University Staff Senate

May 20, 2025 | 3:30pm-5:00pm | RSC 142 – Harvest Room

Senators in attendance:

Archambeau, Krissy  Bergkamp, Monica Brown, Anne Marie Brown, Zachary

Bui, Trang Coffey, Aaron Duffy, Kevin Fonseca, Gabriel

Leonard, Chris     Ludlow, Daniel McCoy, Susan Mendez, Jacob Nguyen, Kendra

Pierpoint, Jessica   Pletcher, Lyndsay Redington, Corby     Rees, Margaret

Rogers, Kennedy Smetak, Kelley Swink, Rhenee

Senators in remote attendance:

Nathaniel Johnson, Kimberly Gutierrez, Marissa Kouns, Amy McClintok, Corby Redington, Seth Macy, Naquela Pack, Stacy Salters

Senators not in attendance:

Houston, Matthew   Brooking, Wendy    Gimlin, Denise Linder, Angela Lockhart, Courtney Martin, Emily

Guests:

Fran Angell, Kevin Crabtree, Julissa Khan, Autumn Bennett, Shaira Dunn, Bobby Gandu, Carrie Henderson, Tiffanie Henderson, Owen Balman

1. **Call to Order**
   1. [Approval of Minutes](https://wichitastate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5yScuZfUW6JL794) – Electronic
2. **Guest Presenter(s)**
   1. Budget Update – David Miller
      1. Enrollment changes – International Student have been an area of concern for us with the current climate we are experiencing VISA process changes that affect our international student enrollment significantly.
      2. State and National funding – changes occurring have impacts on our funding, for example, the federal grants that we have historically received will have a much lower over head rate for us to receive.
      3. Employee compensation – 2.5% pot from the state legislature for SGF funded positions which is not our whole workforce, additional added from campus resources that increased the available compensation dollars.
      4. NCAA Athletics changes, including NIL and House Settlement
      5. 3.5% tuition increase, and 4.8% budget reduction for GU funded resources (no terminations, these will be made through ooe and attrition), no fee increases for students
         1. Reductions are centered on different sources for each division – for example, Academic Affairs is reviewing course fill rates. Satellite Campuses are being reviewed for efficiency, including maintenance, so conversations are happening reviewing these needs.
      6. 4 elements driving the budget
         1. Compensation – 2.5% for SGF position support, then additional resources provided by University in order to support the compensation goals. RU funded operations will still be required to operate within their own resources.
         2. Enrollment – International enrollment is decreasing, as well as some decline in Texas students due to their state system implementing starting a new program that covers tuition for any family that has total income of less than $100,000 annually. Evaluation of course and program fees process will happen over the next year, which will likely have an impact on RU resources moving forward. There are options in the review process that will help to align the needs and resources to the best/most efficient model. Budget model will also be evaluated over the next year, which will help to align needs and resources better.
         3. State funding – 2.5% SGF compensation will be included, no additional funding will received for many of the resources that we have previously received. Lapsing of SGF funding for vacant positions will be an additional concern to our budget that has not previously been instituted. This will likely result in a cut of somewhere around $500k for us still.
         4. Athletics – House Settlement $2.8B settlement for all D1 institutions and NIL concerns. House Settlement is basically former athletes that were not eligible for NIL between 2014-2024, and this is about $700k a year in expenses for our campus over the next 10 years. This settlement also authorizes revenue sharing and expansion of scholarship numbers for existing athletes. This total will be about $5M in expenses for our campus, in addition to about $2M to provide operating support. This is a long term strategy and not something that will be done any time soon. Student Athletes are around 50% first generation, just like our student population. They are also an economic driver for our community and campus. Our athletics department is very low in comparison to peers without football programs on institutional support, and very high on the self-generated income in comparison to peers. At least $5M will be a revolving need, the $2M will hopefully be more short term based on tickets and donors. Question from Senators about return on investment regarding Athletics – are we driving ourselves into the ground trying to invest in things but also stay affordable. A: We are all a part of the University and we encounter different concerns at different areas of the University at different times, and we often need to pivot and focus on whichever