

BUSAC ACADEMIC YEAR-END REPORT

*Brandeis University
Staff Advisory Committee*

2025-
2026



A NOTE

As Brandeis begins to focus on micro-credentialing and second transcripts, the elected Brandeis University Staff Advisory Committee (BUSAC) Representatives continue to apply our technical and soft skills (collaboration, communication, adaptability, cultural awareness, critical thinking, curiosity and problem-solving) to our everyday staff roles and in this engaged committee.

BUSAC is pleased to share this report of our work from the 2025-2026 Academic Year!

Staff can look for an ongoing account of BUSAC work and activities in the [Materials section](#) of the BUSAC website. We're presenting this report as a snapshot of our busy year.

With gratitude,

BUSAC



WHO WE ARE

at a glance

BUSAC is an elected, representative group of staff formed to: improve the work process and environment for Brandeis University staff through discussions and actions that influence policy; develop and enrich staff; and promote ongoing, meaningful and deliberate improvements to the staff experience.

13

**Elected
Representatives***

** Out of a total of 17 seats..*

11

**Districts Across
the University**

1

**Official
Note Taker****

***Stipend role*

WHO WE ARE

2025-2026 BUSAC Representatives



Jane Theriault
District A



Courtney Maurer
Interim Vice Chair
District A



Kapik Yeung
District B



Lanni Isenberg
District C



Calla Mattox
District C



Alina Hicks
District D



Kristina Cherniahivsky
District E



Gail Jordan
District F



Stacey Winkler
District G



Lisa DeNicola
District H



John Pizzi
District K



Aimee Slater
District K



Brittani Niquette
Interim Chair,
At-Large



Abigail Arnold
Notetaker

BUSAC REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICTS

District A

Arts and Sciences (A&S), including the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and Admissions

District B

Brandeis International Business School

DISTRICT C

Heller School for Social Policy & Management

DISTRICT D

The Rabb School of Continuing Studies, including Precollege Programs

DISTRICT E

Centers, Institutes and Rose Art Museum

DISTRICT F

Administration: President's Office, Provost's Office, Investments, Legal, Finance, Human Resources, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Communications, Office Institutional Research, and University Events

DISTRICT G

Institutional Advancement (IA)

DISTRICT H

Student Affairs: Athletics, Counseling Center, Community Living, Health Center, Student Activities, and Student Life

DISTRICT I

Academic Affairs: Academic Services, Study Abroad, International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO), English Language Program (ELP), Registrar, Graduate Student Affairs

DISTRICT J

Campus Operations: Public Safety, Facilities, and Office of Conference and Event Services

DISTRICT K

Information Technology Services (ITS) and Library Services

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

BUSAC REPRESENTATIVE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

BUSAC is an elected, representative group of staff formed to: Improve the work process and environment for Brandeis University staff through discussions and actions that influence policy; develop and enrich staff and; promote ongoing, meaningful and deliberate improvements to the staff experience.

The Spring 2025 elections brought two new BUSAC representatives to the roster to join incumbent representatives in service to Brandeis University staff. We welcomed Kapik Yeung for District B, and welcomed back Aimee Slater (chair of the initial BUSAC committee in 2018) as co-representative for District K. Brittani Harris Niquette was elected for the At-Large role and accepted the unanimous nomination by BUSAC representatives to continue as BUSAC Interim Chair.

BUSAC welcomed Abigail Arnold as BUSAC Note Taker in September. The note taker receives a small stipend and is not a BUSAC representative, but rather shadows every meeting to capture the content discussed.

As the University pursued restructuring with President Arthur Levine's "Reimagining the Liberal Arts" initiative, staff and some of our BUSAC representatives moved into new alignments. BUSAC representatives carefully reviewed constituent district assignments. By December 2025, the Workday district lists no longer fell neatly within prior districts. And some BUSAC representatives were no longer situated within the district they were elected to represent!

BUSAC REPRESENTATIVE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

District I representative Mary Hurd no longer had many constituents within that district. While Mary departed Brandeis during the academic year, she continued working with BUSAC until her last day at Brandeis in January, contributing to subcommittees and important conversations on behalf of Brandeis staff. District A co-representatives Jane Theriault and Courtney Maurer communicated with constituents formerly designated within District I.

