

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes of Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Leigh Hall Room 208 + Electronic Attendance

Attendees in-person: Marilia Antunez, Lisa Appeldorn, Stacia Biddle, Katy Brennan, Stephanie Davis-Dieringer, Edward A. Evans, Tonia Ferrell, Mark Fridline, Daniel Friesner, Andrew Goodrich, Jenny Hebert, John Huss, Djordje Jovicic, Matthew Juravich, Sarah Kelly, Eliza Kleinschmidt, Kris Kraft, Erin Markarius, Nathan Meeker, John Messina, Patricia Miller, Peter Pfordresher, Caitlyn Phipps, Gwen Price, Pat Roberts, Madilyn Shaw, Ally Temsey, Adara Turek, Misty Villers, Sonya Wagner, Mia Yaniko

Attendees via Teams: Dawn Bishop, Eric Brisker, Jared Deeds, Karima Elgarroussi, Dorothy Gruich, Becky Handley, Brian Humm, Emily Janoski-Haehlen, Walter Jevack, Erin Makarius, Debmalaya Mukherjee, Melissa Olson, Jordan Renna, Mark Rittenour, Scott Roberts, Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich, Michelle Smith, Jennifer Stanley, Mark Stasitis

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Tonia Ferrell. A quorum was present.

ELECTION

Following expiration of the terms for both the Chair and Secretary, a vote was conducted for the role of secretary between Stephanie Davis-Dieringer and Sonya Wagner, resulting in the election of a new secretary, Stephanie Davis Dieringer with a final tally of 11 votes to 5.

The Chair position was unopposed. Kris Kraft was named the new Chair.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the agenda, a second, and approved.

The August minutes were reviewed. Hearing no questions, corrections or additions, a motion to approve was made, seconded, and approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The University Council Executive Committee met on August 25. Key topic submissions were discussed regarding green space usage and the key request process, and both were referred for further review.

The committee approved moving the UC meetings to the second Monday of each month at 1:00 pm beginning in January 2027. The committee also discussed improving committee reporting, strengthening alignment with university goals, and increasing administrator engagement. Planning is underway for an October orientation for chairs and administrators, and a handbook will be developed as part of that effort.

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

President Nemer shared his remarks. No comments were raised by attendees.

- Enrollment -
 - Because of high level of growth among first-time, first-year students in fall 2025, we remained relatively flat in that population, but we are still way ahead of two years ago.
 - College of Health and Human Services led the way in growth this semester.
 - Graduate, law, and transfer numbers continue to be up.
- More information to come on how to track project progress for the Revitalization Plan.
- Launching a monthly president perspective communication to the UA community.
- Offensive Coordinator of the Game – our earned media impressions were in the billions. Kudos to Dr. Goodrich and the UA Athletics marketing team for their creativity and for bringing that to fruition.
- Events - Concert on campus later this month. Light Up the Night Festival and Drone Show on Thursday, September 24, 2026 from 6:30 – 9 p.m. on Coleman Common.

REMARKS OF THE PROVOST

Provost Price shared her remarks. No questions were raised by attendees.

- Enrollment: Today is census and for a second year in a row total enrollment is up!
 - FYFT – down slightly
 - Freshmen down about 100
 - Adults up
 - Post Bac up
 - Transfer up
 - CCP is down a bit
 - GR – up about 120
 - Law is up 35
 - Wayne is up
 - And when you add all of the categories up – CHHS has the largest incoming class of any college with a growth of about 29%
- Gave welcome to Dr. Peter Pfordresher and Mr. David Peterson; and an update on CEPS dean search with plan to have on-campus interviews in October.
- Update on several new student success initiatives – EdSights AI platform.
- School of Law announcement – American diplomat, US ambassador, and Akron Law alumna, Lynne Tracy, here at UA.
- Congratulations to faculty – Dr. Nicholas Chesarino and Dr. Yilin Liu.
- UA recognized at the Professional in International Education awards.
- HLC update on visit September 14 and 15, 2026.

PRESENTATION: AKRON ATHLETICS

Presentation of Dr. Andrew Goodrich, Athletic Director, provided a 2025-26 end of year report and cultural blueprint.

- Low trust environment – Created Akron Athletics Cultural Blueprint creating clarity on what we believe, how we behave, and outcome we achieve.
- FOCUS 3 – Focused, intentional leadership training with three retired U.S. Navy Seals, met with coaches, students, and staff once per month for one year, helping each team create their own Cultural Blueprint.
- Fiduciary Success – Balanced Budget by increasing actual cash fits year over year by 109%, from \$1.7 million to \$3.6 million and set record for ticket sales revenue and corporate sponsorship revenue. Reduced general fund allocation by \$700,000 in 2026-27 and committed to doing an additional \$700,00 over the next two academic years.
- Athletics Success – Earned seven conference championships; finished in top 29% of all Division I programs nationally; #104 out of 365 universities. Crain's Business Journal success article; ninth ranked program in the name in terms of overall performance by an independent economist.
- Academic Success – Football program earned a 962 APR score last year which is second highest in school history and ban lifted. Football program earned a 2.949 team GPA for the spring semester which is highest outside of the COVID era. For the academic year all student-athletes combined for a 3.235 GPA. Fourteen of sixteen programs had GPA of 3.0 or better in either the fall or spring semester.
- Community Success – Honor faculty/staff; AD immediate interaction with student athletes; host families of prospective students; increase brand awareness and grow number of applications. \$20 million dollars of brand equity earned by virtue of athletics programs appearing on national television and social media; greater than four billion views due to promotion featured in print edition of New York Times, Washington Post, and numerous television, radio and digital streaming platforms.

COMMITTEE AND CONSTITUENCY REPORTS

(Note: No report if committee not listed)

- **Budget and Finance Committee**
The Budget and Finance Committee met August 17. Topics discussed included optimization of the State Share of Instruction (SSI), adjustment to the in-person surcharge for out-of-state graduate students, and proposed guest speakers for future meetings. The next meeting of the Committee will be Monday, September 28, at 2 pm.
- **Campus Wellness**
Met and discussed RooFit and plans to add something new this year. Also discussion to work with Athletics to increase faculty/staff attendance at events.
- **Institutional Advancement**
The Institutional Advancement Committee met on August 21, 2026. Guest - Dr. Galen Karriker, Director of Bands. Dr. Karriker spoke to the committee about both concert and marching bands, and explained the mechanics behind marching formations, including footage of Ohio's Pride during its first performance at InfoCision Stadium. It was a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at how the impressive choreography of a marching band performance is achieved. Discussion of possible development targets, including possible sponsorship of some of the more expensive instruments that are owned by the University, and discussion of the importance of bands in building brand and reputation for UA.

- **Student Engagement**
Discussion of the student/faculty lounge topic submission.
- **Talent Development & Human Resources**
Discussion of the gambling policies topic submission. After consultation with General Counsel and Human Resources, the Committee determined that this matter should be referred to Human Resources for further review as issues related to collective bargaining fall outside the purview of University Council. The referenced policy in the topic submission is from the CWA handbook. EAP resources related to gambling addiction and support are already available to university employees.
- **Undergraduate Student Government (USG)**
Madilyn Shaw, Student Body President, reported that Undergraduate Student Government has been busy welcoming new students and preparing for the new year.

GOOD OF THE ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A huge thank you and acknowledgment of Tonia Ferrell for her years of service as chair of University Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn, seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Next meeting is **October 13, 2026**.