area is in the greatest need. Q: When we move forward with building new buildings and tear others down, how are we going to be good stewards of our money for that? A: One of the drivers is priorities, and deciding on how to spend where it needs to be and juggle the new priorities. Q: Is the student tuition and fees supporting the Athletics needs? A: This is really a balancing act to match up to priorities, and while all of the resources we discussed excluding the tuition increase covers all of the Athletics needs, it is really the total of resources that make up that whole pot. Going forward, there will be a big focus on our strengths to find efficiency and this is not a one and done, but continued balancing things to get us to the best place we can be. Q: Review on positions that will be coming up as new postings are initiated, starting the need for a review cycle. A: The process will be starting next week (6/3) and will review all new position requests to make sure they are in line with strategic goals.
   2. Federal Agency & Legislative Actions – General Counsel
      1. Joe from General Counsel joined us to explain some state proviso and executive order changes.
         1. DEI language included in the budget bill that dictates several things, including verbiage that requires a certification from the Department of Administration by August 1st that all state positions be eliminated that are focused on or titled DEI, cancel any training, grants, or certifications with DEI. Also, remove pronouns on e-mail, communications, and any resources that are used for state communication (business cards, etc.). The state proviso does not truly define what DEI is, so hoping to get a better understanding of what it means by the time the August 1st complying deadline has been completed. This language isn’t in a separate bill, which means that it is a part of the budget for the next full year, potentially to be added to the next year(s) cycles. If they were to move it out of the budget bill, it is likely to be a more permanent requirement. Q: Is It good enough to change the titles, without eliminating programming? A: Yeah, there are discussions about the specific terms for sure, but in reality, they are trying to get at what those terms are impacting. The DOE has provided some guidance that clearly focuses on support based on race, national origin, sex, and ethnicity, and we have already started reviewing and considering the services that we do provide and making sure that those things are not focused on a specific race, ethnicity, sex, etc. but **supporting all students that are in need**. Q: How are other places going to be affects, such as Disability Services, TRIO, ADA compliance, etc. A: We do not view those areas as being impacted by this bill, and we are still listening for clarification on the true definition of how the DEI language can be incorporated.
            1. What does “any other form of communication” mean? We are asking that all employees update their signature blocks by July 1st to be in compliance, making sure to remove the they/them, he/him, she/her from e-mail signature blocks and await further guidance on name plates, business cards, etc. Additional information on what the expectation will be for implementation.
            2. Q: How does #5 affect students? A: To the extent that the student is working as an employee, they would have the expectation to remove their pronouns from their signature block or any official communication. Beyond employment, that will not have any effect (currently perceived). Q: So if a student is using their student e-mail, in the line of employee communications, they should follow the already set best practice of setting up a separate signature block for communication.
            3. Q: What if we have a student or staff that refuses to comply? A: That is part of why we are having communication now, these are compliance obligations and we have expectations that we will comply with the law. It is a case by case decision and can’t be decided as a blanket ‘this will happen’, but rather we should all work towards compliance.
            4. Q: How would this apply to CAPS, for example, that while the students are able to include their own pronouns however they see fit in treatment? A:It is only restricted to involvement for employees that need to be in compliance.
            5. Q: How does the University view this as an infringement on free speech? A: As a person, you are able to do what you want. As an employee of a public entity, including an employee of the state, we are all asked to comply with the law.
            6. Q: Using employee e-mails with preferred names? A: Preferred names will not be affected, and using the preferred pronoun in communicating with a student is acceptable, just not relaying the employee’s preferred pronouns within the signature block.
