

February 6th, 2026

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 6, 2026

Reynolds 222

Attendees: Amanda Mohler, Kacie Altom, Richard Segall, 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, Jason Causey, Banafsheh Aghayeeabianeh, Karen Graham, Robert Williams, John Hershberger, Julie King, Hao Yang Teng, Scott Mangan, Anne McGee, Stephanie Hoeckley, Toccara Carter, John Howard

Proxy Attendees: John Howard for Jeremy Weeks, Kacie Altom for Audrey Folsom

Guests: Kevin Berry, Kevin Hennings (parliamentarian),

Absentees: Marceline Thompson-Hayes, Robert Bradley, Pradeep Mishra, Veronika Scudamore, Rollin Tusalem, Bert Greenwalt, DayDay Robinson, Mark Lewis

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

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

Approval of Minutes: The motion to approve the January 16, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Richard Segall and seconded by Karen Graham; all in favor, the motion carried.

New Business

Kevin Berry ESL Instructor/Conversation Partners Coordinator

Kevin introduced the topic of Conversation Partners for students enrolled in the English Learning Academy intensively studying English in preparation for another educational program. The purpose of the program is to establish and foster communication and connection between ESL Learners and domestic/first language English speakers through informal discourse. While in the English Learning Academy, students attend classes the majority of the day 4-5 days a week. There are five levels of competency, and students are considered for Conversation Partners when they have in levels 3-5. Currently students enrolled in the program are from a variety of other countries including Japan, China, South Korea, Egypt, Brazil, and Nepal. This is dynamic and changes semester to semester.

As a member of the Conversation Partners program, students would be matched with a Native English Speaker, or someone who is a proficient English speaker. It is preferred that the partners be current students, employees, or faculty members. Alumni may participate on a case by case basis. The students provide their preferences (such as gender, background, etc.), and attempts are made to match them with someone that meets their preferences when possible. Kevin oversees the matching process. After being matched, the student and their partner are expected to meet for at least one hour each week. The partner completes a log. Topics of conversation do not have to be academic in nature but must be appropriate based on culture and guidelines outlined in the handbook. This program benefits both the student and their partner. Benefits for the student include, but are not limited to cultural immersion, informal language exchange, and opportunities to meet assignment requirements. Benefits for the native speaker include cross cultural exposure, language building, teaching practice, resume building, service hours, friendships, making connections, and breaking down barriers.

Application for conversation partners: QR code shared. Flyers will be posted around campus

Email kberry@astate.edu

Q&A

How many students are you looking to partner? 15ish

Would it be available to others who are not native to English and would like to improve too, or would it be just for ELA students? Eventually would like to expand to others, but to start with would just be ELA program students.

Old Business

Committee Reports and Updates

Will be bringing equity proposal in next few weeks.

Todd Clark is coming to go over the website in a meeting in the near future. Share specific questions with Amanda Mohler in preparation for this.

International Studies is coming to talk about services. Send questions to Amanda Mohler in preparation.

Titles of faculty on website: Amanda Mohler has been looking into it. She asked Todd Clark and he provided some additional contacts. She is still trying to get more information. Dr. McGee states that she emailed HR and they fixed it quickly. She also notes that there were a disproportionate number of females listed as Mrs. instead of Dr. as compared to men who were listed as Mr. instead of Dr. from her department.

Do we have any information regarding what is being done about the inappropriate behaviors that occurred on campus? Amanda Mohler reports that we have simply been told it is being investigated (per the email sent out). She will try to get additional information.

3:21 pm adjourned by Amanda Mohler

Minutes recorded by Kacie Altom

Revision #2

Created 2026-02-23 21:20:44 UTC by Audrey Folsom

Updated 2026-04-06 18:44:35 UTC by Audrey Folsom