



STAFF SENATE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday April 11, 2024 - 10:00 AM ITS Conference Room

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- I. Call to Order was 10:00 AM.
- II. Roll Call – Dawn Lewis, ~~Adam Weyer~~, Donna Knight, Katie Whatley, Taylor Haigler, ~~Favores Meadows~~, Brittany Brissey, Sam Abney, Matthew Moore, Awaili Thomas Quarles, ~~Jeff Reynolds~~, Demario Watts, Jamie Wilson, Laney Dixon, Patrick Moore, ~~Ken Toole~~  
Ex-officio: London Thomas or Kurstin Lacoste (HR), Jessica Partlow (DAC)
- III. Guest Speaker – Robyn Hoffman
  - a. Robyn Hoffman, Vice President for University Advancement & External Relations, shared University Advancement functions and updates with the Staff Senate. University Advancement oversees Alumni Affairs and the Alumni Association, the Lander Foundation, and the real estate aspects of the university. University Advancement houses two boards: The Lander Foundation board (comprised of alumni and community supporters) that works towards global visibility and extending the footprint of Lander alumni, and the Lander Alumni Association board that works towards expanding Lander’s national footprint.
  - b. University Advancement has awarded 611 students with \$775,000+ of scholarships due to the generosity of alumni and community partnerships. Robyn noted her gratitude to Katherine Lukas in Student Life for her help with outreach to the Greek Alumni Community. She noted great work by University Relations on their outreach efforts.
  - c. University Advancement is working on many exciting new initiatives, such as “Lander in London” which has been created to connect with our global alumni. There is an endowed scholarship in the works for Van Taylor, who has given 40 years of service to Lander. Robyn noted her gratitude to Randy Bouknight and Van Taylor for their service. Lilian Craton was recently recognized by University Advancement at Homecoming for her outstanding service to Lander’s Honors College. University Advancement is hosting an upcoming celebration for the 20-year anniversary of the Mufuka Scholarship. Robyn announced that Homecoming 2025 will be held February 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. In 2025, Chipley Hall will be 100 years old. There is a “birthday party” for Chipley Hall in planning.
  - d. Robyn encouraged the Staff Senate to follow the Lander Alumni social media accounts, share their information among their networks, and encourage their colleagues to do the same. She notes that University Advancement’s success is dependent on our connections. She expressed her gratitude to the senate for the invitation to speak at the meeting.
- IV. Vote to Approve Prior Minutes
  - a. Awaili Thomas Quarles noted errors in the March minutes. Secretary Taylor Haigler apologized for the errors and tabled the motion to approve the minutes to the May Staff Senate meeting.
- V. Chair Report
  - a. Staff Senate Chair Patrick Moore tabled his updates to New Business.
- VI. Diversity Advisory Council

### Staff Senate Mission Statement

The Lander University Staff Senate exists to enhance the welfare of its staff; to serve as a liaison between staff, administration, faculty, and students; and to advise the administration on matters concerning the staff. This focus provides staff a voice to promote a positive, respectful work environment that sustains both personal and professional growth. In support of the university’s strategic plan, specifically the goal of remaining an employer of choice, the senate strives foremost to contribute to the overall success of Lander University and its students.

- a. Kurstin Lacoste reported that World Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>. She shared that more information will be coming to staff next week.

