THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The University Faculty Senate

AGENDA

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Via ZOOM at 1:00 p.m
Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://psu.zoom.us/j/93585910342
Or Telephone:
Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799
Webinar ID: 935 8591 0342
International numbers available: https://psu.zoom.us/u/adK6W5zrV1
Or iPhone one-tap:
US: +16468769923,,93585910342# or +13017158592,,93585910342#

In the event of severe weather conditions or other emergencies that would necessitate the cancellation of a Senate meeting, a communication will be posted on Penn State News at http://news.psu.edu/. You are encouraged to use the Senate Report Feedback Form to ask questions or make comments prior to the plenary session. Note that feedback is required two working days prior to the plenary session.

A. MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING

Minutes of the April 28, 2020

B. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE SENATE

Senate Curriculum Report of Appendix A
Editorial Changes Appendix B

C. REPORT OF SENATE COUNCIL - Meeting of June 23 and September 1, 2020

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

E. COMMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

F. COMMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST OF THE UNIVERSITY

G. FORENSIC BUSINESS

None
H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Senate Committee on Committees and Rules
Revision to Bylaws, Article IV, Committees, Section 1 Appendix Q

I. LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Senate Committee on Committees and Rules

Revisions to Standing Rules, Article II, Section 6m Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (Sustainability) Appendix C

Revisions to Standing Rules, Article III, - Other Functions of the Senate, Section 6: Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Appendix D

Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs

General Education Requirements for Associate Degree Programs, including Revisions to Senate Policy Appendix A.2 General Education (Associate Degree) Appendix E

Senate Committee on Education

Including Election Day Absences in Policy 42-27 – Class Attendance Appendix F

J. ADVISORY/CONSULTATIVE REPORTS

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs

Revisions to AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities” Appendix G

Senate Committee on University Planning

Climate Action Task Force Recommendation Appendix H

K. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Senate Council

Report from the More Rivers to Cross Task Force [20 minutes allocated for presentation and discussion] Appendix I

Report on Senate Officers Campus Visits Fall 2019 [5 minutes allocated for presentation and discussion] Appendix J

Report on Spring 2020 College Visits [5 minutes allocated for presentation and discussion] Appendix K

Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs

Interim Report: Curricular Policy and Process Reform [15 minutes allocated for presentation and discussion] Appendix L
Senate Committees on Education and Faculty Affairs

*First Day Complete - REPORT WITHDRAWN

Senate Committee on Faculty Benefits

Review of Principles for the Design of Penn State Health Care Plans
REPORT POSTPONED UNTIL OCTOBER 20, 2020 MEETING

Senate Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics

*Developing a Better Understanding of Challenges Presented By Widespread Legalized Sports Betting

Senate Committee on Libraries, Information Systems, and Technology

Office 365 Report
[10 minutes allocated for presentation and discussion]

*No presentation of reports marked with an asterisk.

L. NEW LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

None

M. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GOOD OF THE UNIVERSITY

The next meeting of the University Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 1:00 p.m.,

Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://psu.zoom.us/j/93585910342
COMMUNICATION TO THE SENATE

DATE: September 4, 2020

TO: Beth Seymour, Chair, University Faculty Senate

FROM: Mary Beth Williams, Chair, Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs

The Senate Curriculum Report dated September 1, 2020 has been circulated throughout the University. Objections to any of the items in the report must be submitted to Kadi Corter, Curriculum Coordinator, 101 Kern Graduate Building, 814-863-0996, kkw2@psu.edu, on or before September 29, 2020.

The Senate Curriculum Report is available on the web and may be found at: http://senate.psu.edu/curriculum/senate-curriculum-reports/
COMMUNICATION TO THE SENATE

DATE: September 15, 2020

TO: Beth Seymour, Chair, University Faculty Senate

FROM: Victor Brunsden, Chair, Senate Committee on Committees and Rules

Two editorial changes of a non-substantive nature were approved by Senate Council by a two-thirds vote at their June 23, 2020 meeting. The revisions are described below and will be placed on the Senate website for 5 days after the Senate meeting. Any Senator who feels that the changes require a more careful review must place their objection in writing to Senate Chair Beth Seymour ems22@psu.edu, on or before Monday, September 21, 2020.

1. Editorial change: The Committee on Institutional Cooperation needs to be changed to the current name Big Ten Academic Alliance.
2. Editorial change: The Office of Planning and Assessment needs to be changed to the current name Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research.