Alina Hicks stepped in as District D representative when colleague and Interim BUSAC Vice-Chair Mara Tzizik-Swanson departed for parental leave in February 2025, co-represented District D upon Mara's return to campus, and then became our BUSAC District D representative when Mara stepped down in November. Courtney Maurer accepted the BUSAC Vice Chair role in 2025 and continues in that role.

There have been no District J constituents for the last few years (while individuals were nominated during the past several BUSAC election cycles, no one accepted the role). We thank At-Large representative Brittani Harris Niquette for sharing BUSAC monthly newsletters and other communication with this District in the absence of an elected representative.

BUSAC REPRESENTATIVE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

We offer a special thank you to District F representative Gail Jordan who managed the BUSAC website, posting our monthly notes for us, and was essential to scheduling our annual BUSAC Ice Cream Social. Gail retired in May. We will miss her!

Another thank you goes to BUSAC Representative Calla Mattox who serves as our representative on the Committee on Access and Excellence (formerly DEIS-J).

Among elected & appointed BUSAC Representatives, our roles in our districts include: Academic Administrator (x2), Assistant Director, Associate Director, Director of Technology Client Services, Government Information & Social Sciences Librarian, Head Athletic Trainer & Coordinator Student Athlete Health & Wellness, Program Manager, Senior Assistant Director, Senior Associate Director, and Senior Program Administrator. We meet once each month and pursue timely responses to inquiries, projects and activities that arise throughout the year.

BUSAC REPRESENTATIVES: COMMITTEES

BUSAC Subcommittees

- Communications (Lanni Isenberg & Stacey Winkler)
- Elections (Lanni Isenberg, Jane Theriault, Calla Mattox, Aimee Slater)

Additional Representative Commitments This Year

- DEIS-J Committee
 - organized through the Office of the Provost (Calla Mattox)
- DEIB Council - *did not meet this year.*
 - organized through Lee Bitsó's office (Brittani Harris Niquette)
- Brandeis Food Pantry Advisory Board
 - BUSAC representative (Jane Theriault)
- Presidential Search Committee - *did not meet this year.*
 - Staff and BUSAC representative (Brittani Harris Niquette)



BUSAC REPRESENTATIVES: COMMITTEES

Brandeis Pantry Support

The Brandeis Pantry provides prepackaged bags of hygiene and toiletry items and non-perishable foods for any Brandeis student who is facing food insecurity or struggling to afford them. BUSAC Representative Jane Theriault serves on the Brandeis Pantry Board and provided updates and reported pantry needs this year.

In support of Pantry Manager/ Program Director of Student Support and Initiatives Cathy Carlson and our Brandeis students, BUSAC co-hosted a fall Brandeis Pantry drive with the Faculty Senate and then held another in spring with collection locations in the Library, Gosman Athletic Center, the Business School, Heller School, Shapiro Campus Center, Shapiro Science Center and Lemberg Children's Center. BUSAC also distributed the request for staff volunteers to assist at the Pantry on Friday afternoons.



BUSAC COLLABORATION WITH LEADERSHIP

This academic year BUSAC met with 16 Brandeis leaders in our monthly meetings to learn more about current Brandeis departments, policies and procedures and, perhaps most importantly, to explore responses to some of the [BUSAC contact form](#) inquiries and to provide feedback on behalf of Brandeis staff.

A Look at Brandeis Presidential Leadership

In 2025, Brandeis initiated a search for its next president, BUSAC circulated a survey to understand Brandeis staff priorities for Presidential Qualities. BUSAC received 129 survey responses, compiled a report and shared it with the Brandeis Senior Leadership, who brought that information to the Board of Trustees. Shortly thereafter, Brandeis appointed Interim President Arthur Levine as President with a 2-year contract.

The desired qualities in the next Brandeis President that staff listed in their survey responses included: being open to feedback from various subsets of the Brandeis community (including junior faculty, all levels of staff, and students); being visible on campus; and being open-minded and forward thinking/open to new ideas.

The [June 2025 survey report](#) is posted on the BUSAC materials page. BUSAC will re-share the document with the leadership to reference the staff priorities for the Trustees and Search Committee for the next search with the conclusion of President Levine's term next summer, 2027.

