

University Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Location: Meadowlark Room, Overman Student Center, Pittsburg State University

Time: 1:30 PM

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Called to order at 1:29 PM.
- II. Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum
 - a. Quorum confirmed; agenda reviewed by unanimous consent.
- III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - a. Motion by Michael; second by Josh Letner; approved unanimously.
- IV. Guest Speaker: Jaime Dalton and Mark Diacopoulos
 - a. Jaime Dalton
 - i. Access Pittstate: designed to be clear, relatable, and usable in daily work. Questions: Jaime.
 1. Terms:
 - a. Strategic plan = "Access Pittstate"
 - b. Online planning system = "Pitt Plan" (still used)
 2. "Gorilla Plan" (previous): broad effort to encourage strategic planning.
 3. New plan: four goals (down from 10), simplified structure; each stakeholder group selects one initiative per fiscal year.
 - a. Staff Senate is a stakeholder group and must complete one initiative by June 30, 2027.
 - i. Initiative form due April 17, 2026 (Microsoft Form); flexibility available if needed.
 - b. Keep initiatives simple and aligned with existing work or long-standing priorities.
 - c. Tentative launch event: May 8, 2026; Dr. Newsom aims to celebrate progress and successes.
 - d. Small "fun committee" forming; contact Jaime to join or submit ideas.
 - b. Mark Diacopoulos
 - i. Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs; Provost Bon is attending KBOR.
 - ii. KBOR is emphasizing responsible use of funds.
 1. KBOR policies now require regular post-tenure review and defined faculty workloads.
 2. New reporting requirements may require staff support.
 - iii. The State Legislature has introduced many higher-education bills.
 1. DEI-related proposal could withhold \$2M unless compliance is demonstrated; status uncertain, but preparation is underway.
 2. Cabinet is monitoring the budget process; impacts could range from minor to significant.
 3. Current posture: wait and see.
 - iv. Research now housed in Academic Affairs.
 1. Office of Research and Sponsored Programs: manages state/federal grants, IRB, and the research park.
 - a. Research park

- b. Dr. Gupta connects researchers with the colleges.
 - v. Since Dr. Newsom's arrival, graduation is shifting toward a more traditional format.
 - 1. A committee is working on the changes.
 - 2. Goal: ceremonies that better center graduates and are easier to manage.
 - a. Reduced emphasis on family participation to improve equity and logistics.
 - 3. Separate ceremonies by college will continue.
 - vi. GUS Bus update: two buses at 30-minute intervals from the Rec Center to Kelce/Besse with central campus stops.
 - 1. Campus feedback will be gathered (BOTL).
 - 2. SEK/CAP partnership continues; partnering was deemed more cost-effective than purchasing, with a smaller financial commitment.
- V. Shared Governance Report
 - a. Faculty Senate
 - i. No report.
 - b. Student Government: see March minutes.
 - c. University Leadership: Emily McElwain
 - i. Lunch and Learn with the President: Friday, March 13 (topic: legislative budget). RSVP required for space and refreshments.
 - ii. Legislative budget versions differ between House and Senate; outcome pending conference committee.
 - iii. Town hall retention numbers were real-time and encouraging.
- VI. Human Resources Report
 - a. General Report
 - i. No items to report; see EIT.
 - b. Orientation Report: see March minutes.
 - c. Employee Initiative Teams (EIT)
 - i. Kudos/Recognition
 - 1. Service awards: April 7.
 - 2. Spring food trucks: April 22, Gorilla Village, 11:00–1:00.
 - 3. Free T-shirts: location/details TBD.
 - ii. Professional Development
 - 1. Strong attendance: 100 registered; ~90 attended.
 - iii. Onboarding/Offboarding
 - 1. New employees receive an email survey after 90 days.
 - 2. Exit interview process finalized for all employees (previously USS only).
 - iv. Employee Wellness
 - 1. "Day at the Rec" planned for late May or early June.
 - v. Performance Management
 - 1. More information to come later.
- VII. Cabinet Update
 - a. President's Report
 - i. Regents Universities Meeting: see March minutes.
 - ii. PSU Leadership Meeting: see March minutes.
 - b. Treasurer's Report (Libby Graham): see March minutes.
 - c. Some staff in academic units were not included in meetings with Dr. Newsom. Meet-and-greet: April 1 at 9:00 AM (invite forthcoming). If not affected, disregard.
- VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Professional Development Day: HR
- b. Satisfaction Survey: Michael Woodrum
 - i. Response document has been shared with the committee.
 - ii. Release expected soon, ideally before April.
- c. Parking Committee: Stephanie Willis & Heather Busch
 - i. No meeting; typically meets once per semester.
- d. Board of Governors: Donna Jacobs
 - i. Discussed potential \$5/student increase to student center fees; next step is SGA review.
 - ii. Noted many students participating in conferences, competitions, etc.
- e. Display Case Subcommittee: Sarah Moon
 - i. Display case will be updated today.
 - ii. Carpenters' quote still pending.
- f. Bylaws Committee: Tom Smith
 - i. Considering updates to committee composition (e.g., ex officio members).
 - ii. Committee has not met.
 - iii. Motion by Donna Jacobs; second by Carol Young.
- g. Elections Committee: Tracey Eagon
 - i. President-Elect: Tom
 - ii. Treasurer: Carol Young
 - iii. Secretary: Sarah Moon
 - iv. Motion to approve slate: Michael Woodrum; second Wylie DeGrusen; passed unanimously (no opposed).

