



Regular Meeting Minutes
April 29, 2026
10:00 am
McCastlain Fireplace Room

Senators Present: 19
Senators Absent: 8
Ex-Officio: Present

I. Call to Order

A. Meeting called to order by President Kern at 10:00 am.

II. Approval of the Minutes from the previous meeting

A. Minutes from the previous meeting have been approved and are on the website.

III. Guest Speakers

A. Joshua Gorham- Aramark General Manager

1. The salad bar has been remodeled and enhanced. They have added soups, grilled bread, fresh veggies, new dip flavors, expanded hummus options and infused olive oils.
2. Starbucks now offers Nitro Cold Brew.
3. Rockbot Music System is now available at the cafeteria.
4. Twisted Taco is currently closed for remodel.
5. This summer, Freshens will replace Quiznos in the RWSC. They offer rice bowls, wraps, smoothies, salads and melts. They will have gluten free and vegetarian options. The plan is to be ready for the Fall Semester.
6. Aramark is looking to update/make changes to concessions for Athletic events. There is no plan to increase prices beyond the annual price increase that comes with inflation of goods.
7. They continue to work to improve dining experiences at UCA.
8. Aramark welcomes feedback from the campus community.
9. Limited dining options during the summer months on campus.
10. Thank you to Aramark for providing a free birthday lunch card.

IV. Officer Reports

A. President, Sherita Kern

1. Senate Retreat- June 3, 2026. All Senators will meet together.
 - a) Senate Awards-
2. Employee Benefits Committee-Reviewing benefits. Looking at the efficiency of programs and benefits.-No COLA is in place for this year. Still working to meet the salary study goals. This should be completed by July 1. They will be looking at a possible mid-year adjustment.

B. Vice President, Dylan Richardson-

1. General senate elections vote due by EOD today. Results will be announced later this week.
2. Exec elections will be happening at the next Senate meeting on May 13, 2026.

C. Treasurer, Shalia Delph

1. Treasurer Updates - On track with Budget- Upcoming expenses for retreat.

D. Secretary, Teresa Burton- No Report

E. Parliamentarian/Historian/Assistant Treasurer, Melanie Straw-Watson- No Report

1. If anyone has pictures of Spring Social, please share them. You can submit to Staff Senate email. staffsenate@uca.edu

F. Ex Officio, Carlos Herrera- No Report

V. Senate Committee Reports

- A. Courtesy Committee- No Cards
- B. Spring Social Committee- Thank you to all who helped make Spring Social a success. Thanks to the committee and all those who participated on the Family Feud teams. A survey will be sent to campus for feedback.

VI. University Committee Reports

- A. Parking & Traffic Committee- 2 appeals approved, 6 appeals denied
- B. Public Arts Committee- Discussion of galleries on campus. They are looking at software options to manage the art collections. In October Mid-South Sculpture Alliance Conference here at UCA. There will be workshops and demonstrations available. Freshman and Sophomore artwork will be displayed throughout the summer in Thompson gallery in Windgate.
- C. Calendar Committee- 2029-2030 Academic calendar has been approved and sent to the Provost office for approval.
- D. Veterans Committee-

VII. Constituent Concerns/Communication

- A. I was not sure who to send this too but I wanted to bring attention to an issue. The Employees of the Quarter for Quarter III in April of 2025 have never been recognized at the Recognition Ceremony. The employees were Michelle Burgin, Dewayne George & Gary Broyles. An email was sent but not formally recognized. Thank you for your time.

Response: Based on last year's program, the EOQ III winners for 2023-2024 (<https://uca.edu/staffsenate/employee-of-the-quarter/>) were listed in the program as 2024-2025 EOQ III winners. I can't speak to the details of the decision; I was not involved in the process at that time. Thank you for bringing this oversight to our attention. Staff Senate is already working on how to ensure we don't make that mistake again and how to adapt the timelines to ensure all EOQ winners receive the proper recognition.

- B. I would like to know how UCA as a community can become more involved with our insurance coverage. We are given this insurance, and it seems to me with no input from the UCA community. If we had better insurance, I am sure people would be willing to pay more for a wider range of coverage. UCA needs to be more transparent with why they choose exclusions. If the Governor made it where all insurance will cover weight loss options obviously that is a very serious health epidemic. UCA gets to make bariatric options an exclusion because we have self pay insurance. Some exclusions are not realistic to today's society. I clearly understand this is to keep a lower cost for UCA and staff. I cannot be the only person on campus with bariatric needs that could and would be life changing. This could in the long run improve the health of people and lead to cost-saving measures such as less medicines and doctor visits. I am not aware but I am sure there are other exclusions to our policy that some people might like to voice their opinions about but think no one will listen. UCA has changed insurance a few times over the past 25 years and every time the coverage seems to benefit UCA and not us as a community. Can we do a survey with the staff to see how pleased we are with our insurance? I am not sure how to start being more involved with our insurance committee but it needs to be more than the committee making choices that affect our healthcare. People need to know where and how to address our insurance concerns. I am positive I am not the only person who would like to see a change.

Response: Ed Powers is the chair of EBAC. Anyone can reach out to him to share a question or concern about Benefits that they would like the committee to consider.

From Dr. Powers-We discussed bariatric coverage in our last meeting and we determined that we should continue the discussion in the next round of premium decision-making. We need more robust guidance from Stephens about the probable impact on the overall premium structure.

- C. I am inquiring again about receiving the Years of Service Certificates. I understand that the committee decided that we were no longer going to receive them. This is very disappointing to some people. A lot of employees here have shared their disappointment as well. From time to time, you hear discussion among the workers asking why they have not received their certificate. Is it possible to email the staff member asking if they would like the certificates? I hang mine in my office. I was here 25 years last July and I would like to have the certificate to hang in my office with the other 2 in a nice frame. I understand it turning into a waste issue if some people do not want the certificates but on the other hand there are many that are proud to receive them.

Response is pending.

- D. There is flooding on the sidewalk by Bernard Hall when it rains, making it difficult to walk through. Is there something that can be done to fix this problem?

Response: SS President will reach out to Kevin Carter and update with a response.

VIII. Old Business- None

IX. New Business

- A. Bylaws-Constitution voting campus voting- Unanimously passed through Staff Senate- Voting will be sent out to campus.

X. Good and Welfare

- A. Senator Watson- More volunteers are needed for Commencement. Please consider volunteering.
B. Senator Smith-Todd- Official launch of new Cub Connect system on May 4th. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact asmith75@uca.edu.

XI. Adjournment

- A. Motioned by: Senator Hammond at 10:56 am.
B. Second: Senator Smith-Todd

Important Dates:

- Commencement
 - April 30th @ 5 pm
 - May 1st @ 9 am, 12 pm, 3 pm, 6 pm
- Staff Senate Exec Elections- May 13th meeting
- Staff Senate Retreat- June 3rd @ 10 am- 2 pm | McCastlain Ballroom