These two changes will be made wherever the old name occurs in our Senate Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules.
Introduction and Rationale

The global focus on developing sustainable human and physical systems -- systems that will work for the benefit of all people and the planet, and do so perpetually -- is among the most pressing concerns of our time. As one of the world’s premier research institutions in the arts, sciences, and the humanities, Penn State is poised to be a leader in creating, developing, and disseminating the innovative research and creative practices that will make a sustainable future possible.

Penn State's Sustainability Institute is focused on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that 192 countries have adopted as the blueprint to achieving a sustainable society. However, the Sustainability Institute cannot undertake this by itself. To fulfill the difficult but necessary task of minimizing or eliminating our negative environmental impact, as well as achieving economic and social sustainability in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, every unit across our diverse institution must take ownership of incorporating sustainability into their own operations and spheres of influence.

Research and creative activity across the Penn State system already addresses sustainability in myriad ways:

- A recent study by Penn State researchers in the College of Agriculture notes that "30% to 40% of the total food supply in the United States goes uneaten — and that means that resources used to produce the uneaten food, including land, energy, water and labor, are wasted as well." Using innovative methodologies, this study is the first to identify and analyze the level of food waste for individual households, a key piece of information in efforts to foster food security.

- Researchers at Penn State - Altoona recently focused on the Flight 93 Memorial site as a case study for trans-disciplinary research on reclamation and mitigation of pollution from legacy mining activities. That research illustrates how local, regional, and national stakeholders can come together to address complex, multi-faceted environmental and social challenges in the context of a common goal.

- The 2018 Plastic Entanglements exhibition at Penn State's Palmer Museum of Art brought together sixty works by thirty contemporary artists to explore the environmental, aesthetic, and technological impact of plastic. The exhibition highlighted the diverse, often-fraught relationship between this human-made substance and the material and cultural domains in which it has now become ubiquitous.

- Penn State researchers played a central role in a recent report by the National Center for Science Education, Mixed Messages: How Climate Change is Taught in America's
Schools drew on an unprecedented, nationally-representative survey of science educators to offer a detailed empirical assessment of how the science of climate change is being taught to elementary and secondary students.

The centrality of research and creative endeavor to Penn State's core mission places the Faculty Senate's Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Accomplishment (RSCA) in a unique position to encourage and facilitate the incorporation of sustainability across the university community, bring sustainability concerns to the attention of university administration, and recommend changes to increase the sustainability of the University.

**Recommendation**

Recommended changes to the Senate’s Standing Rules, Article II, section 6(m), are as follows:

Please note that the following contains **bold** text for additions and **strikeout** indicating deleted text. Deleted text is notated with [Delete] [End Delete]. Added text is notated with [Add] [End Add].

1. **Membership:**
   (i) At least ten elected faculty senators
   (ii) One graduate student senator
   (ii) One undergraduate student senator
   (iv) Six members of the Graduate Council Committee Graduate Research including the Committee Chair
   (v) Vice President for Research*
   (vi) Vice Provost for Graduate Education/Dean of the Graduate School or their designee*
   (vii) Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs or their designee**
   (viii) Director of Technology Management or their designee**
   (ix) Director of Research Protections or their designee**
   (x) Representative from Undergraduate Education responsible for undergraduate research**
   [Add](xi) **Chief Sustainability Officer or designee from the Sustainability Institute** [End Add]

2. **Selection:** By the Committee on Committees and Rules. Members from the Graduate Council Committee on Graduate Research will be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Council.

**Duties**

3. **Duties:** The Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity is charged with fostering and promoting the creation of new knowledge by faculty and students in all disciplines across the Penn State campuses, as well as with facilitating transdisciplinary and intercampus collaboration in this regard. It shall be the Senate advisory body to the Vice President for
Research and to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education/Dean of the Graduate School. In the realm of graduate research, scholarship, and creative activity, it works closely with the Graduate Council Committee on Research (whose chair and members serve on the Committee) to achieve common aims and shared objectives. Within the advisory and consultative functions of the Senate, it shall advise and consult on all matters involving research policies and services, as well as on issues relating to intellectual property and technology transfer. In conjunction with the Libraries, Information Systems, and Technology Committee, it shall ensure an active faculty role in the formulation of all research computing and information systems policies as they affect faculty and students. In collaboration with the University Planning Committee, it advises and consults on matters related to facilities, including sustainability and administration costs. It shall make recommendations to Senate Council on the establishment, reorganization, naming or discontinuation of organized research units and institutes. It will maintain a formal liaison with the University Research Council and its chair shall serve as a member of that body.


The Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity shall send its Informational Reports to the Senate Council.

5. Liaison with other Senate, Administrative, Special, or Joint Committees:

One member of the committee shall serve on the Penn State Press Editorial Committee. The chair shall serve on the University Research Council and act as the committee’s liaison to that body.

*nonvoting unless Article IV, Section 2 of the Bylaws applies

**nonvoting resource person for the committee

Revised Policy (Clean Copy)

1. Membership:
   (i) At least ten elected faculty senators
   (ii) One graduate student senator
   (iii) One undergraduate student senator
   (iv) Six members of the Graduate Council Committee Graduate Research including the Committee Chair
   (v) Vice President for Research*
   (vi) Vice Provost for Graduate Education/Dean of the Graduate School or their designee*
   (vii) Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs or their designee**
   (viii) Director of Technology Management or their designee**
   (ix) Director of Research Protections or their designee**
(x) Representative from Undergraduate Education responsible for undergraduate research**

(xi) Chief Sustainability Officer or designee from the Sustainability Institute**

2. Selection: By the Committee on Committees and Rules. Members from the Graduate Council Committee on Graduate Research will be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Council.

Duties

3. Duties: The Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity is charged with fostering and promoting the creation of new knowledge by faculty and students in all disciplines across the Penn State campuses, as well as with facilitating transdisciplinary and intercampus collaboration in this regard. It shall be the Senate advisory body to the Vice President for Research and to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education/Dean of the Graduate School. In the realm of graduate research, scholarship, and creative activity, it works closely with the Graduate Council Committee on Research (whose chair and members serve on the Committee) to achieve common aims and shared objectives. Within the advisory and consultative functions of the Senate, it shall advise and consult on all matters involving research policies and services, as well as on issues relating to intellectual property and technology transfer. In conjunction with the Libraries, Information Systems, and Technology Committee, it shall ensure an active faculty role in the formulation of all research computing and information systems policies as they affect faculty and students. In collaboration with the University Planning Committee, it advises and consults on matters related to facilities, including sustainability and administration costs. It shall make recommendations to Senate Council on the establishment, reorganization, naming or discontinuation of organized research units and institutes. It will maintain a formal liaison with the University Research Council and its chair shall serve as a member of that body.

4. Mandated reports:

a. Biennial Summary of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity on Sustainability

The Committee on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity shall send its Informational Reports to the Senate Council.

5. Liaison with other Senate, Administrative, Special, or Joint Committees:

One member of the committee shall serve on the Penn State Press Editorial Committee. The chair shall serve on the University Research Council and act as the committee’s liaison to that body.

*nonvoting unless Article IV, Section 2 of the Bylaws applies

**nonvoting resource person for the committee

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES

- Johnathan Abel
- Michael Berube
- Renee Borromeo
- Victor Brunsden, Chair
• Beth King
• Jeffrey Laman
• Binh Le
• Judith Ozment
• Nicholas Rowland
• Elizabeth Seymour
• Keith Shapiro
• Ann Taylor, Vice Chair
• Rodney Troester
• Kent Vrana
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES

Revisions to Senate Standing Rules; Article III – Other Functions of the Senate, Section 6:
Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

(Legislative)

Implementation: Upon approval by the Senate (and development of procedures when applicable)

Introduction and Rationale

The current versions of both the Senate Standing Rules; Article III Section 6 and AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities” (formerly HR-76) exclude tenure exempt faculty from membership on the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities. The policy change was changed in 2004 to include only tenured faculty members. In the last several years, the University has made great strides in equity for non-tenure line faculty and including faculty representation on Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities is a natural progression and better helps the committee to reflect the makeup of the faculty at the University.

These changes will require the addition of 2 non-tenure line faculty and 1 Dean/Chancellor to the committee to maintain the appropriate ratio of faculty members to Academic Leadership council members. There is justification for an increase in committee size as the number of cases reviewed each year by the committee has steadily increased.

In addition, to help promote shared governance, the Committee on Committees and Rules proposes that language be added to the Standing Rules and to AC 76 so that the language outlining the membership of FR&R reference the other document with a requirement that the two documents be kept synchronized.

