

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 9, 2026

Time: 2:33 p.m. – 3:33 p.m.

Location: Culp Center 311 and Zoom

Facilitator: Cody Morelock, Staff Senate President

Scribe: President Morelock & William Cate, Staff Senate Secretary

Senators Present: Kari Albarado, Sharon Barger, Dan Bishop, Vanessa Canter, Rachel Colwell, Jennifer Crigger, O.J. Early, Kim Ferrell, David Finney, Archie Fortney, Joy Fulkerson, Wendy Guinn, Suzy Hooven, Ethan Hutchinson, Rachel Kellogg, James Lively, Jenny Lockmiller, Crystal Maupin, Eli Montana, Gina Osborne, Melanie Peters, Debbie Roach, Aneida Skeens, Amy Slaughter, Ben Smith, Jessamine Strauss, Liz Thomas-Joseph
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Guests: Rachael Barnett, Samantha Hunt
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Absent: Joe Bidwell, William Cate, Brooke Garland, Cody Henson, Stefanie Murphy, Donna Nelson Barnes, Rusty Sells, Brayton Siddell, Jeremy Watson

Agenda Overview

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of Guest Speakers
 - a. Mary V. Jordan Center Representatives
3. Approval of Previous Minutes
 - a. January Approvals
4. Information Items
 - a. President's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - c. Committee Updates
5. Old Business & Follow Ups
6. New Business
7. Announcements, *What is on your mind?*
8. Adjourn

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

Meeting Notes

1. **Call to Order**

President Morelock called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m. President Morelock confirmed the Zoom participants could hear the audio.

2. **Introduction of Guest Speakers**

President Morelock introduced Rachel Barnett and Samantha Hunt from the Mary V. Jordan Center. Rachael Barnett serves as the Jordan Center Director and Samantha Hunt serves as the Jordan Center Assistant Director.

The presenters introduced themselves and shared an overview of the Jordan Center staff, primarily composed of Student Success Specialists. The mission of the Jordan Center is to provide comprehensive one-on-one student support focused on removing barriers, investigating student challenges at a deeper level, and connecting students with appropriate campus resources.

Student success data shared by Barnett and Hunt include approximately 206 students were served during Fall 2025, and approximately 80% of the served students were retained into Spring 2026.

Barnett and Hunt also shared information related to the Horizon Scholars, full Pell Grant recipients with Hope Scholarship eligibility, and the Passport Scholars, full Pell Grant recipients without Hope Scholarship eligibility.

Bucs Academy, a summer bridge program established in 2018, is designed to support first-time freshmen prior to the start of their fall semester. Extended summer experiences are planned for July and August, and include a for-credit component, as well as an LLC housing component. Additionally, the QUEST Program, established in 2006, begins again in August 2026, allowing early move-in experiences for first-time freshman.

Barnett and Hunt shared the creation of a peer mentorship program, pairing NASPA-certified peer mentors with incoming Jordan Scholar students.

The Nicholas Academy is formed with a focus on leadership and accountability development.

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

Barnett and Hunt reviewed the referral process, noting that students are frequently referred to the Jordan Center by other campus offices, but walk-ins are encouraged and reiterating that no student is ever turned away. Common student challenges include,

- Limited knowledge of college
- Financial aid misunderstandings
- Academic readiness
- Mental health concerns
- Personal challenges

The Jordan Center collaborates closely with the Dean of Students, CFAA, Financial Aid, Academic Advising, Counseling Center, and Bucky's Pantry.

Senator Roach asked about expedited assistance options for students needing urgent financial support. Ms. Barnett noted that the Center frequently connects students with the Dean of Students Office in such cases.

Senator Fulkerson asked how Staff Senate members could assist. Ms. Barnett encouraged continued referrals and noted potential future mentorship opportunities.

Senator Crigger shared that Follett provides textbook scholarships that are sometimes underutilized and noted ongoing conversations regarding improved utilization of those funds.

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**

President Morelock presented the January minutes for consideration. No corrections were needed. Senator Canter made a motion to approve the January minutes, and the motion was seconded by Senator Finney. The motion carried, and the January minutes were approved.

