

## Staff Senate Meeting August 24 10:00 via Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

Staff Senators: Kelci Martinez, Kelly Stewart, Chanda Hooten Brenda Callaway, Bobbie Lee, Ashlee Dixon, Brian Bagwell, Tanishia Owens, Carrie Stanley, Lenette Jones, Phil Grace, Angie Bradshaw, Alec Arce, Stacey Howard

Guests Present: Dr. Charles Abrose, Dr. Talisha Givan, Christopher Gardner, William Holt, Carrie Burt, Orlanda Goodwin, Janet Brewer, Nikki Laird, Eduardo Ortiz, Tina Hall, Amber Brownlee

President, Kelci Martinez called the meeting to order at 10:01am

The meetings from the June senate meeting were approved as written.

Guest Speakers Dr. Ambrose, Dr. Givan, and Janet Brewer were given the floor to address concerns that had been presented to Staff Senate President Kelci Martinez.

Dr. Ambrose guest speaker- Dr. Ambrose started by saying he wanted to appreciate Kelci's willingness to engage and put staff senate back into a place that cares for staff. He stressed that campus Engagement and staff engagement is vitally important and we all have a shared responsibility to students.

Next week on Friday, the Arkansas State University board will consider the mission statement as an official affirmation of who we are as a University and where we are headed.

Dr. Ambrose stated that this is a very hard transition and hard transitional year. When we say "year zero" we are going to do the heavy lifting required to have a strong foundation to grow on. 2024 will be a very different year in terms of how we serve our students. This year will probably go down as the year similar to that of the fire we hear about in the pine tree speech.

Dr. Ambrose went on to say there will be more organizational change. "We want to put people aligned where you can make the biggest difference." Our end of the

year closing is going to show we are in a better place financially. We can actually steward ourselves to really good outcomes. Our community has been through a lot of trauma. We are going to make an immediate reinvestment to make sure our people can be well and whole when they come to work. Also, we have to have behavioral health options for our students.

Dr. Talisha Givan was given the floor to address work being done for extra support for students and employees on the mental health front. Dr. Givan started by stating that our student population, specifically the freshmen that start this year, their last two years of high school have been "unkind". We have to make sure there is someone on this campus when they can reach out to and talk to when times get tough. We know our student health and counseling department is currently lacking. We are actively looking to bring people in. This is elevated to the highest priority right now. We are also potentially looking for someone for our faculty and staff to turn to in times of need. We need employee assistance as we've all been through a lot. Janet Brewer then took the floor to further this statement talking about partnering with resources in the community to also be able to help assist both students and employees. This is being done in conjunction with the University actively looking to fill the counseling shortfall on our campus. Ms. Brewer stated that at her previous institution counselors employed by the University were available to both students and employees. That is something she'd like to see done here.

Dr. Givan also wanted to put out a reminder about the person of concern. Please if you see someone with immediate attention please reach out via this email. [personofconcern@hsu.edu](mailto:personofconcern@hsu.edu). Those emails go to our Behavioral Intervention Team. Dr. Givan also noted that work is being done to revamp the Behavioral Intervention Team to not just be reactive but proactive.

Dr. Givan acknowledged that a lot of questions from staff deal with the staffing levels. The administration knows there are inequities across almost every department. We have active engagement of the Ferrilli team. Will use shared services to fill for a period of time. Chris Sim is a member of the ferrilli team but in effect he will be our registrar through at least the fall semester. He will have

feet on the ground to help with conversion and training. It makes no sense to hire a registrar until all of these processes are worked out.

