

UNIVERSITY STAFF SENATE REGULAR MEETING
MUC Mississippi/Illinois Room
Teams Meeting ID 296 016 262 1225 6
September 4, 2025 – 9:00 am
Approved Minutes

The regular meeting of the University Staff Senate was called to order at 9:08 am on Thursday, September 4, 2025, by President Steven Green.

Present: Steven Green (President), Sarah Kirkpatrick (President-Elect), Doug James (Past President), Evan Lowis (Secretary), Jory Chadwick (Treasurer), Benedict Kaminski (CSNP Constituency Rep), Rachel Garrett (ASR Constituency Rep), Christy McDougal (CSOR Constituency Rep), Linda Eilerman, Maria Ferrari, Cheryl Jordan, Shane Kessinger, Lisa Mosley, Angela Pritchett, Dusty Rhodes, Amanda Russell, Jill Smucker, Michael Tadlock-Jackson (ex officio), Jessica Take, Angie White

Absent: Amy Mitwally

Guests: Bethany Friedrich, Josie Palitzsch, Mae Arnold, Ryan Baker, Keith Becherer, Maureen Bell-Werner, Phyleccia Cole, Mindy Dilley, Kristen Durnan, Katherine Eilers, Xanthe Emerick, Chris Jackson, Ora Lockett, Madalynn McKenzie, Matthew Miller, Misty Newman, Robert Newman, Nicholas Rachowicz, Thomas Rosner, Kristie Signorello, Donnell Smith, Jay Sullivan, Patricia Werner, Connie Wyvell

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting minutes from August 7, 2025 were approved as written.

NEW CANDIDATES:

There are two vacancies in the Administrative Staff Non-Represented category, and we have two applicants expressing interest in joining Staff Senate. Bethany Friedrich, Research Fellow in Center for Predictive Analytics, and Josie Palitzsch, Assistant Director for Resident Life in University Housing, both introduced themselves and expressed their interest in serving on the University Staff Senate. Their applications were unanimously approved.

REPORTS:

President Steven Green – Attended Convocation last month, our largest student class in nine years, which is great for the University. I had a candid conversation with Chancellor Minor about representing staff and distinguishing between the Staff Senate's voice and collective bargaining units. I also spoke with Faculty Senate President about our shared goals and maintaining our partnership.

Past President Doug James – Thank you for investing your time outside your full-time jobs! I spoke with Dr. Jamal Watson, Executive Director of *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, about student success at SIUE and our staff's role. I also attended Student Move-In, a great way to connect with students and their families.

President-Elect Sarah Kirkpatrick – Also participated in Student Move-In. Worked on the Ad Hoc committee list. These aren't required for Staff Senate members, but if you're interested in any of the available slots, please reach out. We have a few openings for committees!

Civil Service Negotiated & Prevailing Constituency Representative Benedict Kaminski – Want to make everyone aware that we've been told there are temporary Facility workers in the new Nursing building

making \$25 an hour, which is more than our union Building Service Workers make. Additionally, there are rumors that Chancellor Minor is not approving the SPA forms for new people all over campus, specifically those that would be represented by a union.

There were no other executive reports.

Executive Director of Marketing & Communications – An offer has been extended and accepted by Paula Bridges. She will officially begin on September 25.

Curator of University Events – Position has been failed for a second time. Awaiting the posting to go back on the website.

Director of Government and Community Relations – A top two have been selected for university visits this week, and then meet with Chancellor Minor and the Chancellor's Council. Hoping to have a successful candidate within a month.

Director for the Institute for Community Justice & Racial Equity – Search is on pause for now.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance – Campus interviews for the top candidates are hopefully taking place the first part of September.

There were no more executive searches.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Open Seats for Administrative Staff Non-Represented – After the successful applicants added earlier this meeting, this piece of unfinished business is complete!

Open Seats for East St. Louis Senators – Still working on recruiting. If you know anyone who would like to apply, feel free to send them our way!

NEW BUSINESS:

December Meeting Time and Location – At our last Staff Senate Executive Board meeting, we discussed having our December meeting at the Belleville campus. However, the Board of Trustees meeting in Carbondale is on that Thursday, so Exec proposed two items for a vote in the full Senate: moving the meeting to the Belleville campus (building/room TBD) and delaying it to **Thursday, December 11 at 9 am.** Both items were approved unanimously.

Lack of Transparency Regarding Executive Vacancies – It was discussed how, despite its wide-reaching impact, the University has yet to make key personnel announcements. Examples include the HR Director's removal months ago, leading to Deb Talbot's quiet appointment as Interim Director, and the Associate Vice Chancellor for IT/CIO's upcoming retirement in September without news of an interim or news of a search for a permanent replacement.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Public Relations – We sent out a first quarter report in the last two weeks. You should have received a little bit of information—just announcements from what we are doing here at Staff Senate.

Scholarship – Still working with Financial Aid to get access to the new version of Academic Works. As soon as access is given, we can make sure the application is built correctly, and the deadlines can be updated.

Fundraising – No report.

Policy Review – This committee is still paused while we await word from HR to see if there's interest from Deb to continue with it while she's serving as Interim Director.

Staff Development & Well-Being – We did drug take backs in August. Our next round will be in October on the three campuses. We are still interested in having a panel Q&A on the newish Paid Leave Donation Policy, but again, like everything related to HR, it's in flux right now.

Diversity Initiatives – Heard back from Lindy Wagner regarding the future of Diversity Council. It's now being called the Council for Belonging & Equity. It has not started meeting yet, and they are still working on finalizing a Chair for that Council.

Elections & Operations – No report.

ACTION ITEMS:

Awaiting Responses on the Poll Sent Out – Late last month, Steven polled all Staff Senate members about the current administration and SIUE's state. All replies go directly and only to Steven. This follows a previous conversation about gauging the Senate's feelings. As the Staff Senate, we must voice the collective body's concerns. This information helps the Senate represent the majority of staff and advise the Chancellor on issues affecting staff. The goal is constructive feedback and solutions to improve university operations and address concerns like staff turnover and pay.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. University Budget Update – September 4, 12:00 pm
- b. Homecoming/Family Weekend – September 22 – September 28
- c. COUGARFEST – Rock the Quad! – September 26
- d. Cougars Unleashed Homecoming Run & Pancake Breakfast – September 27
- e. Cougar Fan Zone Featuring NPHC Yard Show – September 27

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Will discuss the Poll Results at our October meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Shane Kessinger provided an update on wasteful spending. In addition to the fire-rated doors, wrapped and subsequently removed due to a fire hazard, there are the temporary quad lights, which have deemed illegal on government or business settings by a fire marshal, will be replaced by permanent lights. Bruce Capelle, the University Architect who pointed out these discrepancies, was reassigned to the Alton campus. Shane urges attendees at the SIU Board of Trustees on September 18 in East St. Louis to voice concerns against Chancellor Minor in the Public Comment portion, as his contract extension is up for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 am.

Submitted by Michael Tadlock Jackson, University Governance