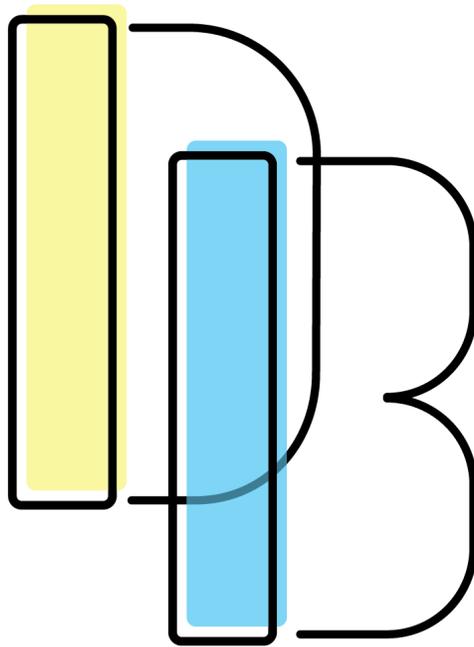


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The University of Cincinnati Undergraduate Student Government



BASHIR & DANA

In-Depth Platform

We're For the Bearcats.

Howdy! We're Bashir Emlendi and Dana Drage and we hope to be your next Student Body President and Vice-President. We've both spent our last 3 years in Student Government and are eager to potentially be able to enact real, tangible changes--both internally and externally--if elected. Our concept, "For the Bearcats," is centered around our love for the University and the rapid upward climb we are experiencing as a whole. "For the Bearcats" unites us all as loyal children of the Red and Black, but also allows us to carry our individual identities to the table. It is with this, dozens of lengthy conversations, and our own experiences in mind that we decided to break our platform down to 6 unique sections: Campus Services, Well-Being, Academics, Student Interest, the City, and Accountability.

We hope this guide serves as answers to some of the questions you may have, particularly the infamous "How are you going to do *that?*". We've spent months processing that ourselves and feel confident that with your help, we can accomplish each and every one of these platform points and enhance the student experience for all.

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I. For the Campus Services

We firmly believe that the University has an innate duty to assist its students not only in the classroom, but also outside of it. The overall purpose of Campus Services is the enhancement of student services. We promise to continue to support any University or student-led initiative that will better the Bearcat experience.

A. Printing Services

1. **Why?** Students' number one focus is and should always be their academics. While we are lucky to have prints included in our university accommodations, we feel there is a need to have an extension of locations to utilize these prints. We will be adding printing stations to select residence halls and student life locations on campus (TUC and/or Steger).
2. **Who?** All students, specifically those with smaller numbers of "included prints" as well as those students living in residence halls
3. **What?** Getting more printing locations for student ease of access for homework, studying, and other academic purposes.
4. **How?** Partnering with RHA, using SG's budget, and coordination with University Utility services

B. Findlay Market in the Dining Halls

1. **Why?** We feel that to enhance the student dining experience, having an upgrade in the dining halls is crucial to assist those students looking for healthier, more fulfilling dining options.
2. **Who?** Students eating on campus, students living on campus, students with dining plans.
3. **What?** Coordinating and being the student voice to lobby and push for the necessary need of better dining options.
4. **How?** There was internal discussions between SG and Dining Services about creating this program a little over a year ago that Bashir was a part of. We plan to continue from where it left off with the University staff and administration to make this initiative a reality for students. We will be utilizing connections with John Hautz (Dining Services), and Kellen Heines (Findlay Market). It is beneficial to both UC's Dining Services as well as Findlay Market and are very confident in its execution.

C. Expansion of Campus Study Rooms

1. **Why?** We believe that both to increase student spirit on campus and help the student buy-in to our university, there needs to be a student connection with our campus. This will assist with everything from academics to student spirit, and to do this there needs to more areas on campus open for student use to study, relax, meet, and more.
2. **Who?** All students!
3. **What?** Have rooms open on campus to relax and study

4. **How?** 25 Live and Student Government/SALD agreement to make SG responsible for these open rooms in TUC, Braunstein, and McMicken. Similar to how there are current rooms in TUC available to be signed out at the Conferences and Event Services desk.