            7. Q: Can I use “Mx. Joe Smith” is that allowable? A: At this point, yes, we are interpreting that as a honorific which is currently allowed.
            8. Q: Does funding being pulled mean that a specific college will have funding pulled or would it be a funding removal for the full University. A: We are hoping and planning to be in compliance so we don’t know specifically.
            9. Q: Do bios or other full communications need things to be removed, such as online bios for each school? A: Yes, those should be removed as an official communication. Strat Comm has a service that some of these type of things are going to be reviewed and removed from front-facing needs.
            10. Q: What about all pronouns when used within bios or other literature? A: We don’t interpret it as going that far, if they are listing ‘preferred pronouns’ at this point, it does need to be pulled, but pronouns within literature are not currently interpreted as needing to be removed.
            11. Q: What are we doing to make sure that this is not included in next year’s budget bill form the state? A: We always have representation at the state when they are going through the legislative session, and working to educate our legislators on what is important to us and what is important to our students. Hopefully this will have positive impact on the legislative session.
            12. Concern: The communication did not come directly from the President, and even if the President does not have control over the situation, the communication could/should have come directly from him. Legally we do have to comply, but we don’t have to do it happily. Leadership does ask for feedback about how this interaction happens, and leadership does not seem to share much communication, including silence on international education student interactions, If we lose funding based on interactions because we are ’not having a backbone’, it is important to keep in mind that we still need to keep support in the sense that there are things that we need to support. We don’t ‘have the luxury’ to stand up against everything and fight the government. It is hard to also know what will happen in the near future, if the lawsuit to stop these injunctions is successful, these might not be a concern a few months from now. Sometimes, we do have to follow along to survive.
            13. Kennedy will share that ‘we hear there has been advocacy’ what does that look like so that we can share with our constituents?
3. **Discussion and New Business**
   1. Staff Senate Internal Awards and Recognition
      1. Rising Star
      2. Outstanding Achievement
      3. Committee of the Year
      4. Executive board is considering adding an additional, like ‘above and beyond’, ‘solution seeker’, ‘senate spirit’, ‘good governance’, and ‘legacy of service’.
   2. At-Large Senator Appointments
      1. 3 vacant seats, incoming president typically provides a suggestion, and these will be checked and see if they are in agreement, then conferred.
         1. Sarah Mathews
         2. Courtney Henry
         3. Chukwunenye Nweke
            1. Motion to approve Dan Ludlow
            2. Seconded Gabriel Fonseca
            3. Passed: pass by majority
   3. Executive Team Elections
      1. This will be shared likely in the next week or two, please feel free to reach out and ask anyone that has already been in these roles about their experience. Anyone who is continuing their term is eligible.
4. **Old Business**
5. **Senate Committee Updates**
   1. Awards and Recognition
   2. Communications and Website
   3. Elections
   4. Policy Review
   5. Professional Development and Service
   6. Scholarships
   7. Shocker Strive
6. **Campus/University Business Updates & Discussions**
   1. Academic Forum
   2. Budget Advisory Committee
   3. Human Resources (Joint with Faculty Senate)
   4. Legislative Update + KBOR Briefing
   5. Parking Appeals + Traffic Appeals
   6. President’s Meetings
   7. RSC Board of Directors
   8. UPS/USS Presidents Council (KBOR)
7. **Adjourn/Upcoming Meetings and Events/Shoutouts**
   1. June Senate Meeting: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 | 3:30pm-5:00pm | RSC 142 Harvest Room | TEAMS Link: [Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NDc5NzgzNjctNTk0MC00YjQ5LTgwYjMtODUzNGEzYzJkOTU2%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e05b6b3f-1980-4b24-8637-580771f44dee%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22436634f0-7b3c-43f9-8f1b-2c03f0463d91%22%7d)
   2. Check the [Events Calendar](https://www.wichita.edu/calendar/index.php?com=searchresult) for upcoming events on campus
   3. Morning of Tuesday June 3rd, sculpture tour, sign up will be shared through WSU Today soon. Big thanks to Nathaniel and the communication committee for their work on setting these up.