Recommendation

Recommendation 1: That Article III, Section 6 (a) of the Senate Standing Rules be and is hereby amended as follows:

Please note that the following contains strikethroughs for deletions and bold text for additions. Additionally, deleted text is delimited with [Delete] [End Delete], while added text is delimited with [Add] [End Add].

[Delete](a) Membership: Nine members elected by the Senate six tenured faculty members and three members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority (through the college level) for promotion and tenure. Two of the faculty members shall be from academic voting units other than those at University Park. Alternates: Six tenured faculty members and three members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority (through the college level) for promotion and tenure will be elected as alternates. Two of the faculty member alternates shall be from academic voting units other than those at University Park. The chair will be chosen by the committee from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair. [End Delete]

[Add](a) Membership and Alternates: Twelve members elected by the Senate – eight faculty members and four members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority
(through the college level) for promotion and tenure. For both the group of faculty members and the group of alternate faculty members, each group shall consist of

- a minimum of three employed on non-tenure line contracts
- a minimum of three of the employed on tenure-line contracts
- a minimum of three will be from academic voting units at University Park
- a minimum of three faculty will be from academic voting units other than University Park of which at least one will be employed on a non-tenure-line contract and at least two will be employed on tenure-line contracts.

All members and alternates will have either earned or been hired in with at least one level of promotion. The committee chair will be chosen by the committee members from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair. The membership criteria outlined above and the membership criteria given for the committee in AC76 will be kept in agreement. [End Add]

Revised Policy/Policies

(a) Membership and Alternates: Twelve members elected by the Senate – eight faculty members and four members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority (through the college level) for promotion and tenure. For both the group of faculty members and the group of alternate faculty members, each group shall consist of

- a minimum of three employed on non-tenure line contracts
- a minimum of three of the employed on tenure-line contracts
- a minimum of three will be from academic voting units at University Park
- a minimum of three faculty will be from academic voting units other than University Park of which at least one will be employed on a non-tenure-line contract and at least two will be employed on tenure-line contracts.

All members and alternates will have either earned or been hired in with at least one level of promotion. The committee chair will be chosen by the committee members from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair. The membership criteria outlined above and the membership criteria given for the committee in AC76 will be kept in agreement.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES

- Johnathan Abel
- Michael Berube
- Renee Borromeo
- Victor Brunsden, Chair
- Beth King
- Jeffrey Laman
- Binh Le
• Judith Ozment
• Nicholas Rowland
• Elizabeth Seymour
• Keith Shapiro
• Anne Taylor, Vice Chair
• Rodney Troester
• Kent Vrana
SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

General Education Requirements for Associate Degree Programs, including Revisions to Senate Policy Appendix A.2 General Education (Associate Degree) (Legislative)

Implementation: Upon approval by the Senate

Introduction and Rationale

In 2015, the University Faculty Senate approved a legislative report put forward by the General Education Taskforce on the Revision to the General Education Curriculum. This report included 6 recommendations. Recommendation 6, part (e) specifically addressed how Integrative Studies courses could be used for Associate Degree students.

Recommendation 6: …… (e) allow an Integrative Studies course to satisfy the flexible 3 credits of exploration within the Associate Degree General Education curriculum.

Integrative Studies was a new and innovative change introduced in the General Education update. Since that time, the primary implementation strategy has been the creation, development, and delivery of Inter-domain courses across the University. Of these 21 unique associate degree programs, nineteen prescribe specific, limited ways for fulfilling the single General Education requirement that students might be able to complete with an inter-domain course.

The result is that nearly all Associate Degree students cannot engage in the integrative studies innovation in our General Education program. Additionally, this has complicated implementation and course offering options for smaller campuses where a limited number of General Education courses can be offered, which further restricts Associate Degree students’ course selections. Unfortunately, this can encourage Associates Degree students to enroll in General Education courses outside of Penn State.

A second recommendation included in this report addresses a historical limitation that does not allow Health and Wellness (GHW, formerly GHA) courses to satisfy the extra three credit of Knowledge Domain requirement for Associate Degree students. The committee recommends removing this restriction to bring Health and Wellness into alignment with the other areas of our General Education program.

