



STAFF SENATE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 14, 2025 - 10:00 AM College of Education Conference Room

- I. Call to Order was promptly at 10 a.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Perrin Rickenbaker, Grant Stone, Kenneth Roach, Anthony Lepore, Brittany Chadwick, Kendra Rodgers, Austin Gregory, Jake Lucas, Anna Crawford, Ryan Murdock, Karen Petit, Pleshette Elmore, Brittany Brissey, Sydney Stanley

Excused absences: Buck Billings, Corey Anthony, Wyatt McInerney
- III. **Guest Report:** Ariel Wingard, assistant director of Campus Engagement and New Student Experience, discussed how her office has been working to prepare for the return of Lander students to campus. She discussed the work that the office does to encourage students to become involved in campus activities and student life. With more than 100 clubs and organizations, which are staff or student led, Lander students can assume leadership roles, which then can become part of a resume for future employment.

Wingard said that more than 225 events are planned for the year, including a new festival in April and the much-anticipated Holiday Tree Lighting.

She discussed efforts underway by the Office of Admissions and the Office of Workforce and Career Development to help students “discover what it means to be a Bearcat” and to give them additional opportunities for personal development.

One of the goals of Campus Engagement is to “up the ante” with social media to encourage students and potential students to follow what’s happening at Lander
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Ryan to approve the minutes of the July meeting, with a second by Brittany Chadwick.
- V. **Chair Report:** Brittany Brissey welcomed the new members of Staff Senate, including Jake Lucas and Talia Samard, and said that there are no vacancies currently in Staff Senate. At the end of the meeting, she would distribute new folio binders to Staff Senate members.

She encouraged Staff Senate members to send emails to staff from their areas to keep them up to date and to keep the senate up to date on activities and their interests in involvement to help.
- VI. **Division Announcements:** 1) The Art Gallery was opening in the library and that work is being done on the stage at the Culture Center; 2) The fall Bearcat sports schedule is online, and the update to the arena floor has been completed; 3) Housing reported that they are “moving in an

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army of students”; 4) Finance and Administration reported on the renovations of Chipley Hall; 5) Admissions reported that there was a significant increase in enrollment for the 2025-26 academic year; and that new applications were being accepted; 6) Marketing and Communications announced that Laura Wood, the University photographer, is leaving Lander. 7) It was announced that Taylor Cook had been hired as Vice President of Advancement; 8) A reminder was made for staff to attend the Lander Launch on Friday and welcome freshmen and transfer students to campus.

- VII. **Adjournment:** A motion was made by Brittany Chadwick for the Staff Senate to adjourn the regular meeting and have an executive session. Kendra seconded the motion.

Executive Session

- I. **New Senators:** Brittany Brissey welcomed new Staff Senate members.
- II. **Staff Senate Officers:** In the weeks leading to the August meeting, Staff Senate members voted on new officers for the 2025-26. The results of the election: Chair-Elect, Brittany Chadwick; Secretary, Karen Petit; and Treasurer, Kendra Rodgers.
- III. **Committee Assignments:** Brittany Brissey said that she and Brittany Chadwick would work on committee assignments for Employee Appreciation, Professional Development and Communications. She said that those who serve as committee chairs should be “delegators and facilitators” and are not expected to carry the work off the entire committee.
- IV. **Open Discussion and Planning:** Among the topics in the open discussion:
- It was discussed that having a “meet and greet” for new staff at a time when people are more relaxed and less rushed. A suggestion was made to have a pumpkin painting event outside, weather permitting, to encourage people to talk to each other and have fun. An event should be done before 2 p.m. to allow people from the Physical Plant to participate. With the large number of faculty and staff on campus, events help foster a sense of community. The Employee Appreciation Committee could lead the planning of this event with input from Staff Senate.

Kenneth referenced previous staff and faculty events and said it was important to encourage events that are before the end of the workday when possible because events in the evening may not accommodate the schedules of many people.

The development of a newsletter to highlight staff accomplishments was discussed, along with how information for that newsletter could be gathered. With the hiring of Taylor Cook, Brittany Brissey said this could be a good opportunity to see how Staff Senate could collaborate with the Alumni Association.

- V. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

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