



STAFF SENATE MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 7/9/2026

PRESIDING OFFICER: CHAIR Misty Webster

The Staff Senate held the July Session in Glass Hall, room 486. Chair Webster called the session to order at 11:10am

Absences: JF1: Lesa Anderson, Blanca Mallonee, Margaret Osler, Serena Whorton; JF2: Josh Chadwick, Justin Daugherty, Kirk Robinson; JF4: Alicia Baum, Sharon Harter, Adam Niesen, Sophia Raithel, Carly Totsch-Nowobielski; Div Reps: Stephanie Smith; College Reps: Garrett Kirk

Guests: Patrick March, Cali Pettijohn, Dave Harp, Kelly Elkins, Denise Lofton, Campbell Keele, Stephen Sharum, Nate Bledsoe

Greetings

Welcome from Chair Webster to the 2026/2027 Staff Senate session.

GUEST SPEAKERS

I.

- a. President Biff Williams: Recognized staff senate as well as the executive committee. Thanked everyone for HLC success: 10-year reaffirmation with very little monitoring is a huge thing and hard to get. First year of strategic plan implementation is done; next is branding refresh and implementation. This year there will be 2 scheduled townhalls, and he will take suggestions on subjects that you want to cover (ask exec board members to bring them to President Williams.) Forums are for you so please give input. New hires: MarCom is incoming and Brent Dunn is retiring in one year; will start the search and onboarding before that. Flat funding from the state last year is why there were no raises. Flat funding again this year, but revenue is going up in some areas so new CFO and Pres Williams will be discussing raises. In the past, the state funding or a large increase in tuition funds generally determined raises. Talked about FTE funding at the state level and the possibility of that changing. Department of Education is working on a new funding formula that may benefit us. For fall there will be ribbon cuttings for a lot of completed projects as well as a groundbreaking for the locker room project for football. Boomer Block Party coming up on August 20th (similar to the CUSA party) with free shirts, etc. Question from the group about the vote to eliminate income tax, and President Williams says that it will impact us and the state has not yet answered questions about how the funding will be replaced though they say that it will be phased and not instant. Another question: will possible federal funding changes on financial aid affect the graduate program and the answer is yes. President Williams said that he is looking most forward to the fresh energy in the fall.

3. Overview of Senate Duties: Reminder of the Mission Statement and the Staff Senator Charge.
4. Introduction of New Officers and Swearing In
5. Introduction of New Senators and Swearing In
6. Introduction of old senators as well.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

- Chair report: Coordinator of Committees update – Rachel Rigby had to step away from Staff Senate so Kelly Schlinder will be interim and nominations will be open during new business and by email for new coordinator. Exec board members sat in on 4 candidate interviews over the last 2 weeks. Yesterday Mark Danes was announced as new MARCOM VP.
- Chair Elect: nothing to report
- Past-Chair: Bridges spoke about last year's budget and mentioned the candy purchased for the Outreach committee and the books for fall PAC committee. Mentioned the email from President Williams that went out 24 hours after Phil asked him to consider sending something to staff senators and their supervisors. There was a meeting this morning about CUPA data and they are working on making the data more useful with a dashboard that is sortable by jobs, families, and workload.
- Coordinator of Committees: nothing to report
- Coordinator of Communications: nothing to report
- Secretary: Senator Piercy asked all Senators to make sure they have a placard and are on the attendance sheet. Requested that guests please sign in. Email staff senate any food allergies or sensitivities.
- Parliamentarian: Reminder that we function on a good-faith parliamentary procedure. Robert's Rules are on the back of placards but do not worry about making the right motion, just bring up what you need and Parliamentarian Hader will guide you. We will operate on the good-faith process until it gets contentious.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION REPORTS

