

February 20th, 2026

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 20, 2026

Reynolds 222

Attendees: Amanda Mohler, Audrey Folsom, Richard Segall, Karen Graham, Robert Williams, Gary Edwards, Suzanne Melescue, Jamie Passmore, Ibrahim Duyar, Alexandr Sokolov, Eric Dry, Rashele Wade, Kristen Sumler, Savannah Cormier, Dwayne Powell, Kim Vickrey, Eric West, Guolei Zhou, Bert Greenwalt, Jason Causey, Banafsheh Aghayeeabianeh, John Hershberger, Rollin Tusalem, Veronika Scudamore, Scott Mangan, Anne McGee, Stephanie Hoeckley, Toccara Carter, DayDay Robinson, Mark Lewis, Jeremy Weeks

Proxy Attendees: Katie Camden for Kacie Altom, Eric West for Julie King

Guests: Kevin Hennings (parliamentarian), Calvin White, Will McLean, Alyssa Wells

Absentees: Marceline Thompson-Hayes, Robert Bradley, Pradeep Mishra, Hao Yang Teng

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Amanda Mohler.

Order of the Day: Motion to approve the order of the day by Eric Dry, seconded by Rashele Wade; all are in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The motion to approve the February 6, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Richard Segall and seconded by Eric West; all in favor, the motion carried.

New Business

Provost updates and Q&A

Census data is all good, with measurable growth. We are at a 20-year high for retention, same for our graduation rate. It is the highest it has ever been.

Registration starts March 9th. Let us know if you have any issues.

The Spring semester has been quiet, outside of the snowstorm.

Snowstorm FYI - We cannot do a transition to online instruction for in-class instruction courses, per the state legislature. It is the same for the public school system. We cleared the FNB arena quickly because we do not have the power to stop an athletic event. We cleared the parking lot due to liability issues regarding people attending the athletic events at the FNB. Residential life is always the first area on campus to be cleared, then the student union, then major thoroughfares. Academic buildings are cleared last. We make the decision to open the campus based on the public school system and what they are doing. Next, it is about being able to walk around campus safely and get in and out of buildings. This was a rare event for this area. We had to manage it to the best of our ability. We did use outside contractors, but they could not keep up (and they were expensive).

Q- Is there a way to say our classes are hybrid? No, it throws us out of HLC and ADHE compliance, and it risks federal and state funding. It's kind of a "truth in advertising" thing. We have to be consistent in our course format offerings all the way through. AOS is a separate thing because it has always been an all-online modality.

Q- Is there a way to let people know earlier that we are closed? No, we have to play it day by day. Typically, we get a little bit of snow, and then we come back to school. This was an unusual event. We were waiting for the local school districts to make decisions because so many of our employees are parents. We were ready to go with announcements by noon the day before. In the past, we waited until early morning that day to decide to close.

Q- A student asked if we were still going to have Spring Break. Yes, we are having Spring break. He argues that he paid for a whole semester and that he is short a week. This was unusual. Each faculty is an expert to decide how to make up the material so the student gets what they need from the course.

Submitted Question: Is there anything that can be done to support A-State employees who use on-campus housing and must now relocate?

Context: We have allowed faculty and staff to stay in on-campus housing. It was never meant to be permanent. It is a great perk. Some staff had been living on campus for a decade or more. Our housing was not full, so we did not make an issue. We understand that affordable housing is tough in this area. We (Dr. White and his family) had a hard time finding housing when we moved to this area. With the record enrollment, we have to free up the housing for the students.

We also need to make room for 120 veterinary students coming to campus. The housing was built and funded as student housing, not staff and faculty housing, so we must stay in compliance with the intent of the funding.

The University Housing Department will help those who received the email to move out by June 15th with letters of reference and to find open housing in town. We cannot help you pay for moving expenses. This impacts 33 people/families.

This is the result of our on-campus housing being full. It hadn't been full since 2015.

The provost understands the circumstance it puts these 33 people in.

Reach out to Natalie Eskew or Martha Spack with any questions about this situation.

Q- Any thoughts about building housing for faculty? Faculty housing is a leftover remnant of the past, and we are not doing that anymore. It is too cost-prohibitive for us due to the tie to state funding. Universities are not building dorms anymore. It is too costly. For example, to tear down Kays Hall and replace it with the same number of beds, it would cost us \$98 million, whereas a private contractor can do it for \$33 million.

Todd Clark, Chief Marketing & Communication Officer, Review of A-State's Website

Todd Clark has been with A-State for 19 years. Changing a website is a daunting task. His team started the process in 2023. We partnered with a company called I-Factory, a national leader in university website building. The new focus is on prospective students and their families, to showcase what we have to offer. The old website had info that was important, but was cluttering the website and did not give a good impression (such as grievance procedure links, etc..)

We wanted to make it more searchable and easier to find info. During this process, we launched the Pack Portal.

Our style is more marketing-based now, so that students can easily find what they are interested in.

We had 40,000 pages managed by people who did not have IT training. We now have 4,000 pages. We moved from a .cms system to Modern Campus. It has great functionality. We also had ADA accessibility issues with the old website. The new system takes care of that. We have a 98% ADA accessibility score. We are getting lots of new traffic on the website since it launched. We have a team of 5 people managing IT tickets to improve the website and fix small issues.

The A-Z index was heavily used and is missed. TC is open to conversations about how to make something similar, but you should expect strict rules.

They are evaluating the analytics and fine-tuning the website. It is a work in progress.

The campus calendar is hard to find. TC can fix that.

The search function can take a while to keep up. The Google crawler is slow. We are seeing search function improvements.

Q- Can we improve the KB? Like set favorites?

You can bookmark things in your browser.

The IT team is doing fabulous work with the tickets.

For accessibility, we need to keep PDFs to a bare minimum. It is very hard to make them accessible. Word documents converted to PDF are better than a scanned PDF document.

Clicking on Faculty and Staff pages in a department takes people to the dean's page, then everyone is on that page, and we have to scroll to find the person. Can we get better staff pages?

Can we get phone numbers in the KB?

Outlook can be a good place to search for people.

Using the search feature in Pack Portal is another good place to find people and phone numbers.

If you find things that are not functional, or want to share feedback, email web@astate.edu

This is an ongoing project we are working on. We are using analytics to dial it in and keep it relevant and up to date.

Email Todd if you are doing interesting things that can be captured and used on the website.

Old Business

Committee Reports and Updates

Hans is working on updating the PRT document.

The Provost and Chancellor are presenting the new faculty equity proposal next month, 3/20/26.

There are a few issues with graduation completion checks, and faculty are still listed as advisors. And students are still emailing faculty as advisors.

4:18 pm adjourned by Amanda Mohler

Minutes recorded by Audrey Folsom

Revision #2

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