UNIVERSITY GUESTS AT BUSAC MONTHLY MEETINGS 2025-2026

BUSAC Meeting Guest(s)	Discussion/Topics
<p>JULY 10, 2025 BUSAC Open Staff Meeting Donald Greenstein, University Ombuds</p>	<p>Services (confidential) provided by the Office of the Ombud – to campus community and beyond</p>
<p>AUGUST 14, 2025 Eli Jacobson, Associate Director, Digital Media and Conferencing Services</p>	<p>Answered questions and facilitated the transition to Zoom Phone and Zoom Workplace App in place of physical office telephones</p>
<p>OCTOBER 9, 2025 Matt Rushton, Associate VP for Public Safety and Campus Operations*</p> <p>President Arthur Levine and Stew Uretsky, Executive VP for Finance and Administration</p>	<p>Recruitment for new volunteer Student Support Team (SST) to assist in response to any student protest interactions between students and Brandeis Public Safety team</p> <p>To review BUSAC Contact Form topics and answer questions submitted in advance</p>
<p>NOVEMBER 13, 2025 BUSAC Open Staff Meeting Erika Chin, Natalie Ippolito, and Elizabeth Tierney, Robin Switzer, Suzanne Raj, Brandeis Human Resources Compensation Group</p>	<p>Led a discussion and Q&A about the new Massachusetts Salary Range Transparency law</p>

UNIVERSITY GUESTS AT BUSAC MONTHLY MEETINGS 2025-2026

BUSAC Meeting Guest(s)	Discussion/Topics
<p>DECEMBER 11, 2025 Stew Uretsky, Executive VP for Finance and Administration</p>	<p>Presented the budget and finance slides originally shown at the November Brandeis Faculty meeting</p>
<p>JANUARY 8, 2026 Jacob Taybor, Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) and Robin Switzer, Vice President of Human Resources</p>	<p>Discussed discrimination and harassment policies and answered questions regarding the staff accommodation process</p>
<p>FEBRUARY 12, 2026 President Arthur Levine and Robin Switzer, VP for Human Resources</p> <p>Sheila Georger, Vice President and Michelle Gaseau, Assistant Vice President, Brandeis Communications Marketing</p>	<p>Shared results of the Voluntary Retirement Plan (VRP) offer for eligible Faculty & Staff</p> <p>Presentation about Brandeis Marketing Communications work and plans to address Brandeis internal communications needs</p>

*Matt Rushton shared similar information about the Brandeis Public Safety Team roles and responsibilities at Interim President Levine's All Staff Forum in Schwartz Hall on April 30th.

For more details about meeting guests and discussions, visit the [Monthly Meeting notes](#) posted on the BUSAC website.

UNIVERSITY GUESTS AT BUSAC MONTHLY MEETINGS 2025-2026

BUSAC Meeting Guest(s)	Discussion/Topics
<p>APRIL 9, 2026 Captain Oren Wright, Brandeis Public Safety</p>	<p>Responded to questions about safety on campus, Public Safety vehicles, getting in touch with Comfort Dog Justice's handler to schedule visits</p>
<p>MAY 14, 2026 BUSAC Open Staff Meeting Erika Chin, Natalie Ippolito, and Elizabeth Tierney, Brandeis Human Resources Compensation Group</p>	<p>Responded to BUSAC Contact Form questions and Zoom chat about pathways to promotion, new hires, promotions and HR process updates to come</p>
<p>JUNE 11, 2026 Haley Rosenfeld, Director of Institutional Research</p> <p>Judy Jaeger, Marketing Director for Institutional Advancement</p>	<p>Presentation about the University's accreditation application process and what the staff role in that may be</p> <p>Described the University's Comprehensive Campaign and the roles staff can play there as well</p>

BUSAC COLLABORATION WITH LEADERSHIP

In September 2025, BUSAC representatives were invited to attend the Board of Trustees luncheon, seated alongside faculty and Board members and some discussions included ideas for staff and faculty collaborations.

