

Staff Senate Monthly Meeting

April 10, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

Main Campus Student Center – Room 249

In-person attendance for Staff Senators and Alternates

Virtual attendance available through [livestream link](#)

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Crystal Hildenbrand, Staff Senate Chair

Chair Hildenbrand called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. She shared meeting best practices with staff, guests, and those who attended virtually and welcomed the new senators who will serve during the 2024-2025 year. Speaking is limited to senators, alternates, ex-officio members, and individuals who have been granted speaking privileges before the meeting. Senators should state their name and their division before speaking. Non-senators who wish to speak at future meetings can notify Staff Senate by emailing staffsenate@ecu.edu.

Roll Call

Jenna Boardman, Staff Senate Secretary

A roll call was conducted to determine if a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Jenna Boardman, Staff Senate Secretary

The March 13, 2025, meeting minutes were emailed to Staff Senate members. No corrections were received, and the minutes were approved as presented.

Campus Update

Dr. Brandon Frye, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Dr. Frye began his update by sharing that ECU recently welcomed approximately 6,000 guests to campus for Pirates Aboard. This event was blessed with beautiful weather and an ideal opportunity to showcase the university. He emphasized that every staff member plays a role in recruitment and retention, regardless of title or department. Small acts like helping a visitor navigate campus or taking the time to assist a parent are meaningful contributions to a positive first impression. Dr. Frye encouraged all employees to avoid using the phrase “I’m just...” when referring to their roles, affirming that each person is essential to creating a welcoming environment for prospective students and their families.

He congratulated the university community on achieving R1 (Research 1) status, noting the significance of this designation and the impact of ECU's research on regional health and wellness. He highlighted remarks from Dr. Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education, who praised ECU for setting the standard for the future of American research universities. Dr. Frye said the comments made him proud to be part of Pirate Nation and reiterated ECU's commitment to student success and institutional advancement.

Regarding the ongoing legislative session, Dr. Frye acknowledged widespread interest in potential salary increases but shared that it was too early to predict outcomes. He assured the group that Chancellor Rogers remains actively advocating for ECU's priorities in Raleigh, supported by ECU's legislative liaison, Karson.

As the spring semester comes to a close, Dr. Frye recognized the many end-of-year celebrations and preparations underway, including spring commencement, student organization banquets, and division-level retreats. On behalf of the Chancellor's Cabinet, he thanked staff members for their continued dedication and acknowledged the hard work and value each brings to the university.

He also offered appreciation to the Staff Senate Executive Committee, acknowledging their collaboration and meaningful dialogue with the administration. Dr. Frye spoke positively about staff appreciation initiatives and shared his own participation in activities like wearing fun socks and attending events. He emphasized the importance of consistent staff recognition throughout the year, not just during Staff Appreciation Month. He encouraged leaders to remain visible, engaged, and in tune with morale across divisions.

He closed his remarks by thanking the audience for their participation and reiterated his support for ECU staff and the mission of the Staff Senate.

Sustainability on Campus

Kim Fox, Sustainability Outreach Specialist

Kim Fox provided an overview of sustainability initiatives and events across campus, emphasizing that April is Earth Month, with Earth Day occurring on April 22. She invited staff to participate in several upcoming events, including the Sustainability Ball, a semi-formal event supporting student clubs that encourages attendees to wear something they already own as the most sustainable choice. Other events include a crafting activity using recycled plastic bottles, a guided nature hike, and the Earth Day Festival, which features fun, educational sustainability activities from campus departments and community partners. During the Pigskin Pig Out and Purple-Gold Spring Football Game, an electric vehicle demonstration event will offer information and answer questions about EV ownership.

Kim shared exciting updates related to campus recycling. Thanks to a new company managing Greenville's recycling operations, the university has expanded what materials can be accepted, now including items like plastic cups and containers, paper cups, paperboard (e.g., cereal boxes), and pizza boxes. These changes will be reflected in updated signage around campus this summer, supported by a student intern project.

She also introduced two new tools for promoting sustainable practices at ECU. First, the Green Event Guidelines are now available on the Sustainability website and offer guidance for hosting eco-friendly events. Staff are welcome to reach out for personalized consultations. Second, a revamped Green Office Program will launch in the coming weeks. Unlike the previous model, which required 75% office participation for certification, the new program allows individual certification with four recognition levels: Seed, Sprout, Sapling, and Tree. A training module will be available through Cornerstone, followed by a Qualtrics survey, making the process self-guided and accessible.

Kim encouraged attendees to stay engaged by following Sustainability's social media accounts and subscribing to the monthly newsletter. She clarified that recyclables should not be placed in plastic bags, which can damage recycling machinery. All event information, recycling updates, and Green Office details are or will be posted on the Sustainability website under the appropriate sections.