D. Meal Plan Swipe Expansion

1. **Why?** Any increase in university offerings to students helps in bettering the student experience. In the past, we've seen an expansion of the program that was very well-received by students. We hope to continue the swipe expansions so that students get more usage from their meal plan at more locations around campus.
2. **Who?** Students with meal plans looking for more accessible options around campus.
3. **What?** An expansion of the swipe program will enable students to use swipes for a base meal offering from one or more of the Aramark partner restaurants on campus (Subway, Papa John's, Taco Bell, Burger King, Chick-Fil-A, etc). In addition to these locations, we believe that there can be new "express" swipe locations for to-go meals in the Lindner College of Business.
4. **How?** Housing and Food Services worked with Student Government in 2015 to get a swipe program deal with Papa John's. While it was a successful program, it was not continued due to funding. We will be reigniting the conversations to expand the swipe program, which is something we know will help more students get more out of their college experience.

II. For the Well-Being

We believe the University has a duty to its students to keep them safe and healthy in all senses. We will fight for your mental, spiritual, and physical well-being to be a priority in the minds of decision-makers at the University of Cincinnati.

A. Good Samaritan Policy

1. **Why?** Many students feel uncomfortable calling for help in emergency situations, particularly those related to drugs and alcohol. According to the Medical Amnesty Initiative, 19% of college students said they should've called for help for a friend, but only 4% made the call. (1)
2. **Who?** All Students! Every student may one day end up in a situation where this policy could pertain to them, no matter what you're getting into.
3. **What?** Medical Amnesty policies grant forgiveness to students who call for assistance for another student in an emergency situation involving drugs or alcohol. They increase the amount of students who get necessary help when in dangerous situations and are present at many major Ohio institutions.
4. **How?** There needs to be actual University Policy written to fortify and continue this policy among students. It also needs to be marketed so that students know that they shouldn't be afraid of the consequences if they call for help when needed. We will utilize and work with Aniesha Mitchell and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards, Student Safety Board, UCPD, SG Director of Health and Wellness.

B. Emergency UCPD Texting

1. **Why?** There can be situations where students feel uncomfortable and need to call UCPD for things such as an escort or a suspicious person report, but are unable to do so based on who's listening or around.
2. **Who?** All Students. Namely when they are traversing off campus or in situations where texting is more accessible than calling.
3. **What?** Emergency texting will provide a quick and convenient way for students to report problems to UCPD without putting themselves in danger in certain situations.
4. **How?** UCPD is undergoing major efforts to reach students where they're at. We'll work with them to set up a line that'll be quickly answered by dispatchers, just as the calls are currently. The initiative has been in progress at the University of Michigan and will be used as framework for ours.

C. Sexual Assault Resource Centralization

1. **Why?** There are many wonderful and helpful resources for survivors of sexual assault on campus, however, it can be confusing where to go with an issue. Different resources on campus have different services, ranging in confidentiality and levels of assistance.

2. **Who?** Survivors of sexual assault and gender-based violence, as well as their friends and advocates.
3. **What?** We hope to centralize resources to create clarity for survivors of sexual assault and gender-based violence. The issue is complex. Getting help should not be.
4. **How?** We plan to have dialogue with all of these offices (Title IX Office, Women's Center, UCPD, Women Helping Women, LGBTQ Center, SG Executive Director of Sexual Assault Prevention, SG Director of Women's Affairs) to create a clear map of where students can go based on what their needs are as survivors. Long-term, we hope to set this up to fall under its own office by continuously informing the University of the magnitude of this issue.

D. Student Emergency Fund

1. **Why?** College is expensive and you give a lot to be here. Isn't it time UC gave back a bit in your times of need? Other Universities build *esprit de corps* by setting up an emergency fund to aid students in disasters like medical emergencies, family deaths, and job loss.
2. **Who?** Students experiencing traumatic events or life-altering emergencies that have an effect on their health, family, and/or financial situations.
3. **What?** The Student Emergency Fund will start small as a gift from SG, as students nominate their fellow Bearcats the event of a personal disaster. A committee will decide need and grant funds based on that. We hope this can become a self-sustaining fund that is funded by donors and local businesses in years to come.
4. **How?** We'll create a committee that will read over confidential needs submitted by students that will be responsible for distribution of funds. It'll be small for the first year, but we hope to find funds to make it sustainable to support students in years to come using SALD and the UC Alumni Association. Ours will be formed from U of Louisville's plan that has been up and running for multiple academic years (2).