4. **Information Items** **President's Report**

Due to time constraints, President Morelock announced he will send his updates to the senate via email. The President's Report is provided below under *Supporting Documents & Reminders*

Treasurer's Report

Senator Canter provided an update of the Staff Senate account balances.

- Main Account: \$9,760.58

[Agenda Overview](#)

Staff Senate
February 9, 2026

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

- Awards Account:	\$18,000.00
- Holiday Fund:	\$623.44
- CBC:	\$681.25

Committee Updates

Senator Hutchinson provided an update from the Awards Committee,

- The nomination window is open from February 16 – March 22, with both digital and paper nominations begin accepted
- Senators are encouraged to distribute flyers to promote nominations
- The awards webpage is updated with additional details
- Vice President Albarado created and distributed promotional materials

5. Old Business & Follow Ups

President Morelock divided senators into small groups to discuss the campus Hopes, Aspirations, and Concerns survey. All collected feedback will be compiled and shared with President Noland.

6. New Business

None.

7. Announcements, *What is on your mind?*

None.

8. Adjourn

Vice President Albarado made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Senator Canter. The meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

Action Items Summary

<u>Task</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Distribute awards information to promote nominations.	All Senators	March 22, 2026

East Tennessee State University Staff Senate

Supporting Documents & Reminders

See materials below for the Staff Senate President's Report and for the Jordan Center presentation.

Staff Senate Update — February 9, 2026

Below are key updates and announcements from my report yesterday.

★ Staff Senate & Campus Updates

- **Staff Award Nominations** will open **February 16** and run through **March 22**. I will be sending out an email on Monday with links to the Awards Webpage as well as copies of the flyers. We encourage you to share the flyers with your areas and also to nominate deserving staff if you have someone in mind.
- **Staff Celebration:** scheduled for Wednesday May 20th. The Celebration Committee is working to plan the event. WE NEED YOUR HELP sourcing door prizes from various community partners. I have attached a copy of the donation request letter. I have also included a link to the [door prize spread sheet](#). If we all work together to begin requesting these door prizes, it will make the work much easier. Donors highlighted in yellow have been contacted. Donors highlighted in green have confirmed their donation.
- I have attached a copy of the Jordan Center presentation.
- I appreciate the small group work that was completed yesterday on the Hopes, Aspirations and Concerns. I have included the [link to the form](#), if you would like to provide any of that feedback to me.

University Council (UC) Highlights

- Special thanks were extended to Facilities staff who worked diligently to clear roads and parking areas during recent winter weather despite equipment challenges.
- **THEC Funding:** This year is a “pause year” for scoring; current activities will count toward the **2026–27 cycle**.
- Increased emphasis on **Academic Program Quality**; updated program review rubrics are in development.
- ETSU will continue using the **CCTST assessment**, even though it is no longer required by THEC.
- Planning for the next **Quality Enhancement Strategic Cycle (QESC)** will begin soon.

Campus Updates

- **Faculty Senate:** Faculty-to-Faculty survey launching soon.
- **SGA:** Mountain Made Folk Festival scheduled for **April 7**.
- **Athletics:** Transfer portal closed Jan. 16; approximately 42 roster replacements in progress.

Mobile ID Initiative

- We will be transitioning to a mobile ID model. Physical Id's will still be available but recipients will need to choose between a physical id and a mobile id, once the roll out is complete.
- Implementation efforts will continue into the Fall semester:
 - Benefits include enhanced security, MFA integration, and touchless access.
 - Dining readers completed; residence hall installation underway.
 - Long-term goal is full mobile ID adoption in partnership with Apple.
 - Campus security functions will be consolidated under EMA leadership.

Website Redesign

- Library archiving of current sites underway.
- Redesign will include transition to more responsive formatting.
- Final vendor meetings occurring this week.
- New content rollout planned for **Fall 2026**.

President Noland's Report Highlights

- Appreciation expressed for staff response during winter weather; priority remains balancing operations with safety.
- Estimated **1.5% across-the-board increase this year**.
- State approved an **infrastructure project** (water/steam/electrical upgrades) plus funds for elevators and other updates in some buildings.
- Monitoring multiple legislative developments, including tenure legislation (HB2194).
- Upcoming BOT meeting (Feb. 20) will include enrollment and retention updates.

