



STAFF SENATE MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 9/4/2025

PRESIDING OFFICER: CHAIR Phil Bridges

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

Absences: JF1: none; JF2: Justin Daugherty, Brian Grindstaff, Ingrid Hintze, Kirk Robinson; JF3: Joseph Cillessen; JF4: Nicholas Horne, Nicole Webster; Divisional Reps: Kelly Evans, Kevin Piercy

Guests: Angela Goerndt, Holly Keehner, Kelly Rapp, Hannah Smith (and SGA Rep Jada Smith)

GREETINGS

GUEST SPEAKERS

I.

- a. [Senator Christina Bowles](#), Student Success Coaches Coordinator, Center for Academic Success and Transition – grant has ended, mostly referrals and requests now – have 40 referrals and requests this semester so far. It can be good for students who are doing well too. Goal setting, time management, student strengths, and opportunities for the student. Supports a lot of first general college students. When to refer a student – missed class, appears tired/stressed, they need to talk to someone but not counseling. They do work with BIT. Office in Meyer 116 – can drop in.
- b. [Dr. Clarendia Phillips](#), Provost – the provost is here for faculty AND STAFF; we are a community of Citizen scholars. Wants to be known as the Student Success Provost. Would like thoughts and ideas, even if you were told no in the past. Believes in having joy and fun at work. Committed to the types of students that MSU serves: first generation, low income. Was drawn to MSU because of the public affairs mission. (Talked about the goal of being an R2 university.) Wants to improve success rates of the students and make sure they have marketable skills.
- c. [Patrick Ransdell](#), Athletics Director – C-USA did what we wanted it to do: engage the students and faculty and staff and the community. Fantastic trip to LA for the game and met with Alumni from MSU there. Staff is vital to Athletics continued success. Athletics helps engage potential students; looking at a dual enrollment day at a football game and other options to reach them. Reach out directly to him with ideas/help for this.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

- Chair report: Ombuds update – still on track for October training and November launch and will probably be located in Meyer Library; Strategic plan – 9/22 at PSU theatre at noon is the launch; Gov Excellence Award recipient will be announced soon; New VP of Enrollment Management Dawn Medley; HLC reaccreditation still in progress; Listening Lunches coming up; Census is coming up but we anticipate flat enrollment and frozen positions staying the same; discussed upcoming guest speakers.
- Chair Elect: Nothing to report
- Past-Chair: Nothing to report
- Coordinator of Committees: Reminder that it is ok to switch committees
- Coordinator of Communications: No report but did ask for info/events to share in the blog
- Secretary: no report
- Parliamentarian: no report
- Historian: no report

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION REPORTS

- Academic Calendar – Chair Bridges: has not met
- Administrative Budget Committee – Chair-Elect Webster: none
- Employee Wellness – Senator Martin: Programs are still going well, and they are hybrid now with students included, nutrition and cooking classes are filling up quickly, Threads & Trends: Bookstore wine event and showing off new Bear Wear clothing line, Stop the Bleed was yesterday afternoon, McDonald Arena Gym is open (Tu Th 4:45-6:15) for employees and not students
- Executive Budget – Chair Bridges: did not meet
- Faculty Senate – Senators Ball and Van Rhein: they are still going through bylaws and still worried about the re-alignment, if more restructuring will come, and how to represent faculty evenly and properly. Also discussed if Zoom would work for the meetings.
- Health Care & Benefits – Chair Bridges, Senator Mings: Health plan running about 6% higher; working toward open enrollment and the wellness incentive should be the same as last year; Biometrics with Mercy will be coming soon - sign up ASAP once announced.
- Inclusion Awareness Team – Senator Catlin: 1st meeting tomorrow 2-3pm in Magers
- IT Council – Chair Bridges: updating all university IT policies because they are all about 20 years old; SCUF process will be amended to tap into new funding (ask Kevin). If you have questions about SCUF – ask Senator Kevin Piercy

- President's Council on Accessibility – Senator Derrick: did not meet
- Shared Leave – Senator Mallonee, Senator Muñoz Aliaga, Senator Helton: Approved one, and denied one case last month; may discuss some policy wording
- Staff Excellence in University Service Awards – past-chair Keele & Senator Niesen: no report but be thinking about who you want to nominate and send in detailed nominations. Applications are accepted through November 7, 2025.
- Student Government – Varies: will need help to attend these Tuesday evenings, there is a sign-up to attend a meeting; New SGA rep, Jada Smith, introduced.
- Strategic Planning Committee – Senator Hader: BOG agenda will be out tomorrow with draft plan
- Sustainability Advisory Committee – Senator Letterman: Won't meet again until October but had news about the new Bears Share program (sharing food after meetings with students in need).
- Sustainability Commission – Senator Wilkins: no update
- Transportation Advisory – Senator Bogue: no update
- University Council – Chair Bridges: Phil sent out notes from the meeting; New Bear Shield safety app, ADP change (old goals in archive of old ADP), etc.
- University Space Allocation – Senator Hader – has not met
- Wall of Fame – Chair Bridges – Don Simpson and Kathy Davis were chosen
- West Plains Staff Senate – WP Chair Cressman – no report
- Williams' Welcome – Chair Bridges – will meet again October 15th.
- Wyrick Commission – Secretary Piercy – September 25th will be first meeting

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Public Affairs (Harter): Adopt a Street 9/26 at 8am, next meeting is 10/14 at 1pm
- Staff Activities (Babb, Mallonee): in compliance with financial responsibility policies, we can't do Little Theatre tickets; will still have tailgates but not sure about tickets. Will be meeting with Athletic Director to do more on-campus sports events. Next meeting at Mama G's on 9/15 at 12:15
- Staff Development (Helton, Phillips): Monday at 2pm in Carrington 312
- Staff Outreach: (Senator Paula Jean) - still looking for a chair, meeting after Staff Senate each month; waiting for numbers on 2nd and 3rd shift employees.

OLD BUSINESS

Bylaws workgroup – working through the red-line document with administration but hope to bring to October meeting. Mostly process changes and putting some items into the handbook instead, adding college reps is the biggest change.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Strategic Plan Kick-off is Monday, September 22, at noon in the PSU Theater
- b. Government Excellence Award announcement is upcoming
- c. By tomorrow! Nominate students for the [Citizen Scholar award](#)

OPEN FORUM

Senator Helton – service animal reminder: don't pet the service or security dogs!

Senator Martin – Fall Festival guides are out!

Senator Derrick – increase in homeless folks camping out in buildings, taking showers in the sinks, etc. Use the new app (can send photos or videos) or call security. Reminder that you can request a SafeWalk to your vehicle, etc.

Senator Kem Yost - 24/7 access on the app; security is always available; check door lock times with building managers and Chris Rees

Senator Ybanez - Non-degree seeking is accepting Spring 2025 students

Senator Hader - Morris center featuring East African student cultures

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to close the September meeting at 12:40 pm