Academic Library Services

Jan Lewis, Director of Academic Library Services

Jan Lewis, Director of Academic Library Services, provided an engaging and informative overview of the resources and services available to ECU staff through Joyner Library and the Music Library. With over 26 years at ECU, she expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak to the Staff Senate for the first time. Lewis encouraged staff to take full advantage of library offerings, in person or online, and to spread the word about the many services available beyond traditional academic support.

She shared that Joyner Library is open 24 hours a day from Sunday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters and offers a safe, welcoming environment with special events like game nights, Lego building activities, and exam-week programming. The library provides access to databases like the Chronicle of Higher Education, Learning Express, and JOVE, as well as career development tools and research support. Using their ECU OneCard, staff can borrow books, tech equipment, and even board games.

Joyner also offers art exhibits, including a new generative AI mural at the entrance and an extensive student art collection throughout the building. She highlighted the Teaching Resources Center (TRC), which includes die-cut machines, a Cricut, laminators, a family study room, and a robust children's and young adult book collection—perfect for staff with children or grandchildren. Staff are encouraged to use the library's "pull and hold" system to easily reserve materials online for pickup.

On the upper floors, Lewis highlighted the North Carolina Collection, which includes genealogy resources, cookbooks, fiction, and rare materials like the 1733 Moseley Map. The Special Collections department houses manuscripts, oral histories, university archives, and digital collections accessible online.

The Music Library in the Fletcher Music Center contains CDs, LPs, scores, and music-specific databases. Lewis also mentioned ongoing campus outreach, including story walks at Green Springs and Wildwood parks and collaborations with the community.

She invited staff to explore all the libraries offer, whether for research, personal enrichment, or family fun. She addressed questions about donations, interlibrary transfers, and accessing materials from ECU's various libraries.

Faculty Senate Update

Dr. Anne Ticknor, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Dr. Anne Ticknor, Chair of the Faculty Senate, provided updates as the Senate approaches the end of its academic year. She shared that while her role is year-round, Faculty Senate primarily operates on a nine-month calendar and is currently wrapping up its activities for the academic year. A major recent milestone was the Faculty Senate's 60th anniversary celebration, during which 17 past chairs were honored, including 11 in attendance. She recounted the story of a former chair in his 90s who expressed support and shared that several past challenges remain relevant today. Laurie Lee, the retired longtime administrator, was also recognized, along with her successor, Rachel Baker, who has excelled in the role.

Dr. Ticknor shared that the final regular Senate meeting will be held on April 22, including reports from Chancellor Rogers and Trustee Jason Poole. The last meeting of the year, the organizational meeting, will take place on April 29. During this session, incoming senators will be welcomed, and elections for Faculty Senate officers (chair, vice chair, and secretary) will be conducted. Committee assignments will also be made, a time-consuming process overseen by the Committee on Committees, which works to ensure broad university representation and alignment with faculty preferences. She noted that her term as chair concludes on June 30 and that she will not seek re-election. Dr. Ticknor also mentioned the upcoming university-wide teaching awards and recognized the vital role of faculty in instructional excellence.

In response to a question regarding in-person versus online instruction, Dr. Ticknor explained that course modalities are influenced by factors such as scheduling conflicts, classroom space, and student program requirements. While face-to-face instruction is preferred, when possible, particularly during the academic year, logistical constraints often require online delivery, especially during summer sessions. She encouraged students to raise concerns about unexpected modality changes directly with department chairs or deans if no clear justification is given.

Dr. Ticknor concluded by acknowledging the challenges and rewards of her leadership role and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve. She plans to attend the May Staff Senate meeting before transitioning out of the position.

Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Jones, Staff Senate Treasurer

Treasurer Jennifer Jones provided a brief financial update. For state funds, the beginning balance was \$8,242, with an ending balance of \$7,739. The only expenses recorded were two chair stipend payments. No activity was reported for the UNC Staff Assembly account in March. The discretionary fund began the month with a balance of \$34,209 and ended with \$34,127, with the only expenditure being for labels used in the Staff Assembly gift bags. Lastly, there was no activity in the Staff Senate scholarship fund for March.

Committee Updates

Executive Committee

Chair-Elect Bri Wood provided updates on behalf of the Executive Committee. Nominations for the 2024–2025 Executive Committee are now open, and senators are encouraged to nominate themselves or others for the roles of Parliamentarian, Treasurer, Secretary, Vice Chair, and Chair-Elect by emailing Chair Crystal Hildenbrand no later than May 1. Position descriptions are available in the Staff Senate bylaws, and elections will be held at the May 8 meeting.

Committee chairs were reminded that final committee reports are due to Chair Hildenbrand by May 20. Vice Chair Kristina Page has created a report template to be posted in the Staff Senate Teams chat to assist with report completion.

