

Hello FHSU Staff, Faculty and Administration. It's fantastic to see you all here today. The start of each year always amazes me. While it's tough to see summer end, it's energizing to see staff, faculty and especially our students arriving for the first time and/or returning to campus.

Some of you know me, but for those of you who don't, I'm Bob Duffy and I have the honor to represent over 500 FHSU staff as the President of ***your*** Senate. This is my 3rd year on senate, and I am about to begin my 25th year on staff at FHSU as the drug and alcohol counselor in Health and Wellness Services.

Last week a colleague asked me why I voluntarily ran for President and to be honest I can't remember what my answer was in that moment. I have however, been thinking about that question since, and my answer is simply that I'm grateful. Grateful for all that FHSU's staff has provided and continues to provide for me. Whether it's the daily support in all of its forms necessary to perform my primary job as a counselor and prevention specialist, the opportunity to travel the world representing FHSU, or the support I've received during trying times in my personal life, the Staff at FHSU has played an important role in my development as a professional and a person. My taking this role is a way for me to express my gratitude for all that you have done for me. Thank you for all that you do- it has meaning.

In case you're not sure about Staff Senate and what we do and why we are here:

The Senate exists as an open forum for free expression of ideas, issues, and interests that are of concern to the FHSU Staff and to empower and support the Staff in creating a culture that fulfills the vision and mission of the FHSU community.

In short, we represent the interests of Staff through the process of Shared Governance. We host open monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month from 1:30 to 2:30 and all are welcome to attend either in-person or via zoom. Detailed meeting announcements are published in the Tiger Daily, and meeting minutes are posted on our website.

This year my predecessor Jennifer Whitmer completed her second term as President and played key roles in hosting KBOR, and along with the Docking Institute of Public Affairs staff and representatives from the other Regent's Universities developing and implementing the Regents-wide workplace climate satisfaction survey. We will be using the data from that to identify and address issues on our campus. For all of those who completed the survey- thank you- your feedback is critical and appreciated. Without your participation we can't identify issues to work on. Also this past year a Senate committee rewrote our by-laws and established a new rotation to our executive leadership as well as reassigning the functional areas that senators represent.

Jennifer Whitmer continues to serve Senate as Past President, Nicole Frank is President Elect, and Misty Koonse is Secretary. They have already helped me immensely in my role as President and their dedication to FHSU is evident in too many ways to mention here. I am proud to play my part in this group. This year we have established a goals committee who will be working on identifying issues for Senate to pursue and navigate, as well as an events committee to increase our activity and visibility on campus. We want to hear more from our staff. Currently there are two open seats that represent the functional area of Student Affairs/ President's Office. If you work in either of these areas and are interested in serving on Senate you can contact me or any of our senators- a full list of senators is available on our Staff Senate webpage.

I realize many staff are not able to be here today because they are taking care of our grounds, moving students in, updating technology in our classrooms and performing various other tasks to ensure a smooth launch to the academic year. If you see them today or any other day, please take time to acknowledge and thank them.

Dr. Mason and the Executive Leadership team, thank you for your support of Senate. I look forward to working collaboratively as we navigate this year.

Staff Senators and executive officers, thank you for your dedication and spirit. Let's do great things together.

To all of you, let's have a fantastic year and move FHSU forward together.