

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA STAFF SENATE MEETING

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

PRESIDING: Megan Colascione, President

Call to Order – Megan Colascione, President

President Colascione officially called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM. President Colascione welcomed staff senators and visitors to the staff senate meeting.

Roll Call/Attendance Report – Julia Hodge, Secretary

Secretary Hodge checked the roll after taking attendance. According to the attendance report, 39 senators were in attendance, 12 senators were absent or online, and no senators gave proxies.

Establish Quorum – Julia Bellon, Parliamentarian

Based on the attendance report, Parliamentarian Bellon declared a quorum was established and declared business could be conducted.

Approval of Minutes – Megan Colascione, President

There were no changes to the January 14, 2025, staff senate meeting minutes. Senator Boland made a motion to accept the general body staff senate minutes as written. Senator Epps seconded the motion to accept the minutes as written. All senators were in favor. The motion was adopted and carried, and the minutes were accepted as written.

President's Update – Megan Colascione, President

- Celebrate
 - Carolina Day – February 11 (Today!)
 - USC Staff Awards
 - Proposal for new slate of awards reviewed and approved through President's Council
 - Staff members in FTE, RGP or TL position at USC-Columbia, SoM-Columbia and Greenville campuses eligible.
 - Each winner will receive an honorary plaque, a \$3000 cash award, and recognition at the Staff Awards Ceremony.
- Collaborate
 - Community Projects Road Cleanup
 - Thank you to the volunteers for Keep the Midlands Beautiful!
 - Provost's Retreat – January 31
 - USC navigating impact of executive orders
 - Enrollment Trends
 - Image and impact of higher education
 - Focus on admitted students and career outcomes
 - March 11: Staff Senate general body meeting with President Amiridis
 - Everyone must RSVP if attending in person
 - Can add questions to RSVP form (questions from yourself and your constituents)

- Innovate
 - USC Staff Appreciation Day Design Contest
 - Who: staff members
 - What: original artwork from USC staff encompassing the theme of unity and connection to be used on items for Staff Appreciation Day
 - When: accepting artwork submissions Monday, February 17 – Sunday, March 16
 - Where: submit artwork online through the Staff Senate website
 - USC Women’s Leadership
 - Reenvisioning what PACWI and Women’s Leadership Initiatives look like at USC
 - The Women’s Leadership Institute will be on April 30, 2025. Registration will open 8:00 AM on April 1. Sign up fast!
 - Employee Engagement Survey – Modern Think
 - Coming mid-March 2025 to all full-time employees
 - Health and Wellness
 - Learning from Staff Senator Alisa Liggett on ways to destress and tap into mindfulness at work

Guest Speakers – Executive Officer Nominees

- Vice President
 - Cami Reid
- Treasurer
 - Andrea Avant
 - Amanda “Manda” Fontenot-Tuk
- Secretary
 - Kathryn Kenard
 - Michaela Taylor
- Parliamentarian
 - Jessica McCormick

Reports of Committees:

Membership: Kathryn Kenard/Andrea Avant

- Officer Elections open after this meeting.
- General senator elections will open after officer elections are confirmed.
 - Worked with Communications to create flyer to share with constituents

Communications: Michaela Taylor/Lori Carey

- Filming scheduled for Staff Senate history video with founders for early March.
- Also, helping advertise General Elections and Staff Appreciation Day

Staff Policy and Well-Being: Jason Cone/Cami Reid

- Expanding Tuition Assistance: USC policy and state code of laws limits tuition assistance to credit-bearing courses (albeit, vaguely); we have been pointed towards DataCamp (data skills); would need data showing that employees would benefit from enhanced skill

sets through these non-traditional platforms and that USC would likely see improved retention and employee satisfaction

- Email Access for Research Employees After Employment Ends: VP Agardy is open to the idea and does not foresee it being a difficult technical endeavor; AVP Ogorek has some concerns about regulating the processes and employees abusing it; we reached out to counterparts in Faculty Senate to learn how academic colleges across campus handle this and if they see a need to investigate further
- RGP Grievance Process Transparency: conflicting information has been dispersed regarding RGP grievance rights; VP Agardy cites HR policy and SC Code of Laws as final answer (no grievance rights); we will have AVP for Civil Rights & Title IX, Peirano, at next meeting to clarify from her perspective; next steps: determine what USC can do/does do and what grant organizations do when onboarding to alleviate confusion
- Upcoming Engagement Survey - President Colascione asked the committee to collect USC-specific topics to be considered in survey; these were sent last month; committee is hoping to use survey results as driving force for upcoming year

Professional Development: Khristina DeLorenzo/Simone Keller

- Following our meeting today – another meet-up at Thirsty Fellow
- Amanda Castles will attend the general body meeting in April to discuss Employee Health & Wellbeing

Community Projects: Chakira Hogan/Alexis Watts

- Keep the Midlands Beautiful
 - We picked up 34 lbs of trash last Friday for our lunch break trash pickup!
 - Next clean up date is Saturday, May 17 - 9:30-10:30
 - Other upcoming clean up dates:
 - Saturday, August 16- 9:30-10:30
 - Friday, November 14, 2025- 12:30-1:30
- Upcoming plans:
 - March: Dates TBA Cocky's Reading Express (3-4 volunteers each event)
 - April: Date TBA RMHC to donate our can tabs and prepare/buy a meal for families staying there at 5:00 PM
 - May: Date TBA volunteer in the Sustainable Carolina Garden

Bylaws: Marissa Buck/Manda Fontenot-Tuk

- No report at this time.

Staff Senate Awards and Recognition Committee: Ashley Dantzler

- Save the Date for Staff Appreciation Day: May 22 (11 AM – 2 PM)
 - Location: Russell House Davis Field
 - Updates:
 - All subcommittees are now up and running
 - Meetings and planning with Aramark underway
 - Staff design contest for swag announced
- Approval of USC Staff Awards now moving outside of this committee to HR

Staff Senate Scholarship/Fundraising Committee: Michelle Knight

- Pivoting away from the golf tournament for this year. Just too much of a lift after weighing expenses vs. return.
- Looking to hold a Silent Auction in conjunction with Staff Appreciation Day
- Idea to perhaps do a historic walk on campus, as well.
- Promote Staff Senate Fund for Give 4 Garnet (March 26 & 27).

Additional Announcements

- Athletics – On Feb 5th had 3rd annual National Women's and Girls in Sports event. It was a wonderful event for current student athletes to join together with alums and community members.
- Interfaith Dialogue occurring on campus next week for faculty and staff.
- Student organization for PR survey in a competition and could use our participation.
- Discover USC is on April 25 and looking for faculty, staff reviewers.

Adjourn

Senator McCormick made a motion to adjourn. Senator Kenard seconded the motion to adjourn. All senators were in favor. The formal meeting adjourned at 4:06 PM.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 11 at 3:00 p.m. in the Lumpkin Auditorium, Close-Hipp Building, 8th Floor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Hodge
Secretary
Staff Senate