

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2025

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Location: Google Meet

Attendees: Andrew Min, Anthony Snyder, Aubrey Conover, Audrey Keefe, Carolyn Redman, Chris Apodaca, Christopher Rodriguez, Cody Watts, Danielle Johnson, David Bea, David Parker, Don Harp, Donovan Wagner, Edgar Soto, Ellie Hutchinson, Eric Strong, Erika Elias, Francine Tupiken Ruelas, Himelda Davidson, Ian Roark, Isaac Abbs, Janelle Volkenant, Janet Rico Uhrig, Jeff Thies, Jennie Peterson, Jill Stokes, Jody Seidel, Jonas Camp, Juanita Bonillas, Katie Joyce, Katy Hernandez, Kelly O'Keefe, Kristy Snowden, Lizette Arellano, Lucy Simpson, Maricruz Ruiz, Melissa Stoddart, Michael Radloff, Michael Tulino, Miguel Mora, Natalie McConnell, Nick Riley, Priscilla Phillips, Rachel Cropper, Ricky Gonzalez, Sarah Jayne, Seana Chaves, Susan Ho

Meeting Overview

- Provided updates from IT, Human Resources, Facilities, Finance & Administration, and the Provost.
- Presented detailed progress on key institutional initiatives, including security upgrades, new technology systems, and enrollment/financial planning.
- Reviewed updates related to SNAP program impacts and college food resource efforts.
- Received presentations on the new Bachelor of Arts in Education launching in Fall 2026.
- Shared updates on scholarship events, policy drafts, and governing board activities.

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cody Watts, who welcomed attendees and initiated roll call. Representatives and guests were asked to check in via the meeting chat.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Christopher Rodriguez reported that the October meeting minutes received 18 confirmations and one abstention.

Representatives were reminded that voting—including abstentions—is required even if they are unable to attend meetings.

Reports

Chancellor's Office

No representative from the Chancellor's Office was present.

Campus Presidents

Aubrey Conover reported no formal updates but remained available for questions.

Provost's Office

Dr. Ian Roark provided updates later in the meeting (see “Provost Report” section below).

Information Technology (IT) Report – Isaac Abbs

Key updates included:

- Completion of campus-wide key card system upgrades, improving physical security and police visibility.
 - Successful launch of **Connect**, the Starfish replacement, on October 31. Phase 2 will expand access to all students.
 - Ongoing rollout of **Element451**, the new student application CRM, with recruitment features live as of November 3 and full application functionality planned for November 18.
 - Recognition of Facilities and Registrar's Office for collaboration on technology implementations.
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Human Resources Report – Janet Rico Uhrig

Key highlights:

- Self-assessments for performance reviews remain open and should be completed immediately. Manager review deadline: **November 25**.
- Seeking **4–5 staff volunteers** to test the new NeoEd applicant system using a demo job posting.
- HR currently manages **39 active staff recruitments** and **9 temporary recruitments**.
- Effective January 1, the City of Tucson minimum wage increases to **\$15.45/hour**, which will be automatically applied by the classification/compensation team.

- HR thanked staff who already volunteered for NeoEd testing and requested one additional volunteer.
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Facilities

No representative present. Written updates were provided with the meeting agenda.

Finance & Administration Report – Dr. David Bea

Dr. Bea reported:

- Submission of the draft Annual Comprehensive Financial Report to the Auditor General, on track for December publication.
- Updates on **Chancellor Goals 5 and 6**, including:
 - Progress toward reducing operating expenses by **\$4 million**, with \$1.5 million identified through position closures and nearly \$1 million identified in operating savings.
 - Transition toward a student-to-staff ratio trending from 11:1 to approximately 12:1, with long-term goals aligned around historical 15:1 levels (not a fixed target).
- Preliminary updates on potential **2025 bond projects**, currently estimated around **\$212 million**, including:
 - Public safety facilities
 - Downtown campus redevelopment

- Arts facility renovations at West Campus
 - Collegewide maintenance and infrastructure upgrades
 - Emphasized that reductions are occurring strictly through **attrition**, with **no layoffs planned**.
 - Clarified that salary increases remain part of long-term budget planning; rumors of freezes are inaccurate.
 - Announced a **Board Study Session on November 17** to review projections and budget planning.
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Employee Group Reports

AERC – Natalie McConnell

- Discussed a proposed administrative procedure related to out-of-state work requiring approval for periods exceeding 30 days.
- A working group has been convened to evaluate impacts on faculty staffing for 2026–27.

