

Freshman Senate Platform Statements

Nicole Blackstone:

University of Kentucky Class of 2021,

Hello. My name is Nicole Blackstone, and I am running to be Class of 2021's Freshman Senator. There are some of you in this class that I have known for years. Some of you I have met in these first few weeks of our college experience. But there is a great deal more of you who I have yet to meet. There is a large number of you who live on the opposite side of campus or who have a completely different major or who I pass every other day on the way to class, but we do not know each other yet. I want to fix that. To start, let me introduce myself.

I was born and raised in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. I am a Political Science & International Relations double major, with a Spanish minor. One day I want to be President of the United States, but my mom reminds me to take baby steps on the way there. I live in Lewis Hall, Room 112 if you ever want to stop by, which I hope you do because my baby step for this is to meet every Freshman.

So, come introduce yourself. Tell me your name and where you call home, on and off- campus. Tell me about your plans in life. Tell me what you want to change at UK. And I'll tell you why I should be the one to do it. Thank you.

Alex Cochran:

Growing up in the heart of the Bluegrass, the University of Kentucky has always been a flagship of advancement, prosperity, and opportunity the rest of the state looks up to. Now a freshman at the university, I am truly honored to have the ability to potentially serve the class of 2021 as a Freshman Senator.

As your Freshman Senator, I pledge nothing but the upmost effort and dedication to the advancement of our freshman class, as well as the University of Kentucky. This University and the class of 2021 truly holds a special place in my heart. We have the potential as a class to shape the future of this campus, and it would be an honor to serve each and every one of you.

To make this campus the best it can possibly be, it is going to take transparency, honesty, and mutual assistance. As your candidate for Freshman Senate, I hope to unite our class, our campus, and our community. To do this, we must embrace our diversity, create a campus environment that is appealing to all, and continue to push towards new horizons. It is truly an amazing time to be a Wildcat, and it is something we should all be proud of.

As Mahatma Gandhi once stated "Be the change that you wish to see in the world". On October 11th and 12th, you have that opportunity. By voting Alex Cochran, we can be that change together.

Zebulon Hart:

As a Freshman Senator, I would advocate for optimization of the meal service process on campus, specifically, changes to *TapinGo* efficiency. At present, the system is creating substantial wait times for students ordering in person and those placing orders via *TapinGo*.

Secondly, I would dedicate significant efforts in advocacy for improvements to campus culture pertaining to professor and student relationships, specifically in reference to professor approachability and receptiveness. I would lead efforts for SGA to partner with other campus entities to establish a collaborative bridge between the student body and individual academic departments to open conversation for cultural change. A common theme among many students is that some professors and sometimes specific departments do not embrace a holistic perspective of students, are generally unreceptive to students, and thereby hinder the learning process. This I would work diligently to change.

Lastly, I would advocate for enhancements to transparency and student access to the records related to the dedicated SGA annual budget and a formal process of evaluating and reporting program outcomes to the student body at large.

Thank you,
Zebulon Hart

Lucas Heilman:

Hello, my name is Lucas Heilman and I am running for freshman senator. My experience with student government includes being National Honors Society secretary, National Science Honors Society vice president, and four years of high school student council. First and foremost, I believe that your future senators should always be available for contact. I invite anyone to email me at lbhe223@uky.edu with any concerns, proposals, or for any other reason whatsoever and I pledge to respond within two days. For the Student Government in general, we should hold two town hall meetings per year to allow students to voice concerns. My main policy is to make the University of Kentucky a more environmentally friendly campus. We can decrease our impact by turning off the lights in non-used classroom buildings, having campus wide clean-up days, better enforcing the tobacco-free rule in public campus areas, and using left-over food from student dining center buffets to feed the homeless. Another issue is that the class registration process should be more transparent. Each incoming freshman student should be required to speak one-on-one with their academic advisor during orientation class scheduling instead of in a group. The prior year's syllabi for classes should be available in the course catalog so students can know the class requirements. There should be fewer restrictions on classes, allowing students to take interesting classes outside of their chosen field. A few other possible proposals include rental umbrellas, bus transportation on weekends, and more benches and tables in class building hallways.

Boston Hicks:

I aspire to be an advocate for the student body at the University of Kentucky. My three main areas of concern that I would like to be addressed are UK Dining, UK Parking, and the UK Student Clinic.

The UK Dining process is extremely complex. There are many locations on campus that do not accept meal swipes or only accept them at a certain time of day. Also, on average, UK students pay close to \$10 per meal. However, a meal swipe only covers \$7 of a meal. I would like to see both of these things changed. Students should get a fair deal on meal swipes.

I would also like to see the parking at UK expanded. Parking here at UK can be very difficult and often causes students to leave vehicles at home. If parking were expanded, it would make the lives of students easier and make the campus more accessible.

The UK Student Clinic is also something I would like to see expanded. There is an abundant need for healthcare in the student body. The current system does an excellent job of treating students but often has a limited amount of appointments. If it were expanded, more students would have access to this service.

