

UNIVERSITY STAFF SENATE REGULAR MEETING
Alton Building 273, Alumni Conference Room 1301
Teams Meeting ID 261 777 560 789 6
October 2, 2025 – 9:00 am
Approved Minutes

The regular meeting of the University Staff Senate was called to order at 9:03 am on Thursday, October 2, 2025, by President Steven Green.

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

Absent: Doug James (Past President), Bethany Friedrich (ASNR Constituency Rep), Benedict Kaminski (CSNP Constituency Rep)

Guests: Nathalia Garcia, Keith Becherer, Melissa Bagby, Maureen Bell-Werner, Teri Gulledge, Kelly Jo Hendricks, Lisa Johnson, Jessica McCawley, Misty Newman, Robert Newman, Lynn Noe, Jeanette Parmenter, Theresa Rohrbach, Thomas Rosner, Teresa Shipton, Kristie Signorello, Donnell Smith, Brandon Stookey, Patricia Werner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting minutes from September 4, 2025 were approved as written.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Dr. Nathalia Garcia, Assistant Dean for Career Development and Professor, welcomed Staff Senate to the School of Dental Medicine on the Alton campus. Dr. Garcia discussed the career development office's role in supporting faculty and students. The office focuses on mentorship, career pathways, leadership development, and skill enhancement, collaborating with various SIU units. Initiatives include pre-dental pathway programs, faculty mentorship, and professional development opportunities, all aimed at fostering ethical professionalism and career progression.

REPORTS:

President Steven Green – Attended the budget address last month and inquired about the recording availability. The Chancellor's Office said that technical issues with microphones prevented the release of the recording. Additionally, Chancellor Minor remains uncomfortable with recording budget updates due to previous comments about other institutions. Also attended the SIU Board of Trustees meeting, where speakers addressed concerns about Civil Service employees and Advisor compensation. The Chancellor's Report was positive, highlighting a balanced budget, increased enrollment and retention rates, and the need to address the decline in enrollment from international students. Chancellor Minor, Chancellor Lane, and President Mahony received contract extensions with salary raises. A concern about the lack of salary increases at the Board of Trustees meeting was addressed in other forums, with \$4.5 million allocated for salary and wages in the budget.

Past President Doug James – Attended the budget address, UPBC, and the SUAA update event.

President-Elect Sarah Kirkpatrick – Attended Pat Merritt’s retirement celebration. She has been a longtime supporter of both the East St. Louis campus and Staff Senate. The Head Start Director search is progressing and a decision is expected within the next six weeks.

Civil Service Open Range Representative Christy McDougal – Received a few questions regarding the Apparel Guidance Memo that went out to all Student Affairs employees. The memo states that University-branded apparel and materials must feature only currently approved logos and marks. Departments should audit their inventory and remove apparel with retired logos (e.g., the little e), ensuring compliance with the University-Provided Clothing and Clothing Allowances Policy.

There were no other executive reports.

Curator of University Events – They have scheduled five virtual first round interviews for Monday.

Director of Government and Community Relations – Emma Pieper was chosen and announced.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance – Search is complete, just waiting on an announcement.

Associate Vice Chancellor for East St. Louis Educational Programming AND Assistant Vice Chancellor for Educational Pathways & Community Engagement – Two new positions, one search committee. Search is launching.

There were no more executive searches.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Staff Senate Poll – Steven has received 11 responses so far. If you haven’t completed it, please do so and send it directly to Steven. Your answers will be kept anonymous.

NEW BUSINESS:

UPBC Strategic Plan – Keith Becherer, former Staff Senate President and current UPBC member representing Staff Senate, spoke regarding a proposed UPBC Strategic Plan shared to its membership. A main sticking point is the merger of the current University Planning and Budget Council with the University Quality Council, and have the merged Council co-chaired with a faculty member and a member of the administration. There were concerns raised about the overpopulation of administration in this new council potentially stifling hard conversations, and the impact on staff and student representation if they decrease the membership numbers.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Public Relations – Josie has joined us on the Public Relations Committee! J We will have a meeting to discuss the second quarter report.

Scholarship – Still waiting to hear back from Financial Aid about the new review process in the BAM system. The committee is unsure if we have control over the timeline for scholarship distribution, or if it’s already set in stone.

Fundraising – No report.

Policy Review – Kelly Jo is still waiting on a response from Deb Talbot regarding a potential meeting.

Staff Development & Well-Being – More drug takebacks are being scheduled for the end of October, and a self-defense event will be held.

Diversity Initiatives – No report.

Elections & Operations – No report.

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Health Service Flu Vaccine – Check e-Today for Dates through October
- b. ! Vamos de Happy Hour! – Oaxaca – Oct 3rd
- c. Pumpkin Palooza (Alton) – Oct 8th
- d. Golden Age Celebration – Oct 8th
- e. CougarNet Update – Oct 12th

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Will discuss the Poll Results at a future meeting. We will discuss more agenda items at our next Staff Senate Executive Board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There's more discussion about the SIUE Apparel Policy. Employees are concerned about the policy's expansion to the campus and its consequences for non-compliance. They're also worried about the financial waste of discarding branded items and the need to buy new SIUE-branded clothing.

Rachel Garrett shared a recent student concern about university fund allocation, as evidenced by their questions about chalkboards instead of whiteboards. A student suggested we spend money more wisely instead of repainting the water tower or rebranding the campus.

Steven Green restated Staff Senate's purpose: to advise and assist the Chancellor and Director of Human Resources, participate in university governance, and encourage staff consultation. We also discuss issues from constituents to find solutions, promoting open discussions. This addresses concerns about untrue statements in meetings and the lack of formal announcements on important matters.

Shane Kessinger asked about the process of an EOA investigation, and how it can be determined if a report is filed falsely or in good faith.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 am.

Submitted by Michael Tadlock Jackson, University Governance