E. Sustainability Focus

1. **Why?** UC as a whole has a lot of room to grow in sustainability. We are living in a world with limited resources, and as an institution of learning, we must provide the example to our community and world of how to live sustainably.
2. **Who?** All students, specifically those living in residence halls.
3. **What?** Continue recycling plans for all residence halls and campus areas, as they currently don't exist in many places
4. **How?** We want to work with the city to ensure recycling pick-up from campus in more areas. Recycling began in some residence halls about 1 year ago, but many are still lacking (3). Not only that, most campus areas lack recycling bins. We'll push for bins to be readily available and emptied

to create a cleaner and more sustainable campus. We plan to partner and work with the SG Director of Sustainability, the Office of Sustainability, and the Residence Hall Association.

III. For the Academics

We are here to get an education above all else. We realize the Bearcat experience can be lacking at times in this area. We're here to ensure your school needs are met and you are able to succeed in the classroom and in the workplace without unnecessary barriers.

A. 21 Credit Hour Fee Forgiveness

1. **Why?** Sometimes an extra 3 credit hour allowance would go a long way! Certain situations and students could use an extra charge-free credit hours to graduate early and kick-start their careers as successful Bearcat alum.
2. **Who?** Students who must take over 18 credit hours due to different reasons including transferring, switching majors, adding majors/minors, graduate school courses, non-traditional student experiences, and more.
3. **What?** Allow students with a (proven) high GPA and special circumstances 3 extra credit hours without charge each semester they're eligible.
4. **How?** Work with the Provost's Office to create requirements that would allow for this to happen and ensure funding is sufficient to support the students who would use this. This has been proven to work at other Universities.

B. First Year Experience Development

1. **Why?** So many topics that are relevant to our world and careers go undiscussed. The first year is the ideal time to integrate values such as diversity and inclusion, suicide prevention, gender-based violence awareness, fiscal smarts, among other things. What better place to learn these than in the first year in learning communities?
2. **Who?** First year Bearcats in learning communities
3. **What?** Integrate these ideas into the FYE without creating a new class by utilizing the extra pockets of time in learning community classes.
4. **How?** We will propose the plan to FYE leaders and connect them to the appropriate offices.

C. Co-Op Fees

1. **Why?** We don't think student should have to spend an entire paycheck on their co-op fee each semester at just over \$400/semester, especially when the experience is required by the program.
2. **Who?** Students in required co-op programs with charges (CEAS, IT, DAAP)
3. **What?** Work to reduce the co-op fees or get students more "bang for their buck" when on co-op.
4. **How?** It's a problem that's always discussed, but rarely taken action on. We will work with the Career Development Center, ProPEL, SG Director of Career Services, all the college tribunals, as well as upper-level

administration to cut costs and figure out where each and every student dollar is going--and how it can be better used for the good of the co-op student. It's a unique problem to our campus, but we're sure there's more to be done about this.

IV. For the Student Interest

Part of the reason we decided on the #ForTheBearcats theme is that we recognize the individual identities that we all bring to campus. For the Student Interest focuses on the importance of these identities and how we can best highlight and serve their needs.

A. Prayer and Meditation Areas

1. **Why?** We are a large public University; the second largest in the state of Ohio. We as a University are vastly behind in our accommodations to students looking for a safe and open space to worship, meditate, and/or have a quiet peaceful location for spirituality. (4)
2. **Who?** Students looking for somewhere to pray and/or meditate. For students of all and no religions.
3. **What?** A new location for students that is prepared and purposed as a non-denominational prayer/meditation area
4. **How?** Similar to study room expansion in Campus Services section.

B. Co-Op and Job Placement for International Students

1. **Why?** Our University prides itself on the experiential learning we offer our students. However, the international student community has been neglected in terms of the opportunities available to them for co-op and internships.
2. **Who?** International students in required and non-required co-op programs
3. **What?** Make sure that career services understands that international students are being forgotten in this realm and put more resources and effort to finding them more opportunities.
4. **How?** We will ensure that we lobby the correct University offices for a heavier focus on jobs for international students. Long-term, it would be ideal for a position to be created to exclusively do this, but that requires a great deal of planning and funding within those offices. This is a great first-step in that ideal.