- Academic Calendar – Chair Webster: did not meet
- Administrative Budget Committee – Chair-elect Bohlen: did not meet
- Employee Wellness – Senator Martin: 6-month registration for free classes for staff started this week. Come when you can! Movement challenge starts on Tuesday – all movement counts and can be converted to steps. Can be done as an individual or a team, family members can join too. Top 5 individuals will get a gift card, and the top team will get awards plus there is a general drawing. Ozark Empire Fair has a discount for employees this year. Make sure new folks in your area sign up for the Employee Wellness Newsletter.
- Executive Budget – Chair Webster: not meet
- Faculty Senate – asked for new volunteers, Senators Van Rhein and Ball said that they would continue as well
- Health Care & Benefits – Chair Webster & Senator Mings: contract for VSP renewed for next year with no rate changes for 5 years.
- Inclusion Awareness Team – Senator Catlin: has not met
- IT Council – Chair-elect Bohlen, Senator K. Piercy: last time did a tour of Blunt Hall, next meeting after this Staff Senate meeting and they are touring Glass Hall.
- Large Events Coordination – Senator Reed: Reminded us all what this group is and how to report a large event. Let Reed know if you have questions or want to make sure something is on the calendar.
- President's Council on Accessibility – asked for new senator volunteers for this one
- Shared Leave – Senator Mallonee, Senator Jean: Guest Denise Lofton gave an update that the next meeting is Tuesday at 2:30.
- Staff Excellence in University Service Awards – Senator Niesen: Will meet again in November. Senator Bowles volunteered to replace Keele on this committee.
- Student Government – Chair Webster: No report because there are no meetings in summer. We need several senators to attend this weekly Tuesday night meeting OR if you are the only one, it can count as your committee obligation.
- Sustainability Advisory Committee – Senator Letterman: have not met, may still dissolve.
- Sustainability Commission – Senator Wilkins: nothing to report.
- Transportation Advisory – Senator Bogue: virtual parking change goes into effect August 1st.
- University Council – Chair Webster: Has not met
- University Space Allocation – Senator Hader: Haven't met since last Senate meeting. However, planning is ongoing for MarCom to move to campus.
- Wall of Fame – Chair Webster: Has not met
- West Plains Staff Senate – Chair Webster would like to have a liaison from here (ideally from the staff outreach committee) to work with the chair in West Plains to report on this.
- Williams' Welcome – Chair Webster & Chair-Elect Bohlen: Has not met.
- Wyrick Commission – Senator Piercy: nothing to report in summer.

INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Public Affairs (Harter): Senator Bowles described the committee and some of its events. Meets via Zoom. Most recent even was the United Way Day of Caring and some committee members spent it at the Discovery Center painting.
- b) Staff Activities (Malonee & Babb): Babb spoke about the committee and what they do. Has a survey link on our tables for future events. Normally meet on 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30 in Meyer Library 303. But the next meeting is at Potter's House to go over the survey.
- c) Staff Development: Past-Chair Bridges spoke about the history of the committee and its evolution. Needs direction/focus. Mentioned that the administration is interested in a campus professional development day, and this could be a focus. Needs a new committee chair.
- d) Staff Outreach: meeting after Staff Senate today. Goal is to reach out to those who are part time, night shift, west plains, etc.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Chair Webster mentioned again that HLC re-affirmed Missouri State for 10 years. The first 5 years of this will be focused on Student Success. West Plains is now off of HLC probation and has been reaffirmed for 5 years. The University Budget was approved by the Board of Governors at their last meeting. An amended version of the Staff Senate budget (sent to senators in email) was approved by President Williams for the 2026/27 fiscal year.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. New "Goal 3 Committee" announced. Past-Chair Bridges spoke more about the goal 3 committee and how it affects staff and why it is important to have this group for advocacy and holding feet to the fire about following through.
- b. Committees – Senator Schlinder: QR code and link will go out with descriptions of internal committees and each senator will need to be on one committee. Will also ask for interest in being co-chair.
- c. Chair Webster called for senators who have a nomination for Coordinator of Committees. Can email those or make them in the August meeting until vote is called. No one was nominated during meeting.
- d. limited spots available for Sneak Peek at the University Advancement Center.

OPEN FORUM

- a. Good News, Bad News: Senator Bogue announced that "it is a girl!", Steubenville Catholic camp comes every summer and that starts this weekend. USA class of 2026/2027 was announced yesterday. Notebooks are available on table by the sign-in sheet. Parliamentarian Hader announced the 2-year-old leaping bear shirt is available for free at end of meeting (all claimed).

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to close July meeting at 12:32