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## UA3/9/7 Leadership in Student Affairs

WKU President's Office - Ransdell

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## Leadership in Student Affairs

### Fellow Faculty and Staff:

After meeting with each of the senior officers in the division of Student Affairs, I am ready to announce the divisional leadership moving forward as Vice President Howard Bailey retires at the end of this month.

First, I want to compliment Howard for his leadership and service to WKU for the last 45 years. His is a remarkable professional story of commitment, dedication and loyalty during some of the most tumultuous periods of student life in American higher education. No one on our campus knows better than Howard Bailey the needs of our students and the challenges they face, and how those needs and challenges have evolved over the years—especially in recent years.

Howard has assembled and mentored a remarkable team of seasoned, well-educated, and WKU-centric department and unit heads. Brian Kuster, Lynn Holland, Peggy Crowe, Michael Crowe, Charley Pride, Stephen Rey, and Bob Deane are as good as it gets in leading the critical Student Affairs functions of Housing and Residence Life, Career Services, Counseling and Testing, Judicial Affairs, Student Activities, Intramural and Recreational Sports, and the WKU Police. Their skills, knowledge of national trends, commitment to federal compliance obligations, professional perspectives, strong ties and loyalties to this University, and passion for our WKU students became clear to me in the conduct of an internal search. I learned much as I met individually with each of them in recent weeks. My time with them has given me the confidence that a near term course of action is both proper and prudent. Several of them are capable and willing to lead our Student Affairs operations.

I have chosen Brian Kuster to serve as the Vice President for Student Affairs for the next two years. Brian has agreed to defer his anticipated retirement and serve in this leadership role until December 31, 2017. His new duties will begin on January 1, 2016.

Brian will also continue to serve as Executive Director of the Student Life Foundation (SLF) for the next two years. The next phase of housing and campus life improvements is critical to WKU's near-term future, and must be a priority in our Student Life program. Among his early orders of business are to fill the Director of Residence Life position which he is vacating, appoint a Dean of Students from the current Student Affairs leadership group, and pull this group together into a cohesive, interdependent and inspired group of professionals dedicated to serving the student life needs of our campus.

I have observed Brian Kuster's work throughout his term as Director of Residence Life and Executive Director of the SLF. I have been impressed with what he has achieved in the transformation of our residence life program. He has led the first phase of the physical transformation of our residence halls, the professionalization of our residence life staff, and he has brought relevancy and depth to our student life programming, including the successful M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan program for incoming students. Brian has outstanding financial and management skills. I have found him to be thoughtful, approachable and even-tempered. I have confidence in Brian Kuster to keep me and the campus informed, to keep our campus safe, to insure that our students' needs are met in their day-to-day activities and stresses, to ensure that they are engaged in the life our University, and that student life on our four campuses is central to the WKU learning process for our students.

Brian's résumé is attached. Please join me in welcoming Brian Kuster to his new duties as Vice President for Student Affairs.

Gary A. Ransdell  
*Attachment*



Dr. Gary A. Ransdell | President