Recommendations

We recommend updating the General Education curriculum for Associate Degree students as follows:

- Allowing up to six credits of Inter-domain courses to satisfy any of the Knowledge Domain requirements.
- Allow GHW courses for the extra three credits of Knowledge Domains. It must be acknowledged that this change will minimally impact students, for the very reason limiting Inter-domain courses to this requirement was problematic. As stated above, this
requirement is prescribed by the vast major of associate degree programs, but it removes an inconsistency that does not align with Health and Wellness as a Knowledge Domain within General Education.

BULLETIN ENTRIES

Revised Policy/Policies

(BOLD is new or revised text, strikeout indicates deleted text.)

The associate degree General Education program consists of 21 credits that are distributed among two General Education components:

Foundations courses in writing, speaking, and quantification (6 credits)

Knowledge Domains in the Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences (15 credits).

A restriction (commonly referred to as the General Education Firewall) is placed on students in majors that are closely linked to the Knowledge Domains areas of Natural Sciences, Arts, Humanities, and Social and Behavioral Sciences, in order to ensure that they participate in the full breadth of General Education. These students may not use a course in their academic major to satisfy one of the Knowledge Domains area requirements. For example, an ECON major may not use an ECON course to fulfill their social and behavioral sciences requirement.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

FOUNDATIONS

Total 6 credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing/Speaking (GWS) *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantification (GQ) *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Requires a grade of C or better

KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS

Total 15 credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences (GN)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (GA)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities (GH)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any additional</strong> General Education course selected from: GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, or GS, and may include Integrative Studies (Inter-domain or Linked) courses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.

**FLEXIBILITY OF THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover things they did not know before, and to learn to do things they have not done before.

To these ends, students may, with the permission of their adviser and dean's representative, substitute a 200- to 499-level course for an Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, or Social and Behavioral Sciences course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower level history course.
Policy Update in Senate Policies for Undergraduates

(BOLD is new or revised text, strikeout indicates deleted text.)

Appendix A.2 General Education (Associate Degree)

Policies and Rules for Undergraduate Students

The University Faculty Senate, at its meeting in April 2015, adopted a comprehensive revision of General Education Learning Objectives and requirements. This revision was further detailed in the General Education report adopted by the Senate in March 2016.

The General Education curriculum will enable students to acquire skills, knowledge, and experiences for living in interconnected contexts, so they can contribute to making life better for others, themselves, and the world. General Education encompasses the breadth of knowledge involving the major intellectual and aesthetic skills and achievements of humanity. This must include understanding and appreciation of the pluralistic nature of knowledge epitomized by the natural sciences, quantitative skills, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and arts. To achieve and share such an understanding and appreciation, skills in self-expression, quantitative analysis, information literacy, and collaborative interaction are necessary. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. General Education, in essence, aims to cultivate a knowledgeable, informed, literate human being.

An effective General Education curriculum shall facilitate teaching and learning through seven key objectives:

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION – The ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.

KEY LITERACIES – The ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING – The habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.
INTEGRATIVE THINKING – The ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.

CREATIVE THINKING – The capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.

GLOBAL LEARNING – The intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people’s lives.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING – The ability to assess one’s own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.

Courses taken to meet General Education program requirements may not be taken under the Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory option.

The General Education program for Penn State associate degree students consists of 21 credits distributed among communication and quantification skills (6 credits), the Knowledge Domain areas (15 credits), including courses in the natural sciences (3 credits), arts (3 credits), humanities (3 credits), and social and behavioral sciences (3 credits), and an additional 3 credits in any General Education area (including Health and Wellness (GHW) Integrative Studies).

Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.

Students whose academic majors are in the areas of natural sciences, arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences may not meet the General Education Knowledge Domains components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. All General Education courses are to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors.

Courses to be Used for General Education

Skills (6 credits)
Writing/Speaking (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Writing/Speaking (GWS) attribute satisfy this requirement.

Quantification (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Quantification (GQ) attribute satisfy this requirement (3 credits are selected from mathematics, applied mathematics, statistics, computer science, or symbolic logic).

Knowledge Domains (15 credits)

Natural Sciences (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Natural Sciences (GN) attribute satisfy this requirement.

Arts (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Arts (GA) attribute satisfy this requirement.

Humanities (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Humanities (GH) attribute satisfy this requirement.

Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 credits)
Courses designated with the Gen Ed: Social & Beh Sci (GS) attribute satisfy this requirement.

In addition to the above Knowledge Domains course requirements, associate degree students must complete 3 credits in any General Education area. **Inter-domain courses (N) may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.**

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover things they did not know before, and to learn to do things they have not done before.