In February 2026, a BUSAC Representative met with the Brandeis Staff-Faculty Accessibility Group to learn about the process behind workplace accommodations. Initially, BUSAC attempted to address concerns in a monthly BUSAC meeting with some general questions for HR. BUSAC learned that concerns and grievances can be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). BUSAC constituents' questions were mainly about clarifying processes and guidelines and determining resources available to staff and faculty seeking disability accommodations; therefore, a group of BUSAC representatives met in April with HR benefits and compensation staff in hopes of gaining some answers for staff.

BUSAC continues to communicate directly with the Accessibility Group and will share some resources provided by HR regarding staff accessibility and disability at Brandeis. Three web resources mentioned that can help staff navigate different employment matters can be found below. BUSAC representatives asked HR to ensure that managers and supervisors are aware of these resources and processes as well.

[Staff Support Page](#)
[University Policies & Procedures Page](#)
[Brandeis Business Partners](#)

BUSAC COLLABORATION WITH LEADERSHIP

On April 16th, 2026, several BUSAC members attended The Longest Table luncheon, hosted by Professor Anita Hill, Professor Daniel Kryder and Senior Program Administrator Lanni Isenberg. The event for invited staff, faculty, students and alumni focused on Building a Just Community at Brandeis and specific character traits. Lunchtime table discussion among the group focused on curiosity and empathy, overcoming the University's lack of resources, and the need for University transparency in offerings to students (courses, mentorship) and overall. Transparency could provide a sense of inclusion and enable informed decision-making.



BUSAC CONTACT FORM - STATS

Every month's BUSAC newsletter includes the link to the [BUSAC Contact Form](#), always available on the BUSAC website. Staff can submit inquiries and comments and can include their name, their district, or submit something without attribution.

Staff also talk to the BUSAC representatives or send messages about issues, and since BUSAC reps are staff, too, we also brought our own questions and concerns to the group. As detailed in our monthly newsletter and posted meetings – as well as the monthly meeting guest list and special meeting descriptions in this report – BUSAC shared inquiries with Senior Leadership and appropriate departments to learn more.

Highlights

60 **Contact Form Entries**

35 **Submitted Anonymously**

18 **No District Identified**

BUSAC CONTACT FORM - THEMES

Some ongoing and resolved concerns and ideas shared with leadership from the BUSAC Contact Form include:

Human Resources Processes

- Reorganization implications for additional job roles, duties and manager responsibilities
- Compensation for additional roles and duties as a result of the Voluntary Retirement Program
- Accommodations process for staff
- Lactation Room Access
- Salary review, salary increase status, layoff plans
- Access to salary range information and manager involvement
- New salary transparency law
- Staff retention efforts
- Voluntary Retirement Program and residual workload for remaining staff

University Policies & Changes

- Parking changes, concerns, new hang tags, and parking office interactions – new system rolled out in fall 2025
- Google data storage cap concerns
- New Overhead Policy and Business Expense policy change regarding snacks
- Abrupt and quiet DEI Office staff layoffs and closure
- ESG investment opportunity request
- Elimination of the blue emergency lights on campus
- Campus Safety plans and Public Safety trainings
- Remote work in cases of snow storm/weather emergencies
- AI image use by Communications
- Proposed NECHE accreditation language

BUSAC CONTACT FORM - THEMES, CONT.

Some ongoing and resolved concerns and ideas shared with leadership from the BUSAC Contact Form include:

Staff Benefits

- Adding campus or nearby food options in summer
- Sick time/bonus time policy
- President's Discretionary Day updates
- Charges for staff/faculty fitness classes
- EV charger availability

Communication

- Better Internal Communications
- Reflection on Brandeis Announcements – from President and Provost
- Training for Managers and consistent messaging from all managers to staff and faculty
- Staff Town Hall topics and questions

Staff Morale

- Staff Appreciation event feedback
- Staff recognition and award changes and opportunities
- Honor staff by sharing obituaries (Communications)
- Interest in Staff Union updates, eligibility and process information

BUSAC SUCCESSES

While many of our priorities in BUSAC are ongoing in nature, we feel positive about our successes around additional staff paid off days, our increase in staff involvement in the new restructuring process, and more. Below are select BUSAC successes from this year.