Bri also shared several community service opportunities in support of ECU's Alumni Days of Service, aligning with the university's motto, *Servire*. Volunteers are invited to participate in a litter pickup event hosted by Friends of Greenville Greenways (FROGGS) at Green Springs Park on Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and to assist at the Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC on April 24 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. In addition, the Taylor-Slaughter Alumni Center is accepting donations through April 14 for various causes, including professional clothing for the ECU Purple Closet, toiletries and snacks for the Piedmont Health and Sickle Cell Agency, and personal care and food items for the William Ross Purple Pantry on campus. Senators were encouraged to support these initiatives through volunteer service or donations.

By-Laws Committee

Lauren Arp provided a brief update on behalf of the Bylaws Committee. The committee met earlier in the month to review its current charge and discuss the anticipated transition to a Governance Committee. Members also thoroughly reviewed the Staff Senate Bylaws in preparation for final revisions for the year. Additional details and a discussion of the proposed changes were scheduled for later in the meeting. No further updates were reported at that time.

Communication and Marketing Committee

Erin Gray provided a brief update on behalf of the Communications & Marketing Committee. She acknowledged that April is a particularly busy month for campus events and expressed appreciation to committees that submitted event details early, allowing time for effective promotion. Erin thanked the members of the Communications & Marketing Committee for their hard work in maintaining a strong presence on social media, noting that posts have been going out consistently, often multiple times a day. She also extended gratitude to everyone who has been sharing content to help amplify visibility and engagement across platforms.

Human Resources Committee

Michelle Smith provided an update on behalf of the Human Resources Committee. The committee met earlier in the week to finalize preparations for the upcoming Staff Emeritus recognition. Michelle shared that she has been assembling gift items for the awardees, including vouchers from the Athletics Ticket Office for attendance at an upcoming baseball game. A total of 12 individuals will be recognized this year. She expressed excitement about wrapping up this meaningful initiative as the academic year draws to a close.

Leadership and Professional Development Committee

Joani Zary provided an update from the Leadership & Professional Development Committee. The committee met on March 17 via Teams to finalize plans for the upcoming *Career Readiness: The Whole U* program scheduled for April 14. All logistics, including snacks and drinks, have been arranged. While the session is currently full with 55 participants registered through Cornerstone, a waitlist is available.

Joani also shared updates on the Ballard's Annual Lessons in Leadership (BALL) professional development event, noting that the crystal award has been ordered and is expected to arrive about a week in advance. The event currently has 157 registrants, with a capacity limit of 205. Staff interested in attending are encouraged to register soon. Food and beverages will be provided, and the event will be livestreamed. A setup meeting with the Black Box Theater team is scheduled to ensure all technical arrangements are in place.

Membership Committee

Laura Fanning reported that the Membership Committee has completed the Staff Senate election process, and notification emails have been sent to all nominees regarding their selection status. However, vacancies remain for one senator and two alternates from the Division of Administration and Finance, one alternate from the Chancellor's Division, and one alternate from University Advancement due to a lack of nominations. The committee had not yet met in April but planned to do so the following day to finalize decisions related to the onboarding survey, pending outcomes from today's meeting.

Recognition and Rewards Committee

Dana Lopez shared a comprehensive update on the Staff Recognition & Rewards Committee's activities during Staff Appreciation Month. She expressed gratitude to her committee members for their dedication and hard work. The month started with Spirit Week, which saw strong participation and was highlighted across Staff Senate social media platforms. The committee also coordinated discounted baseball tickets for two games, with 130 staff members participating. Additionally, the free staff meal initiative served over 1,000 individuals so far, with 4,000 meals available overall.

Upcoming events include Family Day on Saturday, April 13, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the North Recreation Complex. The event will feature bounce houses, yard games, a zip line, food from Tucci's Fired Up Food Truck, Kona Ice (free for the first 200 servings), and desserts from the HSC cookout. On April 17, staff can receive a free passport photo at the International House from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. During the week of April 21, Campus Recreation & Wellness will offer free access to the Eakin Student Recreation Center and the Health Sciences Campus location.

The month will conclude with the Outstanding Staff Awards ceremony. Ronnie Woodward, a committee member, announced the award recipients from across various divisions:

- **Academic Affairs:** Rhonda Carlson, Margaret Turner, Dr. Gwendolyn Tyson
- **Administration & Finance:** Jason Sugg, Robin Viera, Tommy Walston
- **Athletics:** Olivia Baker
- **Brody School of Medicine:** Kendrick Burden, Dr. Jennifer Muir, Joani Zary, Dr. Stephen Taylor
- **Chancellor's Division:** Alton Daniels
- **Student Affairs:** Dana Lopez
- **University Advancement:** Karen Burack

These individuals will be formally recognized at the end-of-month celebration.