Dr. Givan addressed a number of questions that had been posed

- 1. Professors advising students to transfer out at semester or saying it will be online but it's listed in person. Saying HSU degrees will not be valid.** We are an accredited University, we will remain that way! Those need to be reported. [www.hsu.ethicspoints](http://www.hsu.ethicspoints). This is a safe place to report ethical concerns that you have. This is routed to legal at ASU Joneboro and then is filtered to the appropriate place on the HSU campus. Unless something is reported we can address it. So please put that process in place so we can better address it. We will take care of our students. Period. Point Blank.
- 2. Regarding communication streamline with who is over what and what department. Broken line of communication.** We have a culture through working with people not processes. We need to revamp our processes so it's not just one person. That said, we need to know who we need to call. Ms. Brewer has created an organizational chart, it's about 19 pages long. We are trying to shrink that down so that we can post it to the web so we all know who we need to talk to. Because people have moved around and are in different positions.
- 3. Concerns for international students and who do staff report to.** Blake Smith is working with us part time. You can continue to work with him. Dr. Salazar is also working in that area.
- 4. Physical and Mental health with our staff. Will we allow key departments to rehire. Justifying salaries. We've added on multiple responsibilities to staff when someone leaves but not added compensation.** As positions are being restructured and we move forward if it's determined that the title and position is appropriate for who you are and what the process is. If it is determined then we can adjust that title and salary at that position. All departments are being analyzed to see if we need extra help, student workers, GA, etc. Important to remember the more we

are able to create efficiencies in processes then we might be able to have less people too. The state has guidelines with govern promotions and salaries as well so keep that in mind. Please talk with your supervisor if you have concerns about your direct position. If you still have concerns, you can go to Ms. Brewer.

Dr. Ambrose----We've got incredible staff members who are committed. We have incredible . WE don't allocate our resources to do the jobs that are more important. There is no way we can extend the advising resources if we only rely on a handful of people who's job is quote advising. We think about the role of professional advising. We won't retain 80% of our students with the current structure we have in place. I won't leave you as a staff with static salaries, current structure. We are working on transforming. The hub will have a direct impact on our performance this semester.

**5. Dr. Givan spoke on Banner access and permissions....** Patience is a virtue. We are still working on an implementation of banner. There are very few people on campus who can get into banner and get things done. We are used to being able to use POISE and get things done. We are still cleaning things up. For now we still have access to transcripts in MyHenderson until October 1<sup>st</sup>. Our goal is to have that information clean, it just takes time. I hear you, I understand. We are working on it. MyHenderson will go away as of October 1<sup>st</sup>. You will see a link on MyHenderson "click here to see the new version that is coming". Please share that with people in your areas.

**6. Staff have concerns because we don't have a staff handbook.** The administrative guide will take the place of the old staff handbook. We probably need to look at some things within that. It's available online. Dr. Givan will also send it to Kelci so she can share it with all of us.

**7. How is it fair to students who are paying full tuition, housing, and meals for most students to have classes online but one?** We acknowledge that. It's not great for a lot of our students. But during this transition we are doing the best we can do at this time. For students who have a lot of online classes we are trying to take the time to help them work through and plan for and how to be successful in an online class. We are helping them figure out how to navigate online classes and their time schedule. Dr. Givan is meeting with each of the athletic teams. Kelly is meeting and doing workshops with the RISE students. Things that would have been covered in HSU seminar, we are taking the time to do a reset on that program because it needed it. We are doing it one-on-one

with different groups of students. It's not ideal but we are trying to reach out in small groups to get that to students.

8. **ASU employee discount and HSU employee discount for tuition remission ....**  
It is in fringe benefits committee. It's being addressed and assessed. Dr. David Rodriguez is the head of that committee on our campus. We as an institution opted out of the system benefit because we wanted to keep our benefit because for people who attend HSU it was more beneficial to stay with the old plan. It was put up to a campus vote. Of course, our campus looks a whole lot different now so it is good to reassess.

### **Old Business**

-Staff Recognition awards. It will be called the Heart of Henderson Award. We are close to getting that back up. We've had a donation for an alumni to provide for the staff awards. We are excited to bring that back. We will let you know when nominations are open.

Recognition & Campus announcements

-Congratulations to Amber Brownlee She was named the Alumni Services Director.

President, Kelci Martinez adjourned the meeting at 11:16am.

The next staff senate meeting is scheduled for September 7th at 10:00am.