

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA STAFF SENATE MEETING

Tuesday, January 14, 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 3:00 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, 42 senators were in attendance, 9 senators were absent or online, and no senators gave proxies.

Establish Quorum – Julia Hodge, Secretary

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

Approval of Minutes – Megan Colascione, President

There were no changes to the December 10, 2024, staff senate meeting minutes. Senator Newton 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
 - New Chief of Staff – Dr. Anna Edwards
 - School of Medicine (Columbia) Health Sciences Campus groundbreaking ceremony
 - January 23 at 3 PM in Columbia's Bull Street District
 - Postal Services at USC received perfect Passport facility scores from the US Department of State
 - Carolina Day – February 11
 - Wear garnet and black!
- Collaborate
 - Provost's Retreat – January 31
 - 9 AM – 1:30 PM
 - RSVP form – please state you are a Staff Senator
 - Staff Senate presentation to the Council of Academic Deans
- Innovate
 - Employee Engagement Survey
 - March 2025
 - Inaugural Unsung Hero Awards to be given at the MLK Breakfast
 - Friday, January 17
 - Honor front-line staff who work in Dining, Facilities, and Housing
 - Data Camp – free PD from Research and Educational Services

- Provides over 430 on-demand, browser-based courses tailored to different skill levels and roles, covering topics including:
 - Discovering the fundamentals of AI
 - Creating pivot tables in Excel
 - Joining tables in SQL
 - Automating tasks with Python
 - Creating dashboards in Power BI
- Reminders
 - Staff Senator Role
 - Communicate with all your constituents:
 - Remind them of our meetings – attend in person or tune-in online
 - Share updates from meetings (Communications committee template)
 - Encourage them to support Staff Senate Projects:
 - Gamecock CommUnity Shop – Carolina Closet, Self-Expression Closet, & Gamecock Pantry
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Meet with leadership in your unit, department, division, and/or college leadership at least once a quarter
 - Create open time with constituents to connect and hear what is working well and what we can advocate to improve.
 - Executive Committee Roles
 - Highlighted each officer position and their duties
 - Encouraged senators to consider nominating a fellow senator or submitting a self-nomination for next year's Executive Committee

Reports of Committees:

Membership: Kathryn Kenard/Andrea Avant

- Announced Officer Elections
 - Info session will be held via Teams on January 28 at 3:00 PM
 - Detailed email will be sent to Senators soon with link for session
 - Next general body meeting (February 11) will be when candidates for officer positions speak about why they're interested.
 - Officer elections will open the next day.

Communications: Michaela Taylor/Lori Carey

- No report at this time.

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

- Robynn will be meeting with Title IX (Molly Peirano) on newest draft charter, also looking to strengthen language and understanding that visits/communication to Ombud Office is NOT formal notice to the University.
- RGP employees & grievance rights
 - HR 1.85 - C - 1: Employees in research grant and time-limited positions are employed at-will, do not have a period of probationary employment, and do not have grievance rights afforded to state employees covered by the State Employee

Grievance Procedures Act or faculty of the university. Employees in research grant or time-limited positions may be separated at any time with or without cause.

- We want to follow up with VP for HR Caroline Agardy to articulate this, as well as what *can* these employees expect from USC and how is this communicated when hiring, either by USC or the funding organization?
- Checking with HR to see if the tuition credit could be applied to continuing ed programs
- Other endeavors are still ongoing

Professional Development: Khristina DeLorenzo/Simone Keller

- Planning on having a couple more post-meeting meet and greets. Look on Teams for a survey.

Community Projects: Chakira Hogan/Alexis Watts

- MLK Day of Service held on January 18th (Saturday) opportunities via the USC Leadership & Service Center:
 - Reach out to [Chakira Hogan](#) or [Alexis Watts](#) ASAP to sign up
- Keep the Midlands Beautiful
 - Working on selecting dates for February – probably Friday, February 7 or Saturday, February 8
- Gamecock CommUnity Shop
 - Please continue to contribute any donations to the Gamecock Pantry & CommUnity shop – Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm (clothes, food & essential items/toiletries)
 - Phone: 803-576-8300
Email: unityshop@sc.edu
Carolina Coliseum, Suite 4000
701 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC 29201
- Continuing to collect pull tabs for RMHC and we will plan a time in March or April to donate those.

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
- Discussed sub-committees for appreciation day planning

Staff Senate Scholarship/Fundraising Committee: Michelle Knight

- Looking to have a golf tournament for a fundraiser in the spring
 - Save the Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025
- Encourage donations to the Staff Senate Fund
 - www.donate.sc.edu/staffsenate

Additional Announcements

- USC Palmetto Pathfinder Class
 - Details
 - January 17, 2025
 - 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM
 - The goal of the Higher Education Palmetto Pathfinder Program is to embed trained mentors and allies throughout the university to support service members transitioning from military service to higher education.
 - If interested in serving as a mentor, contact Candace Terry, Executive Director for Veterans & Military Affairs
 - TERRYCM@mailbox.sc.edu
- Reinstated WBB tickets for fac/staff for this year (you+3 with Carolina Card), assuming not a sold out game for a regular season game. The website will be updated to reflect the reinstatement.
- February 3 Brian Lusk, new Executive Director of Mental Health, will start.
- CLA has new GM, Lexie Boone, who started January 2.

Adjourn

Senator Epps made a motion to adjourn. Senator Watts seconded the motion to adjourn. All senators were in favor. The formal meeting adjourned at 3:44 PM.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Hodge
Secretary
Staff Senate