Faculty Senate – Kelly O’Keefe

- Presented a draft **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** for class cancellations and instructor tardiness.
- Key components include:
 - Clear expectations for communication when late or needing to cancel class.
 - Standardized 15-minute wait time for students.

- Detailed procedures for in-person and virtual class formats.
 - Document is open for comment; final decisions pending further consultation with syllabus development groups.
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Presentations

Bachelor of Arts in Education Launch – Jeff Thies & Dr. Michael Radloff

A comprehensive presentation was provided regarding the college's first bachelor's degree:

- **Bachelor of Arts in Education** launching Fall 2026.
- Approved by the Arizona Department of Education; HLC site visit scheduled for **November 17–18**.
- 120-credit program with two teaching certifications:
 - Elementary Education
 - Mild–Moderate Special Education (K–12)
- Designed to address statewide teacher shortages and expand pathways for diverse students.
- Strong community and district interest; more than 70 prospective students have expressed early interest.
- Tuition for upper-division courses expected to follow state statute: up to **150% of current in-state tuition**.
- Staffing adjustments made via reallocation rather than new positions.

Provost Report – Dr. Ian Roark

Key updates included:

- Successful launch of the **Regional Security Operations Center** at East Campus with state and municipal partners; cybersecurity students are actively engaged in real-time threat monitoring.
- Ongoing dialogue with regional superintendents to address rising institutional costs associated with dual enrollment.
- Updates on partnerships with the **University of Arizona**, including potential co-enrollment pathways and general education collaboration with the College of Medicine.
- Continued work on:
 - 8-week scheduling model
 - Student success initiatives
 - First-term “no success” interventions
 - AI and digital literacy implementation led by faculty leadership
- Academic Forums will resume in February, beginning with a forum focused on 8-week scheduling.

SNAP Program Update – Susan Ho

Significant changes affecting students:

- **Government shutdown impacts:**

- SNAP benefits not being distributed until federal action resumes.
 - Even after reopening, disbursement delays are expected.
 - **New federal eligibility and work requirements (effective Nov. 1):**
 - Adults ages 18–64 must meet new 80-hour monthly work/activity requirements.
 - Previous exemptions for foster youth, veterans, and unhoused individuals have been removed.
 - Refugees and asylees are **no longer eligible** for SNAP, affecting approximately 400 enrolled students.
 - The Resource Center is coordinating with county and resettlement agencies and encouraging employees to contribute through **payroll deduction**, which funds 80–85% of food purchases for five campus distribution sites.
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Scholarship Fair & Workshops – Juanita Bonillas

- The **3rd Annual Scholarship Fair** will be held on **November 18** at Downtown Campus.
- Attendance expected to match last year's ~500 participants, including high-school seniors and current students.
- About 30 partner organizations will participate.
- High-school groups are welcome to attend (lunch provided only for pre-registered groups).
- Additional FAFSA and scholarship-application workshops are available throughout the year.

Policy Drafts for Review

Several draft policies were presented for review through **November 12**.
Members were asked to submit questions or concerns to the Chair for routing.

Governing Board Update – Don Harp

Highlights included:

- Introduction of new student senators.
 - Social media peer mentors presented on revitalized Instagram engagement.
 - Significant public comment in support of federal grant programs, particularly TRIO.
 - Employee group reports emphasized:
 - Review of direct appointment policies
 - Continued support for remote work
 - Salary adjustments based on experience and market data
 - Encouraged representatives to stay engaged with employee groups and shared governance.
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Adjournment

The meeting continued with open questions and general discussion before adjourning at the scheduled time.