To these ends, students may, with the permission of their adviser and dean’s representative, substitute a 200- to 499-level course for an Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, or Social and Behavioral Sciences course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower level history course.

**NOTE:** When a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits in the course can be counted only once.

General Education courses are identified in the [University Course Descriptions](#) and [General Education](#) sections of the [Undergraduate Degree Programs Bulletin](#). They can also be found in the [Schedule of Courses](#) by the appropriate course designation.
SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

- Jeff Adams
- Emmanuel Almonte
- Michael Bartolacci, co-Vice Chair
- Anne Behler
- Justine Blanford
- Laurie Breakey
- David Callejo
- Lisa Chewning
- Wendy Coduti
- Melisa Czymoniewicz-Klippel
- Peter Forster
- Paula Hamaty
- David Han
- Harold Hayford, co-Vice Chair
- Lawrence Kass
- Kenneth Keiler
- William Kenyon
- Suzanna Linn
- Timothy McNellis
- Robert Melton
- Janet Schulenberg
- Andrea Sillner
- Cynthia Simmons
- Margaret Slattery
- Karin Sprow Forté
- Evelyn Thomchick
- Alfred Warner
- Mary Beth Williams, Chair
- Jeffrey Wong
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
CORRECTED COPY
(Shaded areas in [square brackets] reflect editorial revisions made after the Senate meeting.)
Including Election Day Absences in Policy 42-27 Class Attendance
(Legislative)

Implementation: Upon approval by the Senate (and development of procedures when applicable)

Introduction and Rationale
Exercising the right to vote is a cornerstone of full participation in a democracy. Exercising that right allows students to have a say in the policies and issues that affect their lives at the local, state, and national levels, and gives students an opportunity to put the knowledge and skills developed in the classroom to bear in a practical way to impact their communities. We should make every reasonable effort to eliminate obstacles to exercising that right.

Students registered to vote at the location of their Penn State campus may face long lines at campus polling stations, requiring wait times of more than an hour. These wait times may be unpredictable, making it difficult to plan for a time of day when class and work schedules will not be impacted. Further, students whose polling station is off campus may face similar wait times as well as the additional time needed to travel to the polling place. Class and work schedules may not allow for concentrated blocks of time to accommodate travel to and from polling areas and extensive wait times.

Policy 42-27 allows faculty to make reasonable accommodations for students to make up work when students are absent from class for a variety of university sanctioned conflicts, including illness, family emergency, co-curricular/athletic event participation, and graduate school visits. We are proposing an addition to this policy to encourage the same reasonable accommodations be extended to students who are exercising their right to vote. This change does not substantively alter the policy, but makes explicit that voting should be considered a university sanctioned activity, on par with athletic completion and graduate school visitation.

Recommendation
The Committee on Education recommends amending Policy 42-27 on Class Attendance to explicitly include election day absences as a university excused absence and to encourage faculty to make reasonable accommodations when possible for students who miss class because they are exercising their right to vote.

Revised Policy
Please note that the following contains bold text for additions. Added text is notated with [Add] [End Add].
42-27 Class Attendance

Regular class attendance is one of the most important ways that students learn and understand course materials. It is a critical element of student success. Accordingly, it is the policy of the University that class attendance is expected and that students should follow the attendance policy of the instructor, as outlined in the syllabus. A student should attend every scheduled class and should be held responsible for all work covered in the courses taken.

Class attendance is expected regardless of the format of the course and this expectation applies equally to students in face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses. Attendance in online courses goes beyond course login and is based on documentable participation in class activities, such as interacting with the instructor, interacting with enrolled students, completing assignments with specific due dates, and/or participate in online discussions on a regular basis. It is the student’s responsibility to complete work early, or make alternate arrangements with the course instructor, if due dates or required work will be missed because of a University-approved absence as described in this policy.

Instructors should provide, within reason, the opportunity to make up work for students who miss class for regularly scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities (such as Martin Luther King Day of Service, field trips, debate trips, choir trips, and athletic contests). In addition, instructors should provide, within reason, the opportunity to make up work for students who miss class for post-graduate, career-related interviews when there is no opportunity for students to re-schedule these opportunities (such as employment and graduate school final interviews.) In both cases, students should inform instructors in advance and discuss the implications of any absence. Missing class, even for a legitimate purpose, may mean that there is work that cannot be made up, hurting the student’s grade in the class. Likewise, students should be prepared to provide documentation for participation in University-approved activities, as well as for career-related interviews, when requested by the instructor.

