



Staff Senate July 2025 Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 30, 2025 9:00am-3:00pm

Call to order

Time called to order: 9:03am

Attendance

Rob Bridges	Jin Jo	Nasia Perez
Aimee Kane	Katie Hegebarth	Bee Thompson
Dorianne Gutierrez	Hillary Dreyfus	Blake Schneider
Carla Budinsky	Karen McDonnell	Jessica Urquhart
Hadley Cottingham	Melisa Gonzalez	Scott Wiltsee
Kelley Price	Samantha Burke	Alejandra Thomas
Qing Qing Norris	Sherrie Goodman	Franklin Ard
Shelina Munoz	Michael Alvarez	Kayla Barbosa
Dakota Kaloustian	Sarah Holik	Stephanie Marchant
Haley True	Barbara Bowler	Alexis Melchior
Stephen Sprague	Maya Harper	Colin Ake

Introductions

Opening remarks/New Senator training: Hadley Cottingham

- 'What is a staff senator', a.k.a. duties and expectations of staff senate:
 - Attend meetings
 - Stay involved with Staff Senate and volunteer opportunities
 - Serve on a committee
 - Disperse info to department

- Be a listening ear
- Bring forward staff concerns
- Share relevant updates with Staff Senate
- *Support staff!*
- Roberts Rules of Order:
 - Everyone has the right to participate; everyone must have a chance to speak before anyone speaks a second time.
 - Everyone has a right to know what is going on at all times, only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
 - Only one topic (motion) at a time.
- Typical meeting format/timeline
- Bylaws
 - Executive committee structure and renewed Parliamentary position
 - Representation guidelines
 - Procedures
 - Attendance requirements
 - **Question:** How to establish who to send as proxy? Hadley suggested reviewing nominations from the department and/or talking to Karen McDonnell to see if there are people in the unit who could reasonably serve.
 - **Question:** Does sending a proxy count as an absence? Yes, even though your proxy is there, that is considered an absence.
 - **Question:** Are absences are only for one year? Yes, the three absences do not accumulate over the course of 3 years.
 - Voting
 - Vacancies
 - **Question:** If someone moves to another department, can they continue serving for the unit/department they originally served for? We will review on a case-by-case basis, though generally a departmental change will likely lead to the senator vacating the seat.
 - Duties
 - Amending bylaws

- **Question:** Are we conducting a first review today? We will vote on bylaws after lunch, no further discussion at this time though.

Aimee Kane made a motion for a 15-minute break, Hadley Cottingham seconded, all were in favor, so motion passed.

Meeting called back to order by Hadley Cottingham at 10:27am

- SharePoint training
 - General navigation
 - Archival information: 2024 conference, archive folder
 - Mention of the crossover to Teams space, there is a Team set up as well as a group chat. Conversation in either is fine.

Reading & Approval of June 2025 minutes

Aimee Kane motioned to approve, Kelley Price seconded. There was no further discussion and all were in favor. Motion passed, minutes were approved and will be published as approved.

Old business

Item #1: Bylaws updates – Vote whether to amend the Staff Senate bylaws to include our updated mission statement and standing committees.

- Hadley presented the proposed new mission statement and committee structure for senator review. The new committee structure is as follows:
 - House
 - Communications
 - Staff Impact
 - Community Engagement
- Discussion
 - Missing verbiage from bylaws was reviewed and will be reinserted. They were omitted in error.
 - Procedures: Regarding attendance, line 7, clarification regarding the 2/3 executive committee vote for removal to state the vote is only for attendance concerns.

- Procedures, Voting: Section 3 is vague. Hadley clarified that this is meant to indicate the most recently published bylaws supersede. This will be clarified.
- Vacancies: Line 3 does not specify if eligible replacement serves until the end of term or until the next general election. We determined the replacement serves only until end of the year and may then be on the ballot to serve their own 3 year term if they so desire at that time.
- From Colin Ake: Section 13, line 375 contains very subjective wording regarding the definition of good standing. Can we specify or remove some language to make this more objective? Hadley suggested edits to make the language more precise and in line with Roberts Rules of Order and Human Resources. Edits will be proposed for review.
- Committees: Bylaws committee in prior bylaws was absorbed by House committee, but the terminology that the Executive Committee drives changes was removed. Hadley clarified this was so that all members of senate can suggest changes, not just executive committee.
- Committees: Elections and scholarship are gone without replacement, how is that handled? We are moving to an ad hoc structure as these committees handle events that happen once a year rather than ongoing work. It was noted that an ad hoc committee isn't typically operated this way, Rob Bridges clarified this structure was proposed to make operating processes simpler. Suggested change: keep it as a special committee and add specific details regarding timely formation and disbanding of these committees each year as needed. These special committees do not count towards the senators required committee membership.
- Budget and finance: The committee was disbanded and duties absorbed by the house committee.
- Committee: Policies and procedures committee was disbanded but specific line items are missing from the new bylaws. This was

left intentionally vague to allow more efficiency and consolidation of processes.

- Committee: Communications committee duties appear very condensed. Was this intentional? Yes, to allow for flexibility and account for more stringent communications allowances within new StratComm guidelines. Same reasoning applies to Staff Recognition Committee.

Hadley Cottingham made a motion to table the bylaw vote; Colin Ake seconded the motion. All voted in favor of tabling, the motion passes and bylaws will be reviewed in the next meeting.

Item #2: Instatement of Bylaws – Vote to reinstate the Staff Senate bylaws, which have been suspended for at least a calendar year.

Hadley Cottingham made a motion to table this vote; Stephanie Marchant seconded the motion. All voted in favor so the motion passes and the vote will be tabled until the next meeting.