Scholarship Committee

Jenny Gregory enthusiastically updated the Scholarship Committee's ongoing fundraising auction. She thanked all staff who contributed baskets, noting that the items look fantastic and are displayed in her office. The auction officially launched the day before the meeting and will remain open for one week, closing on Wednesday, April 17.

In addition to donated baskets, this year's auction features several unique high-value items obtained on consignment, including a trip to Mexico, a trip to Nashville, a Jimmy Buffett-signed album, and a limited-edition *Spider-Man* comic signed by Stan Lee. Jenny highlighted the strong collaboration with Athletics, which donated a helmet signed by ECU baseball player Dixon Williams.

She gave special thanks to Michelle Bone for handling the website logistics and back-end setup for the auction. The committee has also been working closely with the Communications & Marketing Committee to promote the auction through social media.

Jenny announced that the recipients of the Gail Jordan Staff Scholarships and the student scholarship winners have been invited to attend the May Staff Senate meeting. Four of the five staff scholarship recipients have RSVP'd, and certificates will be presented to all honorees during the meeting.

As of the meeting date, the auction had already raised nearly \$2,000. Jenny encouraged senators to continue promoting and sharing the auction link and offered assistance with delivering baskets and auction items once the event concludes.

Well-Being Committee

Bret Wilson provided an update on behalf of the Well-Being Committee. Since this is the committee's first year, members have researched how similar groups at other institutions support staff wellness. Bret shared insights from a recent post-event training focused on building connections in the workplace and emphasized the importance of fostering camaraderie among staff.

Looking ahead, the committee plans to advocate for staff networking events to be held twice a year—once in the spring and once in the fall—to create opportunities for employees from different departments to connect and build relationships.

Bret also promoted an upcoming virtual workshop on stress management, hosted by ComPsych, scheduled for April 29. This session, titled *Tools to Handle Stress*, is open to all staff and provides valuable techniques for managing workplace and personal stress.

Old Business

Crystal Hildenbrand, Staff Senate Chair

Update from the Committee Realignment Taskforce

Secretary Jenna Boardman introduced the Committee Realignment Taskforce update and acknowledged Senator Lauren Arp's significant efforts in preparing the proposed bylaws revisions under a tight deadline. Senator Arp then presented the detailed changes to the Staff Senate Bylaws, many of which stemmed from the taskforce's recommendations to restructure and streamline the Senate's committee system.

Key updates included formatting and terminology adjustments, such as standardizing the use of "Bylaws" to match the UNC System Board of Trustees' style and updating references to "EHRA" with the current term "EPS" (Exempt Professional Staff). Language throughout the document was also clarified, and several minor typographical errors were corrected.

Among the most substantive changes was the realignment of the standing committees. The Membership Committee is proposed to be dissolved, with its duties reassigned, most notably to the Vice Chair, whose role has been expanded accordingly. The Bylaws Committee is being renamed the Governance Committee, with the Parliamentarian incorporated as a regular member rather than

serving as an ex officio. All committees now include updated, clearly defined charges to guide their function and purpose.

The list of standing committees was alphabetized and restructured to improve clarity and usability, eliminating redundancy and enhancing alignment with the revised organizational model. Committee chair succession language was also clarified: committee chairs will assume the role following a term as Chair-Elect, and committee secretaries will continue to be elected internally.

During the presentation, senators raised thoughtful questions, including clarifications regarding the naming and scope of the proposed Staff Welfare Committee, which now combines responsibilities previously divided between Human Resources and Well-Being. This sparked a brief discussion about the committee's mission and alignment with the Faculty Senate naming conventions.

Senator Arp concluded the presentation by reviewing capitalization usage related to “bylaws” and inviting senators' feedback before a call for a vote.

Following the presentation of the proposed amendments and committee realignment, Secretary Jenna Boardman formally motioned to approve the amended Staff Senate Bylaws as presented. The motion was seconded, and the floor was opened for discussion. With no additional comments or questions, a vote was called. The motion passed unanimously, and the updated bylaws and the newly structured committee framework were officially adopted.

Jenna expressed sincere appreciation to the members of the Committee Realignment Taskforce for their dedication and participation throughout the semester, noting the additional workload and meetings required to complete this important initiative.

New Business

Crystal Hildenbrand, Staff Senate Chair

Chair Crystal Hildenbrand announced that East Carolina University will host the upcoming UNC System Staff Assembly next week. All Staff Senators are welcome to attend, and those interested should notify Crystal directly. She expressed pride in ECU's opportunity to host staff representatives from across the UNC System and encouraged participation and engagement in the event.

Announcements

Crystal Hildenbrand, Staff Senate Chair

In closing, Chair Crystal Hildenbrand announced that the next Staff Senate meeting will be held on Thursday, May 8th, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the East Carolina Heart Institute Auditorium.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Meeting minutes were taken and prepared by Staff Senate Secretary Jenna Boardman.