to get on list), chronic disease self-management program from Mercy, Carrie's Cafe opens today, Flu vaccines are free to any student and employee (appointments are online - look at flu clinics that are upcoming), Biometrics appointments are still available, discussed healthcare incentives, walking challenge can include your family (only MSU employees can win prizes). Wednesday the 29th of October is the benefits fair with HR.
- Executive Budget – Chair Bridges: did not meet
- Faculty Senate – Senators Ball and Van Rhein: President & Provost spoke at the last meeting, Deans Stroebel and Richards spoke, presentation on gender equity in STEM grant and a discussion of how faculty parental leave works and how they use sabbatical/FMLA
 - Health Care & Benefits – Chair Bridges, Senator Mings: met this month; Med-Pay is rebranding as "Point C" in January, won't be other changes besides name; Health Premiums will likely increase about 9; dental will likely stay the same.

- Inclusion Awareness Team – Senator Catlin: Meeting tomorrow 2-3 in Magers; putting together final details on an event on October 17th that is a PowerPoint Party for info sharing.
- IT Council – Chair Bridges, Senator K. Piercy: did not meet
- President’s Council on Accessibility – Senator Derrick: did not meet
- Shared Leave – Senator Mallonee, Senator Munoz Aliaga, Senator Helton: Approved two, shared leave numbers are good
- Staff Excellence in University Service Awards – Past-Chair Keele & Senator Niesen: November 7th is the deadline for nominations
- Student Government – Parliamentarian Hader and Chair Bridges: sign up form to help cover meetings is here : [Staff Senate SGA sign up for FA25.xlsx](#); they are looking into a textbook reimbursement program, AI survey going around, and Bear Pantry partnership
- Sustainability Advisory Committee – Senator Letterman: did not meet
- Sustainability Commission – Senator Wilkins: nothing to report
- Transportation Advisory – Senator Bogue : nothing to report
- University Council – Chair Bridges: did not meet
- University Space Allocation – Senator Hader : meeting was delayed until November
- Wall of Fame – Chair Bridges : nothing to report
- West Plains Staff Senate – WP Chair Trevor Cressman : still no chair-elect, they have a blog now at <https://blogs.wp.missouristate.edu/staffsenate/>
- Williams’ Welcome – Chair Bridges – will meet again on October 15th
- Wyrick Commission – Secretary Piercy – Met on September 25th, discussed the process of student proposals, there are some ideas that the commission has ready to suggest if students are interested but do not have their own ideas. No students presented ideas at this meeting so please tell students that this is still an available opportunity.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Public Affairs (Harter): Adopt a street last week, Ozarks Food Harvest coming up, book discussion upcoming, next meeting is on Zoom on Tuesday October 14th at 1pm
- Staff Activities (Mallonee): 1st staff tailgate was on 9/27, NFL/Chiefs watch party on Nov 2 at 3pm at SkyBox, tickets will be available for November 15th Homecoming game but you will have to pay taxes for those tickets, will also have a homecoming tailgate. There is an MSU football game watch party on 10/8 at 6:30 at Skybox, and the next meeting of this committee is on October 15th at 1:30.
- Staff Development (Phillips): meeting On October 13th at 2pm in Carrington 312. Staff Satisfaction survey will be coming soon – you have to sign in to complete it but data collection is anonymous
- Staff Outreach: (Senator Paula Jean) – meeting after Staff Senate meeting, developing a survey for 2nd and 3rd shift folks

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- a. update on CUPA data workgroup – “Institution of Choice for Employees” workgroup update
- b. update on Strategic Plan oversight workgroup update – there is a survey coming in the spring that ranks us for the Employer of Choice workgroup (compares us to other universities)
- c. Bear Pantry fundraising with SGA and Faculty Senate being discussed; no more AmeriCorps to help them because of federal cuts; usage is high at Bear Pantry this fall: needs include non-perishable food, hygiene items (do not need bars of soap) cleaning supplies, school supplies, money and volunteers (especially on Monday evening)

OPEN FORUM

Bridges – workshop on Public Affairs mission on 10/21/2025, register on MyLearningConnection
Keele – October 20th is the start of National Student Transfer student week
Bowles – National “First Generation” days is first week in November
Munoz Aliaga – Tour of the Globe Oct 17th 6pm for the City of Springfield, MSU’s is 1st Friday of November
Phillips – Nov 7th 1-3pm is the BearPower Connections gathering
Bridges – Oct 29th is a Wednesday football game, but the rest of the campus should be maintaining business as usual. Parking is still up in the air.
Mallonee – reminder about photo shoot for cancer survivors and luncheon on Oct 7th 11-1 in PSU ballroom
Mings- Oct 28th and 29th for Mercy Biometrics. Reminder to send the documentation to Magers so they can associate Biometrics done at Mercy with your account.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to close October meeting at 12:49