## VII. Senate Reports

- a. Academic Affairs
  - i. Katie Whatley shared that several colleges have been without Administrative Assistants for a while. The College of Business now has a new Administrative Assistant, Lillie Thomas. The College of Science and Math now has Heather Martin and an Administrative Assistant. In the College of Arts and Humanities, Perrin Rickenbaker and Debbie Dill have become Administrative Specialists.
  - ii. There will be a choral concert this Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:00PM. Professor Neufeld is retiring and will be recognized after the concert.
  - iii. The College of Behavioral & Social Science has an awards ceremony today (April 11) at 3:30pm in the Cultural Center.
- b. Athletics
  - i. Jamie Wilson shared that there are no specific updates from Athletics. She shared the Golden Claw awards will be coming up soon.
- c. Finance & Administration
  - i. Matt Moore reported the new phone system is going through updates and fixes. He encouraged the Staff Senate to put in ITS tickets when experiencing problems with the phones.
  - ii. Awaili Thomas Quarles thanked the Staff Senate for LUPD receiving the Office Spotlight.
  - iii. Human Resources shared they have a new hire starting soon as a Human Resources Coordinator.
- d. Enrollment & Access Management
  - i. Laney Dixon reported the Office of Admissions is hosting Accepted Students Day this Saturday (April 13). Admissions Counselors are traveling to recruit students. This week is "Transfer Week" in Admissions. The Office of Financial Aid now has FASFA data and is packaging students.
- e. President's Office
  - i. Dawn Lewis shared that University Relations has hired a full-time writer, Lindsey Hodges. University relations is now fully staffed.
- f. Student Affairs
  - i. Sam Abney shared the Student Life Awards will be April 17<sup>th</sup>. The Wellness Center has hired a new counselor that will be starting soon.
- g. Student Experience and Quality Assurance
  - i. Brittany Brissy shared the Student Success Center has hired a new Academic Advisor, Caroline Ross, who started April 1<sup>st</sup> in the School of Nursing. They are hosting a "How to be a Super Student" event today. Many of the Student Success staff members are going to the NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) conference next week.

## VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Employee Appreciation and Recognition
  - i. Taylor Haigler reported the Office Spotlight for April is the Office of Housing and Residence Life. She encouraged the senate to recognize them if they see them. She recognized the communications committee for sending out the Office Spotlight graphic.
  - ii. Birthday cards are still going out to staff weekly.
  - iii. The Employee Appreciation and Recognition committee was made aware of concerns with the Staff Anniversary email and was informed the email was not going out to staff every month. Taylor opened the conversation for any feedback on the situation. Dawn Lewis shared that concerns were brought to her from people above her to not send the email. The senate discussed if this initiative was still something the committee should continue to spend time on every month. There was discussion on staff receiving too many emails to receive another one containing their work anniversary. The conversation ended with an agreement on continuing the campus graphic but not the email. Taylor stated the committee will discuss it later and go from there.
  - iv. Taylor opened a conversation on the HR Staff Excellence Breakfast. London Thomas shared that the location and date is not yet confirmed, and the event is currently on hold. She expressed a need for the senate to continue planning for the event by finding door prizes and ordering the Employee of the Month awards.

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- b. Elections
  - i. Matt Moore shared that Staff Senate nominations are needed. The senate has only received one nomination. Academic Affairs will have one vacancy, Athletics will have one vacancy, Finance & Administration will have two vacancies, Enrollment Management will have one vacancy, the Presidents Office will have one vacancy, and Student Affairs will have one vacancy.
- c. Professional Development
  - i. Demario Watts shared success from the March Professional Development Event on Positivity in the Workplace. 20 Staff members were in attendance. Demario recognized Awaili Thomas Quarles for the success of the event. Awaili will share notes from the event in the Staff Senate Teams. The committee is planning another event in May after commencement.
- d. Communications and Bylaws
  - i. Dawn Lewis shared the committee is continuing to communicate Staff Senate initiatives.
  - ii. Taylor Haigler and Patrick Moore initiated a conversation on updating the Staff Senate's vision and mission statement in the bylaws. Patrick shared the new senate transition could be a great opportunity to upset these and work on defining the senate's roles and responsibilities.
- e. Community Partnership
  - i. Katie Whatley shared the committee has completed all the initiatives they hoped to achieve this year. The committee plans to work together in May to plan for next year.
  - ii. Laney Dixon noted the Lander University Adopt-A-Highway sign has been placed on Montague Ave.
  - iii. Awaili Thomas Quarles shared the committee's hopes to continue to incentivize students to participate in service projects through ticket forgiveness with LUPD.
  
- IX. Old Business
  - a. None to report.
  
- X. New Business
  - a. Resignations
    - i. Patrick Moore shared that Donna Knight will be resigning from the Staff Senate, effective next term. Donna shared her gratitude and appreciation to the senate for the opportunity to be a senator and expressed how she enjoyed her time here.
  - b. Chair-Elect
    - i. Patrick Moore shared that Chair-Elect Sam Abney will begin leading senate meetings next month with him to ease the transition into next year. He encouraged committee chairs to also allow committee members to share reports to ease the transition period.
  
- XI. Adjournment
  - a. Taylor Haigler motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dawn Lewis seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 10:58am.

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