

Staff Senate Minutes December 1, 2004

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- **Welcome**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Roll Call**

Senators present: Jana Atkins, Gene Bals, Estella Barron, Ann Bell, Eric Burrell, Jaclyn Byrd, Nick Chavez, Robin Cooper, Chance Dragich, Sandy Ellis, Travis Findley, Rocky Gauna, Brent Guinn, Scott Hall, Patrick Hancock, Virginia Holder, Gary A. Johnson, Carolyn Kennedy, Rick Loper, Guadalupe Luna, Amy Martindale, Barbara McArthur, Dawn Moreno, Teresa Neal, Rebecca Owens, Donna Perry, Larry Phillippe, Valli Ramanathan, Eddie Ramirez, Don Roulain, Carol Ann Stanley, Jake Syma, Richard Verrone, Barbara White, Everne Williams

Senators absent: Louisa Arriaga, Bryan Carson, Doug Crockett, Gerald Cunningham, Mike Hurlow, Sheri Lewis, Tim Wolf, Maria Fernandez, Sandy Gellner, Lori Hefley, Libby Moreland

- **Minutes**
 - Motion made by Dawn Moreno to accept the minutes
 - Seconded by Gary Johnson
 - Motion passed
- **Treasurer's Report**
 - Barbara White has agreed to take over the position of Treasurer.
 - There is a possibility that leftover funds from fiscal year 2003-2004 will roll over into the current fiscal year. This has not been done yet. If this money is rolled over, it may be used to fund additional scholarships.
 - Motion made by Gary Johnson to accept the Treasurer's Report.
 - Seconded by Chance Dragich
 - Motion passed
- **Fall Break – Mitchell Moses, President, Student Government Association**
 - The Student Government Association is proposing that Tech adopt a two-day fall break in October near midterms and around an away game weekend. To make up the missed class days, the proposal is to change the academic schedule in the two weeks leading up to graduation. Regular classes would go through Friday and the individual study day would no longer exist. Finals would not begin until the following Monday and would take place through the following Friday. Diplomas would then be mailed to students instead of being presented in person by the individual colleges immediately following commencement. Students are not proposing to go to school on Labor Day. The SGA would like to make sure this is in everyone's best interest. Legislation was introduced in the SGA to investigate this possibility last spring. The current legislation out of the SGA details when the break will be and the details of how it will be implemented. Cost should not be a big issue because students already absorb the cost of mailing the diplomas, and the cost of mailing is small for each individual. The folders that come with the diplomas could be provided in person as usual in order to further cut mailing costs. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs has agreed to cover the extra mailing costs the first year and the SGA also has a Graduating Class Gift Account that may be able to help with this as well.
 - According to a survey, students overwhelmingly support this method to make up the days. Some of the questions on the survey dealt with whether students wanted a fall break, whether they would be willing to attend class on Labor Day in exchange for time off in October, and the importance of receiving diplomas immediately following commencement.
 - Some benefits to making this change are:

- It will enable better attendance at commencement because finals are administered until the day before commencement rather than concluding three days early.
 - Diplomas would be mailed 2 weeks after commencement, so there will not be a last-minute rush for faculty grading and staff preparation before commencement. The August graduation is already done this way, so this change would only affect December and May graduations. The reason this change affects the May graduation is that it makes sense to use consistent procedures between graduations.
 - Questions and concerns can be directed to Mitchell Moses and the SGA at 742-3631 or mitchell.j.moses@ttu.edu.
 - Other SGA news: during the most recent meeting, representatives called for a new members be added to the Facilities Planning and Construction Advisory Committee. The committee should include 3 students, a staff member and a faculty member along with the current committee members because parking is a problem and the group making the decisions about parking aren't getting feedback from students. This committee works with Max Hinojosa, Mike Ellicott, Chancellor David Smith and new Tech Police Chief Ronald Seachrist.
 - There are two sides to this issue. This is a break for students and will change the academic calendar. This also affects staff due to the possibility of losing Labor Day and having it replaced with an extra day off during the Christmas break. This also affects the residence hall staff because shorter holidays create a rush to prepare for conferences and reopening. The Staff Senate will need to look into creating a resolution to support or not support this fall break and under what conditions. This will be discussed in the next Executive Board meeting.
- **Committees**
- Constitution and Bylaws – Jaclyn Byrd
 - Second reading of Article 1 Section D – Membership and Attendance
 - Motion made by Rebecca Owens to accept the change
 - Seconded by Everne Williams
 - Motion passed
 - First reading of Article IV Section A Number 2 (Executive Board Duties) and Article IV Section B (Executive Board Elections). See Appendix A for the text and changes.
 - Communication and Public Relations – Valli Ramanathan
 - Informational handouts about the Staff Senate will ready by the January meeting. This handout will include basic information about the Staff Senate and will be mailed to all staff members on campus. The committee is also working on a poster for booth displays and Welcome Events and should be ready by the February meeting if not earlier. The committee plans a 5-minute PowerPoint presentation to issue the message about the Staff Senate to new employees. The plan is to make this presentation to a different department every third week of the month.
 - Issues – Amy Martindale
 - Social Security Number usage – Kay Whyburn addressed this issue at the November meeting. The Issues Committee is drafting a formal recommendation to the Executive Board to continue to monitor the progress of this issue. The committee recommends quarterly communication with Kay Whyburn and placement of a Staff Senate member on the committee in charge of the conversion to the new TechID system.
 - Paid parking at campus events - Eric Crouch, Manager of Traffic and Parking Operations, attended the November Executive Board meeting. The committee is asking that the pay stations stop at 7 p.m. during arts events. Mr. Crouch said he would submit this request to Buddy Knox, Director of Traffic and Parking. The committee is currently waiting for a decision and have not been able to contact anyone. Most arts events start at 8:00, but there are some that begin at 7:00. Some of these events can be moved to 7:30 if necessary, but there will be some events that cannot be moved and patrons will still be required to pay for a small amount of parking time.
 - Part-time staff – Jim Brown spoke at last month's Staff Senate meeting. All the decisions and policies regarding part-time staff benefits seem to be in accordance with common business practice. The only issue still outstanding is that full-time staff receive raises upon completion of