IX. Old Business:

- a. Buttons and/or ribbons for University nametags
 - i. Printing and Design can produce removable name-tag ribbons (red with gold print): 100 for \$94, shipping included.
 - ii. Ribbons are removable.
- b. End-of-year banquet
 - i. Traditionally held at year-end with supervisors invited.
 - ii. Emily will review financials.
 - iii. Target date: June 3; location to be discussed next month.

X. New Business and Questions

- a. Officer election nominations
- b. Term breaks for senators
 - i. Discussed; no vote recorded.
- c. Open floor
 - i. Golden Gorilla judges: Stephanie Willis and Josh Letner volunteered.
 - ii. Collegio printing: high costs and a largely digital audience prompted a shift to one print edition per month plus expanded digital reporting; the website remains.
 - 1. Considering pausing summer print beginning in June (except a freshman edition) and moving to monthly print next academic year starting late July/early August.
 - 2. Email newsletter in development.
 - iii. Go Pitt Week (April 6–10, week after Easter): Dr. Newsom's investiture Monday; Service Awards; Apple Day Wednesday (11:00–1:00, Library); community campaign launch Thursday; student leadership awards on the 12th.
 - iv. Following week: Student Employee Appreciation Week; departments asked to recognize student employees.

- v. Good Friday: planned first outdoor track meet in the new stadium.
 - d. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 8, 2026, in the Meadowlark Room, Overman Student Center
- XI. Adjournment
 - a. Adjourned at 2:37 PM.

Access Pitt State

Imagine a university where opportunity knows no boundaries to Make Lives Better through Education. Access Pitt State is more than a strategic initiative, it is a movement to redefine what it means to connect, innovate, and lead. This vision positions Pittsburg State University as a dynamic force for transformation, ensuring that every individual and organization we touch can thrive in an era of limitless possibility. Access Pitt State is a comprehensive initiative designed to strengthen connections and expand opportunities across all facets of the university and its stakeholders. Guided by four pillars; Access **P**eople, Access **I**nnovation, Access **T**alent, and Access **T**radition.

- **Access People**
We open doors for prospective students, ensuring that Pitt State remains accessible, affordable, and welcoming. Through targeted outreach, streamlined admissions, and personalized support, we create pathways for students from different backgrounds and frame of reference to achieve their academic and career goals.
- **Access Innovation**
Pitt State serves as a catalyst for research, economic development, and community engagement. By fostering partnerships with governing bodies, industry leaders, and local organizations, we drive innovation that benefits the region and beyond. Our commitment to discovery and collaboration positions us as a leader in solving real-world challenges.
- **Access Talent**
We connect employers, faculty, staff, and students to a dynamic ecosystem of professional development and training. Through internships, workforce partnerships, and state of the industry programs, Pitt State cultivates talent that meets the evolving needs of the global economy while empowering individuals to thrive in their careers.
- **Access Tradition**
We honor our legacy of excellence inside and outside the classroom, while strengthening relationships with donors, alumni, and friends. By celebrating our tradition of excellence and investing in the future, we ensure that Pitt State remains a source of pride and inspiration for generations to come.

Strategic Goals

We measure our Four Pillars of Access Pitt State through the lens of these four strategic goals: Student Success and Access, Community and Economic Impact, Innovation and Scholarship, and Culture and Sustainability.

Goal 1 – Student Success and Access

Ensure every student has the environment and opportunity to thrive academically and personally in a culture of teaching and learning.

- **Expand recruitment pipelines:** Strengthen partnerships with high schools, vocational schools, community colleges, and universities to attract diverse learners.

- Remove barriers to completion: Enhance financial aid, scholarships, and support services to improve retention and graduation rates.
- Innovative teaching practices: Invest in faculty development and educational technology to deliver applied, learner-centered instruction.
- Foster student success: Promote a comprehensive student success architecture that supports retention and completion.

Goal 2 – Community and Economic Impact

Leverage education, research, and partnerships to strengthen Southeast Kansas and beyond.

- Drive regional prosperity: Expand initiatives that boost local economic development to build and sustain public-private partnerships.
- Engage civic partnerships: Collaborate with public and private organizations to address health, education, and workforce needs.
- Promote science, arts, and athletics: Leverage facilities and expertise as engines for cultural and community engagement.
- Strengthen alumni and donor ties: Build sustainable support networks to advance scholarships, facilities, and student success.

Goal 3 – Innovation and Scholarship

Advance knowledge creation and problem-solving through research, creativity, and collaboration.