Lastly, I am a voice for you. I want to see this campus improved so that there is a positive impact on the lives of students. I want to represent the needs of the student body.

Nick Meredith:

I have a vision for a better school, a better campus environment, a happier student body. A utopia is not possible; there will always be room for our school to be improved. I want to find these outlets for improvement and work to achieve it. I am Nick Meredith, a member of the College of Arts and Sciences and a physics major. I have always strived for positive growth and change and like to inspire the same in others. Because of this, my goal as a freshman senator is to contribute towards positive change in the life of UK. As freshman senator, creating a better and happier environment is my primary concern. If elected, I will fight for dorm pets being allowed. I want more washers and dryers available. There needs to be a better way of collecting trash and recycling so that students do not have to walk far for it. I will push for more lenient visitation policies. I will push for a better and happier school. Ultimately, I will push for all of this and more because perfection is impossible, but improvements can always be made.

Thank you,
Nick Meredith

Taylor Nolan:

My name is Taylor Nolan and I am running as a candidate for the University of Kentucky's Class of 2021 Freshman Senatorial position. Preconceived notions are all too common in today's society; as your candidate I will work to eliminate bias or discrimination toward students based on their campus involvement. I believe that involvement, no matter the organization, is positive and we should work together to be more accepting of all student organizations. If you vote for me on October 11th and October 12th, I promise to work to bring this discrimination against student involvement

to the University and the University Senate's attention and to begin the process of eliminating any bias among student organizations and administration. If elected, I also promise to bring forth any questions or areas of concerns that the Class of 2021 has to our University Senate and our administration.

Kylee Pipgrass:

Nothing is perfect. But what if you had the chance to make something as close to perfect as you could? That is why I want to be a Senator. Hi, I am Kylee Pipgrass and I am a business administration major. I am running for senate because I think there are some changes that could be made around the University of Kentucky that could benefit everyone. I want to have a better balance between merit based scholarships and financial need based scholarships. I think if you are paying for a meal plan then your meal swipes should be valid anywhere on campus-including Starbucks. Not everyone is good at time management, so they end up doing their homework at three in the morning. Thus, the library should be open 24/7 to avoid panic. The visitation policy should be more lenient because we are adults now and do not need the resident that checked us in to babysit us the whole time. And most importantly, we should be allowed to have pets in our room (in select dorms there can be allergen free zones for those that have allergies). We already had to leave our friends and families behind when coming to college, so we should have the right to fill that void with a pet that could keep us company. I want to hear any ideas for what you want to see changed. I am Kylee Pipgrass and I am for change.

Bilal Shaikh:

For the people asking what this is all about, it's not about power or popularity. I'll tell you what it's all about: it's about what happens from here. This is not just about one person, it's about all of us. Never doubt that you are valuable, you are powerful, you are meaningful. You are deserving of a candidate who is willing to fight for you. Together, we will strive for a campus that is more responsive to student needs. We will preserve unity at all costs. We will venture towards a future where the class of 2021 reaches unprecedented heights.

Your Future, Your Terms, Your Senator,
Bilal Shaikh

Rachel Taylor:

Hi my name is Rachel Taylor. I'm from Owensboro, KY and am a Biology major on the Pre-med track. As a senator of the freshman class of the University of Kentucky, I will stand for improvements that will make life on campus less stressful. My plan includes pushing for: improved amenities in the dorms (better washers and dryers, vacuums, kitchen tools), more than two guests allowed in your dorm at a time, and increased meal swipe options (including more places and longer times).

Courtney Wheeler:

Hello everyone! My name is Courtney Wheeler and I am freshman in the Gatton College of Business pursuing a management degree and a minor in Spanish. I am from Louisville, Kentucky and attended Sacred Heart Academy for 3 years and prior to that I called a small town in Eastern Kentucky called Ashland my home. Growing up in Kentucky has certainly shaped me in many ways, the most important being my passion for education. Attending the University of Kentucky was a dream of mine, so I want to do all I can to make my time here worthwhile. My passion for activism is the keystone to why I am interested in being involved with Student Government. Since I was little, I have always been a person to not only say what I believe in, but to actually DO what I believe is right. As a Freshmen senator, I will not only vow to take a stand for the freshmen class, but work to ensure that all members of our campus are equally heard and respected. The University of Kentucky is my second home and I will work tirelessly to make it the best it needs to be. I would be humbled to serve as a Freshmen Senator, and encourage you to consider me as a candidate. Thank you.

Brandon Willard:

My name is Brandon Willard, I am from Lake St. Louis, Missouri and I am running for Freshman Senate. My job as a student government Freshman Senator is to speak for all the freshman and let their opinions be heard. As a freshman who was on student council executive board in high school, I believe that I can most effectively do this by incorporating my own ideas and those ideas of my peers to make UK an even better university than it already is. The election is on October 11th and 12th and I would great appreciate if you would give me the opportunity to be on your Freshman Senate. Thank you.