

Staff Association Minutes

October 8th, 2025 - 3:00 pm

Private Dining Room



Senators Present In-Person: Amy Coats, Jean Foster, Cassandra Penick, Sandra Pennock, Cassie Robbins, Jessica Searcy, Kristen Neeley, Kasey Schmoe, Beth Beggs, Chelsea Norton

Senators Present on Zoom: Trenny Wilson and John Vanderpool

Staff Present In-Person: Jennifer Morris, Samantha Fowler

Staff Present on Zoom: Mary Jo Laupp, Teresa Cobb, Lara Gilpin, Dana Markt, Tara Vides, Rhett Smith, Roberta Diaz, Monica Phillips, Derek Evans, Jenny Sherlock, Ben Moran, Lori Bomberger, Chuck Miller, Jason Morrill

Committee Reports

- Welcoming & Care: Jean Foster
 - The conversation that Daniel mentioned, it was brought to my attention about a colleague and if we could do anything. I reached out to Michelle and other long term employees who couldn't recall anything but Adopt a Griffon. We would need to set parameters to make sure we are using the same process for all inquiries. As a committee we will get to working on that.
 - We would really like some information on personal time bank donations.
- Election, Constitution & Bylaws: Jessica Searcy
 - Alyssa & I will be calling a meeting soon. Nothing else to report.
- Employee Engagement: Jennifer Morris
 - Appreciate everyone and their spouses for support on Homecoming during the whole days events.
 - We will have a meeting soon to discuss next moves. We are accepting ideas.
 - Has your committee met? No.
 - Have you added all your new members? No.
 - Process of calling a meeting of past members and any who would like to join. Get an official who is continuing, recommendations on who should act as chair/co-chairs. Then bring that information back to the senators to vote for the chair approval. Make it official and documented.

Institutional Committees Reports

- Compensation: Chelsea Norton & Jessica Searcy
 - Monday at 2pm is our next meeting.
- Information Technology and Infrastructure:
 - No Report
- Health & Safety: Trenny Wilson
 - Have not met this semester.
- Physical Environment:
 - No Report

Invited Guests

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- Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, President:
 - Thank you for all the Homecoming events. Door Decorating Contest, Dress-up Days, 120 Students attended the pep rally, Alumni 43rd annual awards, Parade, Tailgate and finishing off with the game.
 - Voted #1 (per US News and World Report) Best College in the state for social mobility.
 - A 9th grader from Liberty High School had a football accident he had always dreamed of coming and playing football at MWSU after visiting with his school in 8th grade. Today, Coach Fenwick and myself surprised him and gave him a bunch of MoWest gear including a jersey with his number on it. On October 18th he will be coming to the game as team captain and flipping the coin.
 - Strategic Plan is open to comment. Email strategicplan@missouriwestern.edu with comments. It will be open for another week and a half, before we take it to the board for approval.
- Daniel Holt, VP of Finance:
 - FY 25' Audit still underway. So far uneventful which is a good thing. We will present to the board at the November meeting.
 - Over Fall break, physical plant will work to replace the boiler in Blum.
 - We are in our last stages of replacing computers with windows 11. Approximately 2 weeks to completion.
 - Health Risk assessments are taking place over the last couple of days.
 - Benefit meetings are on Tuesday.
 - Open enrollment will begin on the 20th. We have a new broker that was able to keep the costs low. No change to premiums for employees, but there is a small change to the deductible. That is more of a federal law than anything that our plans had us do.
 - How can SA help with employees going through hard times? We want to make sure we are thoughtful through the process. If you make the choice to support, make sure you take all parts into consideration.
 - Question for Daniel - Possible staff meal plans, other than the 10 meals for \$84.00?
- Monty Smith, Faculty Liaison
 - We are accelerating our communication and keeping consistency across the university.
- Andy Otto, VP of Enrollment Management & Marketing
 - LeBlond's direct admit was completed today.
 - Kristy Martin & Liby Waltemath are with me today. We will finish the semester by visiting over 200 High School and College fairs.
 - Applications for enrollment are up 20% overall, but 80% just in the KC Metro area, year to year.
 - Lots of student visitors on campus.

Previous Meeting Minutes Approval

- Jean Foster motioned. Cassie Robbins seconds. All I's. Minutes approved.

President's Report - Chelsea Norton

- Homecoming week support was huge. Thank you for making sure we received such great reviews.

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- Vector Training for Active Shooter is available.
 - It was suggested to bookmark the vector link to make it easier to access. Staff Association will share the link.
- Daniel discussed how we are in a really good position to meet our tuition goals for this year.
- Residence & Meal plan numbers are down. He correlated that with commuting students including recruiting transfer athletes versus recruiting freshmen who are required to live in the dorms the first year.
- They are keeping their eyes on our technology expenses. Our VM provider two years ago only charged around \$8,000 a year and are now charging us around \$80,000 a year. They are looking at a new plan, but all the technology on campus is owned by that provider which would cost us around 3 million dollars to switch. They are looking at a 3 year plan when some of our technology will need to be upgraded anyways.
- They did join the Barnes & Noble First Day Program and have named it the MoWest Express. Students pay \$24.00 a credit hour billed to either their course fees or tuition and it will cover their books. It is a rental contract. They can opt out of the program, but it will be an opt out for all courses not just a certain course.
- Lights in Spratt 101 have all been fixed.
- Monty from the Faculty Senate has created an adhoc retention committee to look into the reasons why we are not retaining students. New resources in the library are working well.

Vice President's Report - Beth Beggs

- We had \$3,204.00 at our last meeting. We spent \$317.00 on staff t-shirts that Foundations will be reimbursing us for. So we will end the month with \$3,204.00 again.
 - Foundations will be giving us \$7,000.00 again to spend. Let's brainstorm on ways to show staff we appreciate them.
 - When SA committees need funding they will request approval from the senators. There is a formal process.

Unfinished Business

- Meal Plan updates . . Jean Foster . . Flex dollars is where you load your money on your card. You get a 10% bonus for over a \$100 of loaded money at a time. Flex can be used in all areas around campus. You get a discount when purchasing a buffet in the cafeteria, but all other places on campus you just don't pay tax. Now there is a payroll deduction for meal plans where you can get 10 meals for \$84.00. The reason why it is more than the \$7.48 lunch in the cafeteria is because it is for any meal at the cafeteria (Breakfast, Brunch, Lunch and Dinner).
 - There was a reminder that you have until the 12th for an additional 15% bonus when purchasing flex dollars.

New Business

- None

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Open Discussion/Announcements

- I challenge everyone to give kudos to staff in person. We are always hearing how great someone is doing, but it would be great if you said it directly to that person to brighten their day.

Mark your calendars:

- Next Staff Association meeting: November 12th, 2025 at 3pm in the PDR for Senators. All staff on Zoom.

Motion to End: Cassandra Penick motions, Jean Foster seconds.