



Regular Meeting Agenda

April 10, 2024

10:00am

Wingo 315

Senators Absent: Alison Taylor, Angela Jackson, Bryttani Bartlett, Jennifer Jones

Senators Present: Audreka Peten, Carlos Herrera, Christy Dade, Dylan Richardson, Emily Hall, Eric Fulton, J.W. Calvery, Jasmine Driver, Jennifer Day, Jennifer Olson, Jennifer Ruud, Jessica Taylor, LeSha Smith, Melanie Watson, Millie Goins, Nadia Eslinger, Natalie Shock, Richard Hammond, Ricky Harris, Robby Burton, Robyn Smith, Shelley Vangsnes, Sherita Kern, Tiffany Turner, Travis Johnson, Trisha Clark, Tina Wells, Veneta Fricks, Whit Ables

I. Call to Order

A. President Ruud called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

II. Approval of the Minutes of previous meeting

A. 3/27/24 have been approved and are posted on the Staff Senate website.

III. Guest: Cheryl Theall, Living Unleashed

- A. The RSO Living Unleashed, currently has 7 puppies on campus training to be service dogs. The puppies are bred through Canine Companions. The puppies are flown into Dallas where UCA students pick them up to train them for approximately 20 months. The puppies are 7-8 months when they arrive on campus. After being at UCA for 20 months, they receive 6 months of intensive training and are later matched with a person. The dogs are asked to complete a command for multiple people and choose their person. The dogs work until they are 7-8 years old and then retire. The partner and the dog have access to continued training after being matched. All services are completely free to the person matched with the dog. After the dog is retired, the person will go through the matching process again. The puppies live with their puppy raisers.
- B. This initiative began with an honors student who studied this project and Canine Companions as part of their thesis. There are 12-15 college campuses in the country who work with Canine Companions.
- C. SGA mostly funded Living Unleashed, but recently cut some of the SAFA funds given to Living Unleashed. This makes it difficult for the RSO to meet the needs of the puppies training on campus. They previously received \$3,000-\$6,000 per semester and currently receive \$1,600-\$2,700. The group is asking the Staff Senate to serve as a sponsor for Living Unleashed. Funds are needed for food, appointments, and medications for the dogs.
- D. Staff, faculty, and students can be puppy raisers. There are opportunities to dog sit for the puppy raisers when they need assistance such as a test. There are two types of puppy sitters (for a few hours or overnight). The overnight sitters will need to

complete training. Those interested in being a puppy sitter or puppy raiser can reach out to Cheryl Theall (ctheall@uca.edu).

- E. Students present gave their testimonials about their experiences. Benefits of being a student puppy raiser include helping with confidence, finding personal purpose, participating in community service, giving back to the UCA community.
- F. Living Unleashed also works with OARS to ensure all proper documentation has been completed for the puppies training on campus. The RSO is also open to assist with events and being the puppies of schedules permit.
- G. See attachment for more details.

IV. Officer Reports

A. President, Jennifer Ruud

- 1. Thank you to all senators who volunteered for the eclipse events. President Davis also sends his thanks to the Staff and faculty.
- 2. There is a 27% drop in FAFSA completion nationwide. UCA continues to work hard to reach out to incoming students. There is also a 20% error rate in completed FAFSAs as well. Efforts to increase the FAFSA completion rate include student outreach, parent nights and upcoming SOAR sessions.
- 3. Housing applications and deposits are up. Returning student numbers to housing are also up for the fall.
- 4. Governor Huckabee-Sanders is proposing to increase salaries of state employees by 3%, but this does not include higher education. However, UCA employees received 2% for FY 23-24 and will receive another 2% in FY 24-25, whereas state employees received nothing last year.
- 5. The Staff Senate retreat will be June 12th at the Village Den storm shelter (2095 Moix Blvd.).

B. Vice President, Whit Ables

- 1. All senators have confirmed the committees they served on for FY24.
- 2. Ballots to vote for staff senators will open on April 15th.

C. Treasure, Angela Jackson (via Ex-Officio, Carlos Herrera)

- 1. The following payments have been entered into the system for payment:
 - a) 2 staff grant awards reimbursements
 - b) Quarter 3 professional development reimbursement
 - c) Whine & Cheese reimbursements
 - d) Spring Social “Hot Ones” (wings) contest
 - e) Employee of the Quarter plaque from Billy’s Trophies & Awards

D. Secretary, Veneta Fricks

- 1. Language for the staff grant criteria will be updated on the Staff Senate website.