Goal/Topic	Results (so far)
<p>Additional Presidential Discretionary Days</p>	<p>2025: Added July 3rd</p> <p>2026: Added December 24th (Christmas Eve) to a full day (previously was a half day).</p>
<p>Create more equity around knowledge sharing</p>	<p>Advocated for more staff town halls to increase equity around information shared.</p> <p>October 23, 2025 April 30, 2026</p>

BUSAC SUCCESSES, CONT.

Goal/Topic	Results (so far)
Accurate Salary Ranges Posted for Roles	<p>Director of Compensation, Erika Chin, described how community input was helpful in influencing a fall 2025 change in posted salary range listings – including more realistic ranges than before. See the May 2026 BUSAC Meeting Notes (Unet Login Required) for more details.</p>
Staff Equity/Access	<p>Google storage limits for staff were doubled (from 25G to 50G), thanks in large part to feedback from staff.</p>
Staff Recognition	<p>BUSAC rep Jane Theriault received the 2026 Ennis Award. The award recognizes a full-time staff member who has demonstrated exceptional dedication and loyalty to the university. Nominees are known for their professionalism, kindness, and respect toward all members of the Brandeis community.</p>

BUSAC EVENTS

June 10, 2026

BUSAC hosted the Annual All-Staff Ice Cream Social in June with ice cream and sorbet by local favorite Lizzy's. More than 375 guests joined us on the Great Lawn in front of the Shapiro Campus Center for a beautiful, warm day of community and delicious treats.



2026 BUSAC ELECTION

BUSAC members Aimee Slater, Jane Theriault and Calla Mattox (and former District I representative Mary Hurd), formed the BUSAC District Reorganization Task Force to review and revise BUSAC Districts to reflect the University's new structure -- new schools and position changes.

The Task Force aims to make sure the size of BUSAC remains reasonable and represents the staff equitably with staff changes accurately reflected. The Task Force consulted some constituents about any significant potential District changes

Key changes by the Task Force are the creation of two additional Districts (will include two additional BUSAC representatives) along with some rebranding of old districts.

They are also reviewing eligibility guidelines in the current BUSAC Charter and anticipating some revisions. The Task Force continues to work with Workday staff and Human Resources to organize staff into appropriate (and some new) districts and will impact the BUSAC spring 2026 elections.

2026 BUSAC ELECTION, CONT.

BUSAC Representatives Jane Theriault, Aimee Slater, and Lanni Isenberg serve as the Spring 2026 BUSAC Election Subcommittee. While election timing is delayed due to the ongoing redistricting review and implementation process, the Election Subcommittee will proceed with elections in July and August 2026, with plans to extend nomination and voting timing to accommodate staff summer schedule constraints. BUSAC Representatives whose term of service are due to conclude on July 1st will be extended for the duration of the delayed election timing, if the representatives are willing and able to continue in the role.

The 2026-2027 BUSAC term is anticipated to begin in September 2027 to allow time for elections as well as role and knowledge transitions.

LOOKING AHEAD

We continue our work in the transition from year-end to the July 1st start of a new BUSAC year. The University community continues to move forward to meet every new challenge and opportunity.

Our BUSAC goals are to continue to keep our staff colleagues informed of activities, actions and participation opportunities through monthly newsletter recaps and periodic BUSAC Open Staff meetings and provide an open line of communication with direct access to BUSAC representatives plus the BUSAC Contact Form.

BUSAC will respond to staff inquiries, ask tough questions, connect with leadership and departments across the University, and document important information to share with our staff constituents.

We challenge Human Resources to re-activate or update the TAP (Talent Advancement Program). In years prior, a BUSAC representative participated in the Total Rewards Committee, but that group has not met formally during the reorganization process as the University realigns offices and assigns new roles and responsibilities. We will continue to seek input into all of these University areas where staff voices are critical.

LOOKING AHEAD, CONT.

Staff members volunteer their time and energy to serve on BUSAC. While it is not a paid position, it is an act of service and care for the University community. We are proud of our year-round work and thank all of our collaborators, community supporters and the BUSAC Representatives past, present and future.

And, we'll look forward to seeing as many staff colleagues as possible at our next BUSAC Staff Social!



BUSAC@brandeis.edu



[BUSAC Webpage](#)