



## Staff Congress

Draft Minutes for February 21, 2024  
118 Wells Hall and Zoom

**Present:** Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Duane Dycus, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Dayna Hutchinson, Joshua Hutson, Matthew Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Kim Newbern, Travis Plunkett, Matt Purdy, Tressa Ross

**Absent:** Russell Dunn, Casey Johnson, Angela Richerson, Shyann Royalty, David Shelton

**Guests:** Jackie Dudley, Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services; Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources; Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson, University President; Angie Mills, Coordinator, ADVANCE Program; Leon Owens, Chair, Board of Regents; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice Present, Student Affairs; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent; Dr. Tim Todd, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs; Dr. J. David Wilson, Staff Regent

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice President Audrey Neal called the meeting to order. President Lofton was absent due to illness.

### **REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:**

**Dr. Don Robertson, Vice Present, Student Affairs:** Dr. Don Robertson reported on enrollment numbers, credit hours, and recruitment efforts. University President Dr. Bob Jackson has formed a commission on retention and persistence. Ashley Ireland and Peggy Whaley will chair the committee which consists of faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Tim Todd and Dr. Robertson are ex-officio members of the committee. The committee will review current retention strategies, including those at peer universities, discuss any needed improvements, and develop reports of recommendations to present to the President, Provost, and Vice President of Student Affairs. The first meeting is scheduled for February 23. The first report is expected on June 30. The final report is expected December 1, 2025.

On February 24, a diversity leadership summit will be held for students. As part of the summit, alumni will be meeting with students. A keynote speaker will be Mr. Gary H. Harris, Director of Government and Community Relations at the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Dr. Robertson thanked staff for their work and for their recruitment and retention efforts.

**Leon Owens, Chair, Board of Regents:** Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson introduced Board of Regents Chair Leon Owens. Mr. Owens said he appreciates everyone's hard work and dedication and commitment to the mission of MSU. He added that he is glad to be working with Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson.

**Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson, University President:** Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson provided an update on bills in-process during the current state legislative session. He will be attending meetings in Frankfort on February 22. Jordan Smith, Executive Director of Governmental and Institutional Relations, is currently in Frankfort, monitoring proposed bills that would affect MSU. The MSU Faculty and Staff Leadership Committee and Budget Advisory Committee each held a meeting earlier in the semester. The Board of Regents will meet on March 1, in Pogue Library.

**Jackie Dudley, Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services:** Jackie Dudley reported on the network project along Fifteenth Street, and the HVAC projects in-progress. The construction site for the nursing building is scheduled to be fenced-in before the fall semester. The inspection of Station 74 is underway. Labs will be available in the welcome area of the Curris Center for students to use to complete the FAFSA.

**Dr. Tim Todd, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs:** Dr. Tim Todd gave an update on the SACS accreditation review. The questions report and quality enhancement plan were submitted to SACS earlier in February. The SACS vice president visited the Murray campus a few weeks ago. The SACS team will be on campus on April 1. The team will also visit other MSU sites.

**Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources:** Courtney Hixon said the internal job listings channel on myGate will be updated to improve efficiency for Human Resources and Information Systems. Human Resources has partnered with the Office of Recruitment to provide campus tours for newly hired employees. Performance appraisal training for supervisors will begin in March via zoom. The second series of supervisor training will start this semester. The first series was held during the fall semester. Ms. Hixon listed upcoming Racer Wellness events. Information is available on the Racer Wellness website. Staff may contact Human Resources any time with questions. Updates on the compensation study will be provided at the March and June meetings of the Board of Regents.

**Staff Regent Report:** Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson encouraged staff to attend the Lunch and Learn on February 29. The speaker for that event is Elle Covington, a senior who has worked in the Housing Office during her four years at MSU. The Board of Regents will meet on March 1. The meeting will be streamed live. Staff may contact Dr. Wilson with questions. He thanked Jordan Smith, Dr. Jackson, and those working to initiate a veterinary school at Murray State.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Jodi Hanneman made a motion to approve the January 17, 2024 Minutes as presented. Joshua Hutson seconded, and the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:** Tressa Ross made a motion to approve the January 2024 Treasurer's Report as presented. Jeremy McKeel seconded, and the motion carried.

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** Vice President Audrey Neal reported on the February 20 meeting of the Executive Committee. The committee discussed the need to revise the Business Discount List to ensure that the businesses listed offer discounts specifically for MSU employees. The committee is developing a letter Staff Congress members can email to local businesses and to businesses in extended campus locations to ask if they offer a discount to MSU employees. The list will be updated into categories. Ms. Neal sent committee chairs a Google form that the chairs can use to provide an update on the status of committee goals.