E. Parliamentarian/Historian, Melanie Watson

- 1. Please remember to keep conversations to a minimum to assist with the clarity of minute recording and meeting efficiency.

F. Ex Officio, Carlos Herrera

- 1. Monday, April 15th is the deadline for 40th anniversary shirt order. All proceeds will go to the Staff Senate Emergency Fund. [Order yours here.](#)

V. Senate Committee Reports

A. Courtesy

1. 3 cards requested.

B. Spring Social Committee

1. The committee is finalizing the Hot Ones challenge. The Hot Ones challenge consists of competitors eating ten chicken wings (or a vegetarian/vegan alternative based on the person's preference), each prepared with a progressively hotter hot sauce. Competitors who successfully complete the challenge will receive additional funds from the Staff Senate for their desired foundation. This will be filmed and posted to the Staff Senate website. Emails will be sent to participants with rules and expectations. The list of participants and the foundation funds they are raising money for follows:

- a) President Davis - MainStage Education Fund
- b) Kurt Boniecki, Associate Provost - Torreyson Library Account
- c) Jaime Booth, UCAPD Captain - UCAPD Fund
- d) Kevin Carter, AVP for Facilities - Veterans Resource Center
- e) Lesley Graybeal, Provost Office - Bear Essentials Food Pantry
- f) Michael Hargis, Dean of the College of Business - Student Emergency Fund
- g) Jenny Ruud, Staff Senate President - Staff Senate Emergency Fund
- h) Vaughn Scribner, Faculty Senate President - Green Bear Coalition
- i) Reuel Shepherd, Director of Community Learning & Workforce Services - Imagination Library

2. Adams Catfish will cater the event; catfish, chicken strips, shrimp, fries, all the fixin's. There will also be snow cones.
3. There will be games and prizes for attendees.

C. Employee Recognition Committee

1. Nominations for Employee of the Quarter for Quarter 3 are due on Friday, April 12th. [Nominate your colleague here!](#)

VI. University Committee Reports

A. Parking Committee

1. 11 appealed parking decisions, and all were denied..

B. Academic Integrity and Discipline Committee

1. 2 appeals were submitted, and both were denied.

VII. Constituent Concerns/Communication

- A. **Constituent Concern:** "The drop date for students is Monday, April 8th which is the same day as the eclipse. Due to the high volume of events on campus and the asynchronous schedule, I am concerned that students will miss the deadline."

1. **Response from Jenny Ruud, Staff Senate President:** There is information about the drop date on the Advising and Registrar websites. Students also received multiple alerts via email, text, and Navigate well in

advance. There have not been any concerns from students missing the drop date at this time.

- B. **Constituent Concern:** There is a large pothole over by the Southeast corner of the Estes parking lot that is the same color of the surrounding pavement, and people have been hitting it.
 - 1. **Response from Kevin Carter, AVP for Facilities:** “I know the exact one you are talking about. We’re actually going to repave that parking lot starting in early May. In the meantime, I will have Grounds put a temporary patch in it.”
 - 2. **Report from Senator Robyn Smith:** As of April 8th, the hole was patched.
- C. **Constituent Concern:** “I’ve been working on putting together a very short paper about why UCA should give us time during work for our health and wellness. I previously worked at AState in Jonesboro where they gave us three hours a week to work out during our scheduled work hours. I’m really hoping to convince someone here that we should do the same. I’m not sure if you can help with that or would know who I should contact about this.” *See the end of minutes for the full version of constituent concern.*
 - 1. **Response from Jenny Ruud, Staff Senate President:** Staff Senate will bring this constituent concern forward.
- D. **Constituent Concern:** 5 constituents are concerned about the lighting in the Torreyson Library archives. Some constituents expressed concern with being able to view items and the uneasiness of the lighting.
 - 1. **Response from Staff Senate dialogue:** The lighting in the archives is low in order to preserve light sensitive documents. Flash photography is also not permitted.
 - 2. **Response from Jenny Ruud, Staff Senate President:** We will reach out to the archivist for a thorough response on the lighting in the archives.