Additional Announcements (Dr. McCorkle / HR)

- The search for a new VP of HR is ongoing
- Candidate Andrea Unego presenting Wednesday in the Culp Center Auditorium at 10:30. Faculty and Staff are encouraged to join in person. You can register for the zoom meeting at this [link](#).
- Search underway to identify a third candidate after one withdrawal.
- Academic calendar discussions ongoing; goal is to maintain semester end dates while adding instructional days.



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
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Mary V. Jordan Center

Staff Senate
February 9, 2026

Meet Our Student Success Team



Dr. Erin Messmer
Lead Student Success Specialist



Rachael Barnett
Director



Samantha Hunt
Assistant Director of Student Success Programs



Jeremiah Heyward
Student Success Specialist



Sydni Robison
Student Success Specialist



Josh Robinson
Student Success Specialist



Lily Graybeal
Executive Aide



Khia Hudgins-Smith, M.S., LPC-MHSP
Clinical Counselor and Coordinator of Outreach

Meet Our Student Success Team



Dr. Jennifer Osborne
Assistant Vice President for Student Success



Dr. Keith Johnson
Vice President for Student Success



Antony Norman
Presidential Fellow



Sharon Barger
Assistant to the AVPs



Kim Maturo
Office Coordinator

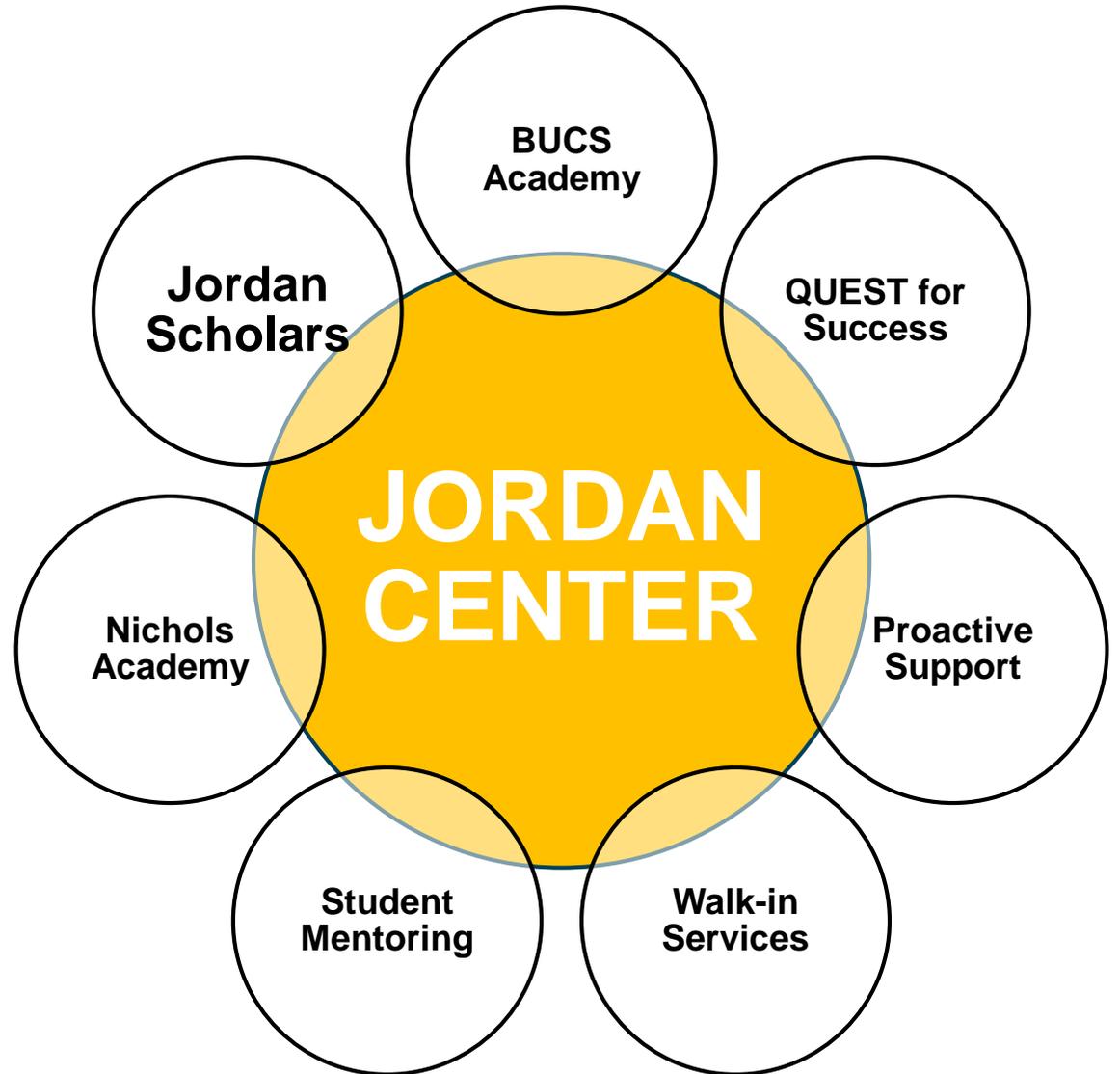
Mission of the Mary V. Jordan Center

Comprehensive, referral and one-on-one student support service center designed to promote academic, career, personal, and financial well-being

Pillars of Support

- Personalized success planning and holistic support through the Jordan Scholars program,
- A welcoming walk-in and lounge space for any student who needs assistance or a place to go,
- Meaningful mentoring and leadership opportunities through a variety of programs and services,
- And mental health support through our close partnership with ETSU's Counseling Center and embedded clinical counselor.

Programs



Jordan Scholars

- Receiving Full Pell - 200 students every year
- Students are offered a scholarship from Financial Aid and required to “opt in.”
 - Horizon - Full Pell and HOPE (Lottery)
 - Passport – Full Pell and below a 3.0
- Started the 25-26 year with 206 scholars. Retained 80% into spring
- In fall 2025, 544 appointments and 360 total hours.

Summer Bridge & Early Transition Experiences