- Expand research capacity: Align academic programs and research with workforce needs through continuous review and innovation that supports teaching and learning.
- Focus on innovation in teaching and learning: Integrate technology and adaptive/applied learning tools to enhance student outcomes and workforce preparedness through state of the industry curriculum and facilities.
- Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration: Connect STEM, pedagogy, modality, and creative disciplines to promote student success.
- Commercialize innovation: Develop structures to bring Pittsburg State expertise and services to support regional and national demands.

Goal 4 – Culture and Sustainability

Foster a thriving campus environment and steward resources responsibly.

- Advance campus culture of success: Enhance support and professional development for faculty and staff to improve retention and recruitment to support a state of the industry workforce.
- Promote holistic wellness: Support a campus that promotes health, wellness, safety, and life-balance programs for all campus members.
- Invest in continuous improvement: Use transparent evaluation, shared governance, and professional development to refine programs.
- Strengthen campus sustainability: Implement planning strategies for future financial, environmental, and operational resources.



ACCESS PITT STATE



A bold initiative to connect people, ideas, and traditions – opening doors to opportunity and transforming our future to **make lives better through education**

ACCESS PEOPLE

Unlocking potential in all



We open doors for prospective students, ensuring that Pitt State remains accessible, affordable, and welcoming. Through targeted outreach, streamlined admissions, and personalized support, we create pathways for students from different backgrounds and frame of reference to achieve their academic and career goals.

ACCESS INNOVATION

Driving regional prosperity



We catalyze research, economic development, and community engagement. By fostering partnerships with governing bodies, industry leaders, and local organizations, we drive innovation that benefits the region and beyond. Our commitment to discovery and collaboration positions us as a leader in turning ideas into practical solutions.

ACCESS TALENT

Solving real-world problems



We connect employers, faculty, staff, and students to a dynamic ecosystem of professional development and training. Through internships, workforce partnerships, and state of the industry programs, Pitt State cultivates talent that meets the evolving needs of the global economy while empowering individuals to thrive in their careers.

ACCESS TRADITION

Living a legacy of excellence



We honor our legacy of excellence inside and outside the classroom, while strengthening relationships with donors, alumni, and friends. By celebrating our tradition of excellence and investing in the future, we ensure that Pitt State remains a source of pride and inspiration for generations to come.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Student success and access
Community and economic impact

Innovation and scholarship
Culture and sustainability

1. Work Schedules & Leadership Changes:

- Discussion of Friday noon closures and flexible departmental schedules.
- No major changes planned.

2. Staff Meetings Without Faculty Supervisors:

- Host sessions specifically for staff reporting to faculty who felt excluded from previous meetings.
- Two sessions planned.

3. Turnover Trends:

- High turnover noted in a couple of areas.
- Issues tied to compensation, internal mobility, and staffing shortages.
- HR informally monitors turnover but no formal report exists.

4. Budget Efficiencies & Possible Cuts:

- Deans asked to identify potential efficiencies due to anticipated state budget cuts.
- No official 10% cut directive campus-wide, though some colleges may set their own targets.

5. Access PSU Project Ideas:

- Request for projects that promote collaboration across colleges.
- Omnibus committee or summer project may support improved staff feedback processes.
- Desire for system ensuring staff concerns are heard confidentially and addressed productively.

6. Extra Compensation Discussion for USS Leadership:

- After review, leadership determined extra compensation is not feasible.
- Emphasis on ensuring senators receive adequate support and release time.
 - Preference to address issues with individual supervisors rather than broad campus messaging.

7. Town Hall Feedback:

- Fewer than 10 feedback submissions received.
- Encouragement needed for broader staff participation to ensure continued value of town halls.

8. Community College Presidents Collaboration:

- Productive meeting with six area community college presidents.
- Efforts underway to formalize ongoing collaboration among presidents, VPA's, CFO's, enrollment teams, and more.
- Goal: Strengthen regional partnerships and student pathways.

9. Sustainability Efforts:

- Plans to revitalize sustainability initiatives upon faculty member's return from sabbatical.
- Focus areas include walking trails, lighting, campus aesthetics, and maintenance issues.

February 2026 Orientation Report

New Appointment	Davis	Connor	Library	2/1/2026	
Resignation	Prier	Melissa	Facility Operations	2/5/2026	
New Appointment	Burns	Kayla	Academic Advising	2/1/2026	
Promotion	Crespino	Anthony	Intercollegiate Athletics	2/1/2026	
Transfer	Johnson	James	Presidents Office	2/1/2026	Transfer from Athletics
Retirement	Manley	Kelley	School of Technology and Workforce Learning	2/13/2026	
Resignation	Prather	Morgan	School of Technology and Workforce Learning	2/4/2026	
Retirement	Pulliam	Darrell	Center for Commercialization	2/6/2026	
Promotion	McKay	Byron	School of Automotive end Engineering Technology	2/1/2026	Moved to Interim Director
Resignation	Oglesby	Matthew	Academic Advising	2/27/2026	
New Appointment	Moser	Scott	Planning, Design, and Construction	2/15/2026	
Resignation	Schrater	Parker	Intercollegiate Athletics	2/25/2026	
Retirement	Conrad	Browyn	History, Philosophy and Social Sciences	2/23/2026	