advanced degrees and part-time staff members do not. According to Mr. Brown, that raise is an incentive for full-time staff to work above and beyond their regular job duties. Part-time staff already have a considerable amount of time away from work to spend on their educations. The committee plans to work with the Communications and Public Relations committee to publicize this information. There are about 75 part-time staff members on campus.

- Overtime reporting for non-exempt staff – The committee is drafting a formal recommendation that education on time reporting for employees and managers needs to be increased. Also, the committee is recommending that there be some targeted information housed with the Communications and Public Relations Committee. Information needs to be targeted separately to “non-exempt” employees and managers. The consequences to both employees and managers for returning a false timesheet should be stressed in this information. This issue also should be included in all the Quality Service employment courses.
- Free tuition for staff – the ad hoc committee dealing with this issue includes several concerned individuals around campus. The committee plans to investigate around campus regarding \$261 in fees to see if these can be waived (not paid). Waiving institutional and graduate tuition in addition to the fees will get rid of most of the cost to staff for attending courses. State tuition, which cannot be waived, is the only cost left after all other fees and forms of tuition are waived and amounts to approximately \$175 per 3-hour course. The \$300 employee scholarship, with 105 recipients currently, is enough to pay the state tuition, although the scholarship is only available to Tech employees for four semesters. The scholarship fund is an endowment that is shared with the TTU Employee Dependant Scholarship of \$600. The committee will continue to investigate this. This scholarship was only available for four semesters for graduate courses and eight semesters for undergraduate classes.
- Staff borrowing privileges at the HSC library – TTU staff members cannot borrow materials from the HSC Preston Smith Library. TTU Faculty and Grad Students do have borrowing privileges at HSC and HSC staff can borrow from the TTU Libraries. TTU Staff if the only TTU group without borrowing privileges at HSC. After investigating, the committee feels that the reasons for this policy are not related to the position of TTU staff so much as trying to limit the number of people who have borrowing privileges. This decision was made by the library director. It is not an institutional policy and does not appear in an OP. The committee plans to draft a resolution requesting that TTU staff be granted borrowing privileges at the HSC library. It is not expected that many staff will take advantage of these borrowing privileges but should not be discriminated against due to the staff status designation.
- New issue: TTU allows telecommuting by special request only. Other universities may have different policies. It was determined that this policy is in accordance with state requirements. The Issues Committee will investigate this issue further.
- Elections – Sandy Ellis
 - The Nomination Form has been revised and will go out this week for the special election. There are currently 3 classifications included in this election. Anyone can nominate any staff member in any EEO Classification. Staff members are not required to nominate exclusively within their current EEO Classification. Self nominations are accepted, and the Executive Board can also nominate individuals.
- Web page – Eric Burrell
 - The page is being kept up to date and the current Bylaws recommendations will be posted there.
- Scholarship – Robin Cooper
 - The deadline for spring scholarships is January 15. The application is available on the website.
- COPS – Patrick Hancock
 - 178 local businesses responded with discounts for TTU staff. These businesses provide a wide range of services and products including chiropractors, dentists, automotive service, and restaurants. The committee is still deciding how to publicize this program, but the information should be posted on the website soon.
- Grievance – Larry Phillippe

- Nothing to report
- External committees:
 - Budget Advisory Committee – Brent Guinn
 - This committee is investigating the possibility of implementing a differential tuition where the tuition cost depends on the college where courses are taken. Engineering is probably most expensive and Arts and Sciences will probably cost the least amount.
 - Ombudsman – Brent Guinn
 - The job listing for the Staff Ombudsman has been posted, and 80 applications have been received. The search committee currently is looking at these applications with a goal to have someone in place by early spring.
- **Other Business**
 - The Committee on Women’s and Gender Equity needs six staff representatives to join the committee. This committee is part of the Women’s Studies program run by Charlotte Dunham. Members of this committee will be asked to serve on subcommittees as well. Committee members serve staggered 3-year terms. Nominations should come from senators, you can nominate yourself or any other staff member. An election will determine who serves on this committee. The Staff Senate is being asked to nominate potential members. Self-nominations will be accepted.
- **Announcements**
 - Executive Board meeting was moved to December 15 due to the Christmas holiday. This meeting will be at 3:00 p.m. in the Engineering Center room 104.
 - The next Staff Senate meeting will be held January 5 at 3:00 p.m. in Escondido Theater (in the Student Union basement)
- **Adjourn**
 - Motion by Gary Johnson to adjourn
 - seconded by Jake Syma
 - Motion passed

Appendix A

Article IV. Executive Board

Section A – Duties

ORIGINAL

2. The Executive Board shall have general supervision and control of all activities of the Staff Senate and votes on confirmation of presidential appointments. It shall oversee general operation of the Staff Senate and receive annual reports for review and action. Five members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for a meeting. In the case of a tie, the President shall have the deciding vote. Proxy vote may not be assigned. Each EEO Classification shall have one vote on the Executive Board and four of six must be present to vote.

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Article IV. Executive Board

Section B – Elections

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