

University of Wyoming Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: May 2025

Time: 1:15 PM

Location: BU 211



Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Staff Senate President Adam Comeau at 1:15

Roll Call: Roll call was conducted. A quorum was established.

- Attendance: 27 Senators present
- Proxies: 5
- Vacancies: 11

Approval of Agenda & Minutes

- Agenda: The May 2025 agenda was approved unanimously with an amendment to include additional items as noted during the meeting.
- Minutes: The minutes of the March meeting were received and approved with unanimous consent.

Introduction of New Staff Senate Office Associate: President Comeau introduced Emilio Padilla as the new Staff Senate Office Associate, Senior.

Elections

Senator Mollie Hand reported a successful election with 40 of 43 seats filled.

- Confirmations (Terms begin July 2025 – June 2028) The following confirmations were approved:
 - **Kimberly Briones** – District 23
 - **Rocky Case** – District 40
 - **Cheyenne Ferrin** – District 41
 - **John Hill** – District 28
 - **Chris Larson** – District 27
 - **Cole Messa** – District 43
 - **Lisa Owen** – District 30
 - **Alicia Perez** – District 17
 - **Violet Rubin-Hodges** – District 20
 - **Aaron Sciulli** – District 4
 - **Trinity Stolz** – District 1
 - **Haley Walsh** – District 35
 - **Joe Castillo** – District 26
 - **Kevin Chancellor** – District 29
 - Beck Herman (District 32) could not be confirmed now. A motion was passed to defer confirmation until July 2025.
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GUEST SPEAKER

Eric Woltkamp, Financial Advisor – Equitable Advisors

Provided a comprehensive overview of retirement planning and supplemental income options.

- Discussed the pension formula: average of top five earning years × state factor × years of service.
- Social Security should represent roughly one-third of retirement income; pensions typically cover about 50%.
- Emphasized the role of UW's 403(b) plan in covering remaining income needs.
- Employees are automatically vested in the 403(b), which allows for flexible withdrawal options, including lump sums.
- UW offers a \$20/month match for participating employees.
- Employees can choose between the WY Retirement System or TIAA.
- Eric is available for one-on-one or departmental consultations

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

President's Office – Kelsey Kyne, Chief of Staff

- **Commencement:** May 17 (Laramie) and May 19 (Casper) – 1,773 eligible graduates.
- **Presidential Leadership Institute:** Applications are open through May 23. Sessions will be held on July 31, August 1, October 17, and January 9, with a January 2026 reception at the President's residence.
- Cabinet meeting summaries are now posted online.
- **Reorganization Plan:** Ongoing; HR will provide updates.

Academic Affairs – Mandy Gifford

- Commencement and Board of Trustees (BOT) recognition of faculty awards.
- Interim Provost search underway; permanent Provost expected by July 2026.
- Leadership searches:
 - **College of Engineering and Physical Sciences** Dean
 - **School of Computing** Interim Director (national search to follow)
- BOT will discuss budget hearings at the upcoming meeting.

General Counsel – Tara Evans

- Feedback on revised Equal Opportunity SAP due May 19. Key sections reflect recent legislative updates.

Research & Economic Development – Parag Chitnis

- Federal funding represents \$111M annually; students receive \$40–50M.
- Concerns over proposed indirect cost rate reduction (44.5% → 15%), potentially impacting REDD operations and staffing.
- Priorities include preserving filled positions and navigating operational policy changes.

Government Affairs – Mike Smith

- Collaborating with VP Chitnis to engage legislators.
- Reminder: Employees may advocate personally but cannot represent UW without authorization.

Division of Budget and Finance – Alex Kean

- New policy forthcoming to support employees impacted by federal grant terminations:
 - Initial reassignment to alternate funded roles.
 - If the reassignment is unavailable, 30 days of paid administrative leave.
 - During leave: HR support and guaranteed interview for qualified internal applicants.
 - After 30 days, separation procedures will begin if no reassignment is found.
 - Presidential memo on policy changes to be issued campus wide.

Office of the Ombuds – via notes from President Comeau

- Programming resumes this summer.
- The Staff Senate may submit topic ideas.
- Survey forthcoming for Ombuds service users.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President – Adam Comeau

- BOT Meeting: May 14–16.
- President-Elect Jesse Grossinger to introduce himself.
- Collaborated with ASUW President Kameron Murphy on a shared governance statement.
- Staff Senate is represented in the Shared Governance Working Group (Grosinger, Holmquist, Tai Baker).
- Senate Chambers may be available for the June 4 meeting.
- Transition planning between current and incoming officers is underway.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Recognition Committee – Senator Frankie Vogt

- Tricia Olson named Employee of the Quarter (1st Q).
- Survey sent to staff about Staff Recognition Day.

Staff Relations Committee – Senator Meghan Monahan

- Upcoming meeting: May 13.
- Topics: Exempt/non-exempt classifications, test group evaluations, DOGE budget impacts, travel policy training.

Governance Committee – Senator Mollie Hand

- 40 of 43 seats filled from recent election.
 - Planning July retreat.
 - Next meeting: May 14.
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LIAISON REPORTS

Food Security Task Force (Senator Monahan):

- Food collected during Staff Recognition Day and Greek Week.
- 2,000 canned goods donated.
- Boxes are placed in residence halls for move-out donation collection.

Freedom of Expression Initiative (Senator Gwen Dailey):

- Formed three subcommittees (faculty/staff, student, external).

Green Dot Committee (Senator Mollie Hand):

- Successful Denim Day (April 23).
- 24 students trained during the Green Dot session (April 26).

Public Art Committee (Senator Catherine Conard):

- Reviewing proposals.
- Website updated

Shared Governance Working Group (President-Elect Grosinger, Senators Tai Baker & Holmquist):

- First meeting scheduled for May 14.

2025 State Laws Working Group (Parliamentarian Steven Lupien):

- The first meeting held May 8.
- Weekly meetings scheduled through June.

Public Comment

Senator Marquez noted that the UW Movers Warehouse is being relocated, which may cause temporary service delays over the summer.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.