VIII. Old Business

- A. None

IX. New Business

- A. Living Unleashed RSO Funding Request
 - 1. Senator Nadia Eslinger made a motion to donate \$1,000 to Canine Companion at the Silver Dog Sponsorship level to be paid from the Agency account. The motion was seconded by Senator Melanie Watson. The motion passed.
 - a) The Silver Dog sponsorship level will cover the partial cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsors are entitled to have their name on our posters/flyers for one academic year.

X. Good and Welfare

- A. Senator Jennifer Ruud - Thank you Senate for all of your hard work this year. A special thanks to the Outreach & Communications Committee for another successful Whine & Cheese event.

- B. Senator Melanie - Thanks to everyone who volunteered for a shift on Eclipse Day!
- C. Senator Whit Ables - If you are a senator who volunteered for the eclipse activities, please email Whit Ables (gables1@uca.edu). These hours will count for the required 12 volunteer hours for senators. These hours do not count toward the 16 staff senate hours that can be used at anytime as the eclipse volunteering happened during business hours.
- D. Senator Veneta Fricks - The Dean of Students office is creating an all-inclusive campus community resource guide. If you are aware of resources students can use, please contact Veneta Fricks (vgraham1@uca.edu). Resources can be specific to financial assistance, food assistance, housing assistance, mental health/medical, veterans, first-generation students, parents, jobs, transportation, etc.
- E. Senator Nadia Eslinger - The Green Grub Fest food truck event will be held on Friday, April 19th from 11:00am-3:00pm at the Alumni Circle in front of old Main.
- F. Senator Emily Hall - Registration open for Fall 2024. Please encourage students to meet with their academic advisors and get holds lifted from their student accounts. The Lavender Graduation will be held on April 10th at 5pm in Ronnie Williams Student Center Ballroom.
- G. Senator Natalie Shock - The baseball game scheduled for 4.10.24 has been canceled. Beach Volleyball will play Friday, April 12th at 12:00pm (vs Missouri State) and 2:00pm (vs Austin Peay). They will also play Saturday April 13th at 10:00am (vs Missouri State) and 12:30pm (vs Austin Peay). Softball will play Saturday April 13th at 3:00pm (vs North Alabama) and 5:30pm (vs North Alabama). See information about UCA athletics [here](#).
- H. Senator Jessica Taylor - Dr. Brad Teague, Director of Athletics will transition to his new role as the Director of the UCA Aviation Academy. Matt Whiting, Associate Athletic Director for External Relations will assume the role of Director of Athletics, effective July 1st.
- I. Senator Millie Goins - Talk Saves Lives, a suicide prevention training for students, will be held on April 10th from 3:00pm-4:30pm in the Student Health Center, Classroom 307.
- J. Senator Richard Hammon - The annual UCA faculty/staff golf tournament will be held on May 6th at Nutters Chapel. Please contact Richard Hammond (rhammond@uca.edu) for more information. The Out of the Darkness Walk will be held at Hendrix College on Saturday, April 13th, and on-site registration begins at 9:00am.
- K. Senator Robyn Smith - Many visitors from across the country and several other countries raved about the eclipse events at UCA. They spoke about the beauty of Arkansas, warm welcomes received from the city of Conway, and the friendliness they felt from the volunteers. The only concerns received were about the number of food trucks on site not being adequate enough to support the large crowd.
- L. Senator Carlos Herrera - The Forever a Bear Memorial will be held on April 18th during x-period (1:40 pm-2:30 pm) at the UCA Amphitheater.

- M. Senator Eric Fulton - The UCA Library will host the Bear Biographies event on Thursday, April 11th from 12:00pm-4:00pm in the McCastlain Ballroom. More information about the event can be found [here](#).
- N. Senator J.W. Calvery - The Torreyson Library will have a grand opening for the low sensory space on April 16th. The space is located in room 117 of the Torreyson Library.

XI. Adjournment

- A. Motion to adjourn at 10:58am by Senator Whit Ables seconded by Senator Emily Hall.

Important Dates:

April 15th - Staff Senate Paid Line Dance Class
April 19th - Food Truck Festival
April 22nd - Employee Paid Line Dance Class
April 26th - Spring Social
May 3rd - Focused Friday
May 3rd - May 4th - Spring Commencement
May 21st - UCA Board Meeting
June 12th - Staff Senate Retreat (save the date)

Upcoming Guests

May 29th - President Houston Davis

Full Version of Constituent Concern C

I've been working on putting together a very short paper about why UCA should give us time during work for our health and wellness. I previously worked at AState in Jonesboro where they gave us three hours a week to work out during our scheduled work hours. I'm really hoping to convince someone here that we should do the same. I'm not sure if you can help with that or would know who I should contact about this.