C. Halal and Kosher Dining Options

1. **Why?** A great way for the University to be inclusive of more of its diverse student community is to offer different programs and initiatives that would reach a different group of students than normal. A pilot program of offering different foods at dining halls is one of these programs. (5)
2. **Who?** Students who have dietary restrictions or practice different food preparations at home/in their cultures
3. **What?** This would start as a pilot program with only a few dates in the semester where Halal and Kosher options would be served and would begin at one of the dining halls.
4. **How?** Aramark already has these services in its repertoire, it just needs to be started and utilized here. This would be an initiative that uses very

similar campus resources as the meal plan swipe expansion by working with Food Services.

D. Gender Neutral Housing Expansion

1. **Why?** We currently (technically) accommodate any student who opts into the Gender Neutral Housing options. However, our University's options for these students is the *bare minimum*. To be a truly inclusive University, we need to expand and build up our Gender Neutral Housing options to lead the charge in inclusivity of all students, not just follow the pack and make changes when absolutely necessary.
2. **Who?** Students and incoming students seeking Gender Neutral housing.
3. **What?** Dedicate more housing to gender neutral spaces, move some outside of Stratford Heights
4. **How?** This is a problem that needs more money to fix it. The University has a LGBTQ center, but they need more staff and resources if they can truly accommodate a gender neutral housing program. It will be our job to find the money and lobby for it.

E. Support for Equity and Inclusion

1. **Why?** The student identity and the rights of those identities is always one of the most important portions of what a University should be supporting.
2. **Who?** All students, specifically the groups that students identify with
3. **What?** We want there to be a better relationship between Student Government and all of the identity groups. SG has a lot to offer, from money to marketing to staffing and assisting with events.
4. **How?** Student Government is going to see an increase in funds from a decrease in internal areas of the group. Essentially, SG is going to have more money to use and we want to be sure that we take advantage of that to help support ongoing external initiatives. Also, we think this is a great way for us to utilize the cabinet positions that are related to these student interest areas and groups so that there is more of an external connection between SG and the rest of the University outside of just the Senate.

V. For the City

In our efforts to drive the University onward and upward, we also want to be cognizant of the fact that we are *the* University of Cincinnati. To us, that means connecting UC with the city in which we live and the people who call it home in as many healthy, mutually beneficial ways as possible.

A. WhatToFix UC

1. **Why?** We believe this past year's "We the Bearcats" (6) petition program is a fantastic way to continue Student Government transparency and plan to continue it. We also recognize and believe that there may be more we can do to truly represent all student wants and needs, both the big and the small. WTF UC is a way for students to tell the university What to Fix.
2. **Who?** Any and all students who wish to submit complaints, recommendations, or questions about anything at the University.
3. **What?** A Google Form. It's as simple as that! It's just something that students can use to file their grievances about anything at the University, be it a broken water fountain in Langsam or a light that's out behind Siddall, among other things.
4. **How?** SG will monitor and respond to all submissions to the WTF UC form and respond within 72 hours to give the students the steps SG will take to help or connect that student to the correct campus resource for assistance. This has been done at Pitt and has been proven to be wildly successful! (7)

B. Metro Deal

1. **Why?** Students are encouraged to utilize our city's amazing professional environment via co-op and other experiential learning opportunities. Having the University help pay for that access to the city through the Metro would ensure our students are set up for success.
2. **Who?** Getting all students who need to use the metro for co-op, internships, volunteering, or any other University approved experiential learning program cheaper or free access to the metro and possibly expanding that to the street car in the spring semester.
3. **What?** UC already has a deal for its students to get a metro pass for a semester, but we think the University has more of a duty to its students and fostering our relations and utilization of the city of Cincinnati that the metro pass should be subsidized in some way by UC.
4. **How?** We are willing to have SG lead by example and partner with the University Office of Transportation to help pay for the program and its offerings.