Dr. Wilson asked that staff notify Jodi Hanneman, Chair of the Business Discount List Revision Committee, when they notice businesses on the list that are closed.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Orville Herndon said the filing period for the regular Staff Regent Election is currently ongoing, and will close February 26, at 4:30 p.m. Staff Regent candidate forums will be held March 6, at 1:30 p.m., and March 7, at 10:00 a.m. The forums will be held in-person and will be streamed live. The Staff Regent election is scheduled for March 12 and 13, 2024. The term for the winner of the election will begin July 1, 2024. The term for the current Staff Regent, Dr. David Wilson, ends June 30.

The Staff Congress Election will be held in April 2024. Mr. Herndon read the names of Staff Congress members whose terms will expire June 30, 2024. The filing period for the election is scheduled for March 25 – April 8. The election dates are April 23-25. At the January 2024 Staff Congress meeting, members voted to change the Staff Regent Election from three days to two days. Mr. Herndon asked if Staff Congress would like to change the Staff Congress Election from three days to two days. Discussion followed.

Orville Herndon made a motion to hold the Staff Congress Election April 23-24, 2025, with the option for the Credentials and Elections Committee to extend the election if needed. Tressa Ross seconded, and the motion carried.

**Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee:** No report.

**Communications Committee:** No report.

**Working Conditions Committee:** Matt Purdy said the Working Conditions Committee has not been able to meet since the Staff Success Week in January. He was able to view the supervisor training and said he appreciates that the training is being offered. Regarding the campus tours for new hires discussed by Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon in today's meeting, Mr. Purdy said the committee had discussed the idea previously and he is glad the tours have started. Videos of Staff Success Week presentations will be available on YouTube.

**Staff Survey Committee:** Audrey Neal reported that the survey responses have been divided into sections and sent to Staff Survey Committee members to review. The responses will be compiled into a report that will be sent to the Staff Congress Executive Committee which will then develop committee assignments as needed. The report will be presented to the Board of Regents. Ms. Neal thanked the committee members for their work.

**Textbook Scholarship Committee:** Joshua Hutson said the committee met and awarded a textbook scholarship to Brandon Anderson in the Office of Development. Applications that were received after the deadline will be considered in the fall semester. The committee is discussing the possibility of scheduling rebates nights for the scholarships.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** Duane Dycus said the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee will schedule a meeting in the next few weeks.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:** Kim Newbern said that Dr. Jackson's report earlier in today's meeting included the status of current diversity, equity, and inclusion bills in the Kentucky legislature. Jordan Smith, Executive Director of Governmental and Institutional Relations, will address the committee at a future meeting.

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:**

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:** Orville Herndon said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet March 15, at 1:00 p.m., and April 19, at 1:00 p.m. A representative from Marsh McLennan, MSU's new health and wellness consultant, will speak at the April meeting to give an overview of the services the company provides. Meetings are open to the public. Zoom links for the meetings will be available.

**Intercollegiate Athletic Council:** No report.

**Naming Campus Facilities Committee:** No report.

**Judicial Board:** No report.

**Sick Leave Appeals Committee:** No report.

**International Studies Advisory Committee:** No report.

**Budget Advisory Committee:** Audrey Neal reported that the Budget Advisory Committee met earlier in February. The committee is unable to move forward until the state budget has been approved by the legislature. The committee will meet in April prior to the town hall meeting.

**Shared Governance Committee:** No report.

**Parking Advisory Committee:** Duane Dycus reported that the Parking Advisory Committee's spring meeting will be scheduled for April.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Business List Revision Committee:** Jodi Hanneman said the Business Discount List web page will be updated to be more user-friendly and current. Audrey Neal said that Jodi Hanneman, Business List Revision Committee Chair, appreciates assistance updating the list.

**Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee:** No report.

**Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee:** Orville Herndon said the Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee will resume its work after the Staff Regent Election in March.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Set New Date for March 2024 Meeting:** Audrey Neal noted that the next Staff Congress meeting is scheduled for March 20, which is during spring break. She said the Executive Committee discussed March 13, and March 27, as options for the March meeting date. A Racer Day is scheduled for March 27. Some Staff Congress members will be working at Racer Day activities and will be unable to attend a Staff Congress meeting on March 27. Orville Herndon made a motion to move the March 2024 Staff Congress meeting from March 20, to March 13, at 1:30 p.m. Joshua Hutson seconded, and the motion carried.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:** Matt Purdy said four career fairs will be held the week of March 13, with 166 employers registered. More employers are expected. A mixer for employers, faculty, and staff is scheduled for March 12. He will send an email with the registration link for the March 12 mixer.

Dr. Todd said if Mr. Purdy will send the link to him, he will forward it to faculty.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Jodi Hanneman made a motion to adjourn. Matt Purdy seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.