I think we have an opportunity and an obligation to make sure our employees are getting the most out of having a wellness program. We have some great wellness benefits already, the healthcheck360 app gives points for different wellness checkups and occasionally has a healthy challenge, newsletters are sent out to the campus about health initiatives, but the biggest factor is having time to perform wellness activities. Most of us have very busy lives and family obligations outside of work. It becomes impossible to make time for yourself when you have several other things to do that day for your household. Studies have shown time and time again that adding physical activity to your day not only improves your physical health but also mental health and cognitive function.

Many employers are adding wellness benefits to their employees' plans already. One of the most useful benefits has proven to be the time to work out. Some other colleges in the state have already implemented plans for their employees to get time for physical activity. AState's wellness

benefit "encourages a healthy work/family life by providing a variety of services and programs including up to three hours of leave each week to participate in wellness activities". As a former employee of AState, I can say I enthusiastically took advantage of this benefit when I worked there. Some of us would take the hour with our lunch breaks, some would take it at the start of their shift, and some would go during the last hour of their shift. The HPER center at AState offered exercise classes and an equipment room that was easy to implement into the work day. Frequently, they would have students who were studying to become physical trainers or nutritionists, help employees learn how to eat well or create a workout routine to meet a specific health goal. The students earned credit and the employees got the help for free. I think UCA is missing out on a vital opportunity for its employees' health by not following suit.

Studies have shown that taking time to exercise before or during work, the employee has better overall productivity and misses less time from work. Overall mood is improved because exercise releases endorphins and dopamine into the brain. With rising healthcare costs, employers need to invest in wellness as a preventative measure. Regular exercise helps keep immune systems strong, making employees less susceptible to whatever germs are circulating on campus. Team building is also a huge factor when group classes are offered during the employees' exercise times, which boosts morale for the campus as a whole. Everyone is happier being at a workplace that cares about their wellbeing.

I think UCA has the opportunity to be a beacon of health for how workplaces should treat wellness for their employees. The only thing we are missing is the time off to put in the work. Other campuses and businesses have already seen the improvement in their employees' work, with less sick leave used, better morale, and less burnout. It's time to fully invest in the health of our employees.

Sources:

AState handbook, page 31/32 "Fitness Release Time Benefit"

https://www.astate.edu/dA/9e27f976d1/ASU%20System%20Employee%20Handbook%20-%20Revised%202023-12-11.pdf?language_id=1

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohll/2019/01/09/why-we-pay-our-employees-to-exercise-at-work/?sh=315d2baa28d2>

<https://www.wellnessproposals.com/connection-between-physical-activity-brain-health/>

<https://www.cnbc.com/2023/05/09/company-pays-employees-to-exercise-its-a-fail-safe-investment.html>

<https://energym.io/blogs/braingains/why-should-companies-allow-employees-to-exercise-during-working-hours>

DONATIONS WELCOME!



\$6000

CELIE



\$6000

BIKKAR



\$6000

DAZZLE



\$500

NOELLE



\$500

TABBY



\$500

ROSALIE

WELCOME BASKET



\$250

- PUPPY BED
- PUPPY FOOD - 1 MONTH
- TRAINING TREATS - 1 MONTH
- PLUSH AND CHEW TOYS - 1 MONTH

Sponsorship Levels:

DIAMOND DOG \$ 6500.00

This will cover the entire cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsor is entitled to have their name on a bandana and may invite the service dog to appear at 1 event each month.

PURPLE DOG \$ 4000.00

This will cover partial cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsor is entitled to share their name on a bandana and may invite the service dog to appear at 3 events each semester.

GOLD DOG \$ 2000.00

This will cover partial cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsor is entitled to share their name on a bandana and may invite the service dog to appear at 2 events each semester.

SILVER DOG \$ 1000.00

This will cover partial cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsor is entitled to have their name on our posters/flyers for one academic year.

BRONZE DOG \$ 500.00

This will cover partial cost of a future service dog on campus for 18 months. Sponsor is entitled to have their name on our website.



Please help us cover the cost of existing puppies and continue the growth of our organization.

Canine Companions®



Thank You

**SILVER DOG SPONSORSHIP
2023-2024 STAFF SENATE**



LIVING UNLEASHED
University of Central Arkansas