C. Enhancing Cincinnati Public Schools Relations

1. **Why?** A major issue during our time here at the University arose in the aftermath of the Sam Dubose murder involving the status of racism and equality here at UC. The Irate 8 addressed these issues, one of their

demands that we feel is going to be really important to continue an emphasis on is the recruitment and retention of diversity (Demand IV). IN order to do this there must be an improvement on the educational system that has

2. **Who?** Students and those interested in the relationship with the city around us.
3. **What?** While UC can do everything in it's power to accomplish this goal or improved recruitment and retention in the city, there must be an effort to fix the systemic problem in our country's education system where students in lower income families (many of whom are minorities) do not get the same opportunities as others in their education. UC must invest and work on that in our own backyard with CPS.
4. **How?** We will promote the continuation of CPS support in meetings and decisions with administration as well as supporting the outreach and tutoring programs amongst students.

D. Basketball Bussing

1. **Why?** The Bearcat basketball team is having a wonderful season and looking to make a postseason run this March. We are huge Bearcats fans and are definitely looking forward to the Fifth Third Arena renovations coming this year. But with those renovations, our home basketball games are going to be played in NKU's BB&T Arena.
2. **Who?** Students! Especially those who love their Bearcats basketball.
3. **What?** With the Bearcats moving home games because of the renovations we want to insure as much of same game experience for students, and make sure that there isn't a drop off with spirit and pride in our team.
4. **How?** We will work to make share there is bussing and other resources to continue the support of the Bearcats next basketball season.

VI. For the Accountability

One of the most important aspects to Student Government's success is the proficiency and productiveness of how the internal organization runs to represent students as well as possible. In knowing that, we felt it important to validate the concerns many students have with SG by providing tangibles to better the inner workings of the organization. And because of this, we're For the Accountability.

A. Cabinet Initiative Focus

1. **Why?** Student Government has over 100 members and we fully intend to utilize every single one. Cabinet members provide an irreplaceable knowledge and task force to the body of SG and have been responsible for some of the most unique and long-standing initiatives in SG's history.
2. **Who?** SG, specifically cabinet members and applicants
3. **What?** Ensure the members of cabinet feel included and utilize their know-how they bring to the table to accomplish great things!
4. **How?** We want to establish suggestions and a running list of cabinet initiatives that have been accomplished in the past as reference for the incoming cabinet. This will not only assist in generating ideas, but also give an idea of what types of programming and initiatives are possible. We hope to continue the new (Phelps Duncan) structure of including directors in committees to ensure their voices are heard in the Senate room when necessary.

B. Spending Transparency

1. **Why?** To continue the current Student Government administration's efforts to be more fiscally transparent, we felt a definitive plan of how to do this was critical to our platform.
2. **Who?** All students, as all students pay the general fee
3. **What?** We will create fiscal transparency by posting every SG expenditure both on our website and outside of the SG office. We hope to have frequent conversations with students about the budget and its whereabouts throughout the year.
4. **How?** The treasurer and executive team will be responsible for these postings and keeping them current.

C. Back to Basics

1. **Why?** We feel it is the #1 and most basic duty of SG to represent students the best we can.
2. **Who?** Bashir, Dana, and all of SG. For all students.
3. **What?** We intend to set the tone for SG as a representative body, not necessarily a legislative body and ensure that tone is seen by students outside of SG.
4. **How?** We will do this by continuing the "We the Bearcats" petitioning system and supplementing it with the smaller, quicker "WhatToFix UC" system. In addition, we will both be holding regular office hours in various

centers and offices around campus to allow for direct student contact that we may not otherwise get, as started this year by the current administration. This, along with a general approachability, will ensure that we're going back to basics to best represent our fellow Bearcats.

Sources

- (1) <http://www.medicalamnesty.org>
- (2) <http://louisville.edu/dos/help/studentemergencyfund>
- (3) S.16-A-000 Recycling Pilot Program in Siddall Hall [SG Student Senate Bill]
- (4) <https://www.ifyc.org/sites/default/files/u4/Interfaith-Space.pdf>
- (5) <http://news.berkeley.edu/2016/08/29/berkeley-opens-ucs-first-kosherhalal-dining-station/>
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- (7) <http://sgb.pitt.edu/wfpitt/>