



KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Senate Meeting October 30, 2024

Attending in person:

- Robert Bridges
- Carla Budinsky
- Ryan Capps
- Hadley Cottingham
- Rebecca Cox
- Joshua Davis
- Molly First
- Lindsey Jefferson
- Aimee Kane
- Lynn Kunkel
- Melissa Lappe
- Savannah Lockman
- Andrew McCanless
- Karen McDonnell
- Shelina Munoz
- Qing Qing Norris
- Sylvia Okonkwo
- Kelley Price
- Susanne Rothery
- Claire Rutte
- Donald Spencer
- Patrick Steimer
- Trudi Vaughan
- Jacqueline Winters-Allen

Attending online:

- Amonte Hampton
- Mark Kirkley

Not in attendance / no proxy:

- Sanjoosh Akkineni
- Dana King
- Janice Malone
- Caitlin O'Kelley
- Brittany Scott

Guests:

- Karen Ruehlman
- Farahnaz Bahreini

Meeting called to order.

- Final review of last month's minutes
- September 2024 minutes approved

Guest Speaker: Karen Ruehlman, Assistant Vice President of Financial Aid and Scholarships

- Pre-2011, the Department of Education discovered that institutions were taking money from students and not really giving them an education, mostly in certificate programs that were useless to help their career
- Laws/regulations were put into place; if determined a program was useless, it wasn't eligible for financial aid
- This was challenged, went through the courts, went away under a past presidential administration, and has now come back; this will impact every degree program at KSU, but graduate programs will be first to implement
- Financial Value Transparency (FVT) will measure programs' debt to earnings, and earnings bring-in (is it more than a HS graduate?); institutions must disclose if the debt for a program will outweigh financial gain after graduation
- Institutions can still offer programs without financial aid
- We won't know what the disclosure will look like until the DoE publishes the requirements (close to 7/1/2026)

- Staff Senate can help by directing students to Career Services
- Karen Ruehlman is happy to schedule time with departments to discuss further

Old Business:

- Final edits/review of current Senator Roster to publish on the website
- USG Staff Council Conference recap
 - Thanks to all who helped!
 - We received many compliments
 - Link to pictures will be sent to the Communications Committee for the website
 - Deck slides of breakout sessions will be sent to attendees
 - A feedback survey will be created and sent out
 - The Inspirational Activity was recreated at the Benefits Fair; it was very successful and the poster will be sent to HR
- Staff Senate Foundation funds
 - They refill every year, so we have funds to order shirts for Senators to wear at events
 - We have Staff Senate buttons; let Rob Bridges know if you need one
 - We can also use Foundation funds for food, maybe an Olympics refreshment table?
 - Foundation funds not affected by fiscal year

New Business:

- Administrators Council
 - Shared government group on campus at the Director level
 - They are having difficulty finding people to lead and are questioning value since meetings tend to be updates
 - If they disband, could they be incorporated into Staff Senate?
 - Admin Council used to be part of Staff Senate before consolidation; we're the only school in the USG with separate groups
 - If we let them join Staff Senate, they'd be like any other Senator and eligible to be elected
 - No objections from Senators; HR will let Provost know we approve
- Meeting attendance
 - Bylaws state that Senators have to attend meetings in person and can't miss more than 2 meetings a year, but there's no real disciplinary action if not followed
 - Senators are supposed to designate proxies if they can't attend a meeting
 - Virtual meetings are convenient, but we don't get the same conversation/collaboration/engagement as in person
 - Suggested options:
 - Alternating schedule (one month Kennesaw, one month Marietta, one month online)
 - Reserve rooms on both campus and meet over Teams so no cross-campus travel needed but still in person
 - Mandatory in person meetings twice a year beginning and end of AY
 - Think about what we want to do going forward; we'll vote in November
 - Suggestion to promote Staff Senate accomplishments so far this year to entice people to join

Committee reports:

- Communications:
 - The Social Media Form is at <https://tinyurl.com/KSUSocialMedia>. Encourage your departments to submit photos of things they've done, Staff Spotlight, etc. Please give feedback on the monthly newsletter when the draft is posted to Teams.

- Community Impact: No new volunteer opportunities are listed on [GivePulse](#). It would be nice for the holidays if Staff Senate could find an organization that has a need; [The Center for Children & Young Adults](#) may need help. Could we collect items for them? CARE services does that for KSU students. [Owl Swap](#) is available if you know people who need items. Senators have contacts at MUST ministries and other Cobb County organizations. Senators could also volunteer for commencement.
- Staff Impact: The Administrative Team is working great. Coffee Talks are happening on both campuses. Encourage people to come and connect! The Door Access Department has a Power BI report that consolidates all door access groups and who has access to them and can be searched by door. Ask Zenobia Strong if you want the report.
 - *Post-meeting addendum: Per Zenobia, the Power BI report only lists the Door Access groups and who has access to those doors through the groups; it doesn't include people who have access to doors individually. Report requests on access would need to include a specific list of doors.*
- Staff Engagement: Rob Bridges mentioned the Staff Senate Scholarship to people at the Benefits Fair. Karen McDonnell volunteered to chair the committee.

Nothing for Open Forum.

Motion to close meeting made and seconded.

Meeting adjourned.