

UNIVERSITY of LOUISVILLE

STAFF SENATE MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: September 9th, 2025 | TIME: 2:30 PM | LOCATION: SAC Multipurpose Room and Teams

[LINK TO FULL VIDEO](#)

Action Item: [Approval of the July minutes - Kevin Ledford](#)

The July meeting minutes were approved and are linked above.

Information Item: [Provost's Report – Interim Provost Cardarelli](#)

Provost Cardarelli provided updates on fall enrollment, student retention, graduation rate goals, and discussed the use of new tools and strategies to further improve these metrics.

Retention and Graduation Goals: UofL achieved a record 84.1% first-year retention rate for the incoming cohort, with a goal to reach 85% next year, which is expected to drive the six-year graduation rate above 70%, a benchmark achieved by fewer than 100 public universities.

Enrollment Growth by Unit: Undergraduate enrollment increased by nearly 1,000 students, with notable gains in social work, business, A&S, and nursing. Graduate and professional enrollments also rose, particularly in the Brandeis School of Law.

Transfer Student Initiatives: The university remains the top transfer destination in the Commonwealth and is employing a new AI tool to accelerate transfer student recruitment, aiming for a total enrollment goal of 26,000 next year, with a focus on transfers and retention rather than expanding the first-time-in-college cohort.

Shared Accountability and Reorganization: Dr. Cardarelli described ongoing efforts to foster a culture of shared accountability for student success, including reorganization within the Provost's office to better coordinate student success and advising, and announced the upcoming Undergraduate Student Success Symposium.

Strategic Plan Development and Leadership Retreat: She outlined the process for developing the new five-year strategic plan, including leadership retreat activities, feedback incorporation, and the timeline for final approval, emphasizing the importance of aligning resources with strategic priorities.

Leadership Retreat Activities: The President's executive leadership team and Council of Academic Officers (CAO) participated in a two-day retreat focused on team building, change management, and connecting leadership roles to the strategic plan.

Strategic Plan Feedback Process: Feedback from campus town halls and other sources is being incorporated into a new iteration of the strategic plan, which will be released in October for final input before submission to the Board of Trustees for approval in December or January.

Resource Allocation and Prioritization: Dr. Cardarelli stressed that only priorities included in the strategic plan will receive resource allocation, and leadership is actively discussing how to clear obstacles for plan implementation, which may involve diverting resources from lower-priority areas

This report is linked above. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Information Item: [Report of the Staff Grievance Officer - Will Adamchik](#)

Staff Senator Will Adamchik presented the annual report as Staff Grievance Officer, detailing the types of cases handled, common themes, and the process for supporting employees through grievances and pre-termination hearings.

Role and Case Volume: Senator Adamchik described his role as a resource for employees navigating the grievance process, reporting 32 touchpoints over the past year, including grievances, pre-termination hearings, and general guidance requests.

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Nature of Grievances: Most cases involved supervisor-employee dynamics, fear of retaliation, and general workplace culture issues, with some cases referred to the university ombuds for mediation when not covered by the grievance policy.

Demographic and Thematic Trends: Data collected showed a slight increase in cases over time, with more female and white employees reaching out, and the 30-44 age bracket being most common; recurring themes included supervisor issues and workplace culture.

This report is linked above. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Update: Shared Leave Need and Open Enrollment - VPHR Clark

VP-HR Mr. Darrell Clark discussed the status of the shared leave pool, and provided details on the upcoming mandatory open enrollment period, including policy changes and support for employees.

Shared Leave Pool Status: The shared leave pool is running low, prompting HR and Staff Senate to campaign for more donations to ensure employees in need can continue to benefit from the program.

Open Enrollment Changes: Open enrollment for health benefits will run for the entire month of October and is mandatory for health plan selection due to plan changes; employees must actively select their plans, with HR providing support, especially for staff who may need assistance.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Report: Staff Senate Chair - Kevin Ledford

Kevin updated the group on the ongoing searches for the Provost and CFO positions, including timelines, opportunities for staff input, and the involvement of various campus groups in the selection process.

Provost Search Input: An online listening session for the Provost search committee is scheduled, and staff are encouraged to provide input via meetings or an online form to help shape the candidate profile.

CFO Search Timeline: CFO candidate interviews are underway, with finalists visiting campus and feedback being solicited from staff, faculty, and student government representatives, aiming for a hire by the end of October.

Staff Representation: Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, and SGA are all represented in the search processes, ensuring broad input into the selection of these key leadership roles.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Report: Staff Senate Vice-Chair - Kari Donahue

Senator Kari Donahue reported on her activities since the July meeting. She is serving on the Provost Search Committee, and informed senators how to submit feedback on the search.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Report: Staff Senate Secretary-Treasurer - Donald Dean

Senator Donald Dean reported that the Bylaws Review Committee has started to meet.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

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Report: Faculty Senate Representative - Courtney Stine

Faculty Senate Representative, Courtney Stine, reported on the following topics.

Inclement Weather Policy: Expanding beyond the traditional open or closed status, a third option for remote operations during inclement weather is being added.

Academic Freedom Initiatives: The Faculty Senate is forming an ad hoc committee to recommend actions in support of academic freedom in response to federal and state legislative changes.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Report: Student Government Representative - Grant Avis

Student Government Vice President Grant Avis highlighted ongoing student concerns about dining options and campus safety, inviting staff to involve student representatives in relevant initiatives.

To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Standing Committee Reports

- **Cardinals for Action, Resilience and Education (CARE) - Leondra Gully**
To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)
- **Credentials and Nominations (C&N) - Barbara Bishop**
Vacancies on the Benefits Design Workgroup and Digital Experience Board were filled. This report is linked above. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)
- **Policies and Economic Development (PED) - Tessa McGilbra**
The PED committee is finalizing recommendations for the staff professional leave policy and considering additional policy reviews based on recent inquiries.
This report is linked above. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)
- **Services and Facilities (S&F) - Katie Hasper**
There was no report.
- **Staff Grievance Committee (SGC) – Laura Edwins**
This report is linked above. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)
- **Staff Help and Relief Effort (SHARE) - Tammy Lawson**
To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)
- **Staff Morale and Engagement (SME) - Stephanie Kittle**
The Staff Morale and Engagement Committee is collaborating with HR and other units to develop promotional materials and initiatives to improve staff motivation and awareness of available resources. To hear more, [please go to the video.](#)

Old Business

None

New Business

None

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Announcements

- Senators were reminded to sign the attendance sheet.
- The next Staff Senate meeting will take place on October 14 on the Teams platform.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Henry