New business

Item #1: Financial Report – Aimee Kane

Aimee updated the senate on our accounts. We have 2 foundation accounts, and Aimee gave credit to prior treasurer Suzanne Rothry for getting these accounts sorted out. The third account currently has 1250. Scholarship fund has \$3419, scholarships are \$500 net and must be awarded as \$610 gross to account for taxes. Our final account has \$3069.90 ready for use. All numbers are estimates and will be finalized soon.

Rob Bridges noted that in the past we were close to discontinuing the scholarships as funds ran low, but we have moved into a place where we have the funds to continue giving the scholarship 1x per year.

- **Question:** Where is the Foundation account replenished from? Aimee confirmed this is from the overall KSU foundation.
- **Question:** Does it get “swept”? Aimee confirmed it does not.

- **Question:** What are the requirements for scholarship recipients? This is on the website, but the scholarship supports full-time employees using TAP to pursue a degree program.

Hadley motioned to adjust to committee discussion, Aimee seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

Item #2: Committees – New senators will join standing committees, and committee members will elect their committee chairs.

- House
- Communications
- Staff Impact
- Community Engagement
 - **Question:** Can experienced committee members give us some guidance on what they found challenging? What did you find worked? Hadley spoke regarding Communications and outlined the communications items that we learned we re not working, namely social media and newsletters. WE did find that the Weekly Feed was effective!
 - **Question:** Can any experienced senators discuss the same as above for the committees that no longer have active members? Yes, Rob and Aimee outlined some of the efforts like volunteering and partnerships that the committee steered in effort to get the senate more involved on campus.

Aimee discussed the outcomes of the Staff Impact committee, namely the inception of the Team-Admin in Teams for admins across the campus to work together and coffee talks. Coffee talk turnouts were up and down but they led to good conversation and connections. A third initiative, a new employee welcome group, did not happen but is still in development. Karen mentioned Staff Appreciation and Recognition committee and the Start Staff of the Semester. That wasn't very successful as there was no real award attached, but the pivot to scholarships and Impact has been very positive. Karen discussed aligning the goals of the Impact committee to the outcomes from the HR survey to better serve staff.

- **Question:** It sounds like there is a lot of overlap between committees. Are there times when representatives work together or attend the other meetings? Yes, we encourage collaboration and have had success with that in the past.
- **Question:** Can you be on more than one committee? Yes! With the condensed committee structure, we may see subcommittees at the discretion of committee chairs. Experienced senators chimed in to give advice that senators should be mindful of work commitments and not overload themselves.

Hadley wrote committees on the board and asked senators to go up and write their names where they are interested in serving. All participated and added their names as listed below:

House	Communications	Community	Staff
Aimee	Kelley	Michael	Michael
Blake	Alexis	Alexis	Jin
Jessica U.	Haley	Katie	Rob
Rob	Shelina	Alejandra	Shelina
Qing Qing	Melisa	Kalya	Samantha (Sam)
Barbara	Frank	Dorianne	Hillary
Colin	Scott	Sarah	Dakota
Bee	Maya	Nasia	Nasia
Stephen		Sherrie	Stephanie
		Bee	Aimee
			Carla

Item #3: Goals and ideas – Discuss goals and ideas for Staff Senate in the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

Hadley set up a whiteboard and the senators shared goals and ideas for engagement:

- Clothing drive for OwlSwap
- Uncanny competition
- ‘Meet staff senate’



- Can we impact the RTO 'mood' by offering some kind of staff celebration or recognition? Spirit days?
- Mentoring? Skillshare? Senator to senator mentoring?

[Break for lunch, provided by Cornerstone Printing]

- Promote study abroad for staff
- "Kudos" system for on-the-fly recognition
- Email signature signifier
- "Best of" report/spotlight or superlatives
- "Owl of the month" leading to "Owl of the year"
- Athletics staff nights
- Partner with CARES/sustainability/nonprofits to reduce and reuse waste on campus
- "Thanks for giving a hoot! Now pass it forward!"
- Flat Scrappy
- Employee development center
- Employee emergency fund
- Professional development fund
- Blood drive
- Holidays around the world including silent auction
- BBQ sales fundraiser, partner with restaurant and get a portion of all sales funds

Committee reports

House

- Aimee Kane will Chair
- House is a maintenance committee
- Bee will replace Rob on the Policy Process Council
- House committee will "own" bylaw enforcement and changes

Communications

- Kelley Price will Chair
- LinkedIn
- Support for other committees
- Revive newsletter with new schedule – send from senator email



- Template for Senate communications

Staff Impact

- Carla Budinsky will Chair
- Plan in place for scholarship will continue as planned
- Partner with HR for staff awards
- Getting Staff Senate name out there by piggybacking on events already planned
- Considering ideas from brainstorming, within reasonable limits

Community Engagement

- Sarah Holik will Chair
- Desire to spread awareness about campus resources, embracing sustainability as a 'theme' for the year
- Brainstormed partnerships: Cobb County recycling center, HR, etc.

Open forum

- Concerns about parking when full return to office hits
- CCSE has grievances and wants to be heard, is Senate the right medium for them? How can we direct those concerns appropriately? Hadley reiterated these are open meetings and that we as senators are the mouthpiece. Bring concerns to senate and we can work on them together.
- CCSE concern: USG policy re: teaching 2 classes per semester. *KSU* policy is 1. This is a big sticking point in CCSE. Karen provided background that with system wide policies institutions can be more strict, but not more lenient. This is a Provost decision that has been validated by Ivan Pulinkala and will remain in place.
- CCSE concern: New hires having trouble accepting they must pay for parking. This is standard across university system, and the fees we pay go towards paying off construction loans for decks and parking upkeep on campus.



Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Kelley Price, seconded by Stephanie Marchant. No further discussion, all voted in favor, so the motion passed. Meeting adjourned 2:57pm.