Purpose:

Support first-time freshmen *before the fall semester begins* by building familiarity, confidence, and early momentum.

BUCS Academy (July- August)

- Extended, credit-bearing summer experience
- Builds college skills, routines, and academic momentum
- Foster familiarity with ETSU's campus and the surrounding region
- **Required first-year Living & Learning Community for non-commuters**

(Facilitated by Student Success Specialist Sydney Robison)

- **QUEST (August)**

- Short, early move-in experience for first-time freshmen
- Introduces campus expectations, resources, and support
- Accessible entry point into Jordan Center programming

Different intensity. Different timing. Same goal: a stronger start to college.

Academic-Year Support & Development

Purpose:

Provide relational support, structure, and leadership development *outside the classroom* during the academic year.

Jordan Center Peer Mentoring

- NASPA-trained and Certified, and experienced student mentors
- Navigation of college life beyond coursework
- Connection, accountability, and resource awareness

Nichols Academy

- Leadership and accountability development
- Bi-monthly Barbershop Conversations that features internal speakers (instructors, staff, administrators) and external speakers (community leaders, various industry and entertainment figures)
- Structured goals, progress tracking, and reflection
- Emphasis on responsibility and sustained engagement

Students enter through different pathways — support is coordinated and ongoing.

Walk-ins and drop-ins

- Referred to the JC by other offices (Financial Aid, Bursar, Advisement)
- Most commonly referred because they have “financial concerns” or “money problems.”
- Returning to ETSU and need additional support.
- Often takes “peeling back the onion.”

Most common challenges

- Lack of “college knowledge.”
- Misunderstanding of financial aid and scholarships
- Underprepared for college rigor
- Mental Health
- Conflicts outside of school (familial and/or financial)
- Basic Needs (i.e. food insecurity)

Most common referrals

- Counseling Center
- Dean of Students
- Center for Academic Achievement
 - Tutoring
 - Academic Coaching
 - Supplemental Instruction
- Financial Aid and/or Bursar
- Advisement
- Bucky's Pantry

Q & A

Thank you for supporting
the Jordan Center!

jordancenter@etsu.edu