Instructors also should provide, within reason, the opportunity to make up work for students who miss classes on an election day due to participation in local, state, and federal governmental elections. Students should make every reasonable effort to inform the instructor prior to the election day of their anticipated absence in advance and make appropriate arrangements to make.

Instructors also should provide, within reason, the opportunity to make up work for students who miss classes for other legitimate but unavoidable reasons. Legitimate, unavoidable reasons are those such as illness, injury, military service, family emergency, or religious observance. Again, it should be recognized that not all work can be “made-up” and that absences can affect student performance in a class.

Due to the potential for academic or financial hardship for military members, for those students providing verified orders, a denial of accommodation may be appealed to the Director of Academic Affairs of the campus or the appropriate associate dean of the college (or DUS) in which the student is enrolled. When the student is unable to make arrangements with instructors for unexpected orders requiring a short term absence, or upon denial of an appeal, the Director of Academic Affairs or Associate Dean will notify the
Registrar’s Office of the administrative cancellation of the course(s) and 100% of the tuition for the course(s) will be refunded to the student. For orders requiring absences lasting longer than two weeks, students may pursue a military withdrawal directly through the Registrar’s Office.

Instructors can determine when irregular attendance negatively affects a student’s scholastic achievement, and thus grade, in the course, even to the point of failure. If class absence constitutes a danger to the student’s scholastic attainment, the instructor should make this fact known to the student. The student may appeal this decision to the head of the department in which the course is offered.

If an evaluative event will be missed due to an unavoidable absence, the student should contact the instructor as soon as the unavoidable absence is known to discuss ways to make up the work. An instructor might not consider an unavoidable absence legitimate if the student does not contact the instructor before the evaluative event. Students will be held responsible for using only legitimate, unavoidable reasons for requesting a make-up in the event of a missed class or evaluative event. (Conflicts with non-final examinations are covered the Policy 44-35.) Requests for missing class or an evaluative event due to reasons that are based on false claims may be considered violations of the policy on Academic Integrity (Policy 49-20).

Revised: 11/3/60
Revised: 5/7/74 (as K Rules)
Revised: 6/6/78
Revised: 12/5/00
Revised: 3/26/02
Revised: 4/28/15 – Effective Fall 2016 – Archive
Revised: 12/5/17
Revised: 4/28/20

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION (2019-2020)

- Vinita Acharya
- Kelly Austin
- Barbara Barr
- Gretchen Casper
- Delia Conti
- Renata Engle
- Joyce Furfaro, Vice-Chair
- Yvonne Gaudelius
- Vicki Hewitt
- Peggy Johnson
- Peter Linehan
- Megan Marshall
- Katherine Masters
- Jacob Moore
- B. Richard Page
• Kathleen Phillips
• Karen Pollack
• Brianne Pragg
• Jay Precht
• Michele Rice
• Kaitlyn Roberts
• Diego Santos
• Wen Shen
• David Smith
• Michele Stine, Chair
• Samia Suliman
• Stephen Van Hook
• Tiffany Whitcomb
• Chelsea Wood
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS

Revision to AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities”

(Advisory/Consultative)

Implementation: Upon Approval by the President

Rationale

The current version of AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities” (formerly HR-76) excludes non-tenure line faculty from membership on the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities. The policy change was changed in 2004 to include only tenured faculty members. In the last several years, the University has made great strides in equity for non-tenure line faculty and including faculty representation on Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities is a natural progression.

These changes will require the addition of 2 non-tenure line faculty and 1 Dean/Chancellor to the committee to maintain the appropriate ratio of faculty members to Academic Leadership council members. There is justification for an increase in committee size as the number of cases reviewed each year by the committee has steadily increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Case Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation

The committee recommends that AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities” be modified in the following way:

Please note that additions appear in **bold** and deletions are struck through.

AC76 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (Formerly HR76)

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Establishment of the Committee

[Delete] The Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities will have nine members elected by the Senate: six faculty members and three members of the Academic Leadership Council. Two of the faculty members shall be from academic voting units other than those at University Park. The Chair will be chosen by the committee from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair.
Six faculty members and three deans will be elected as alternates for three-year terms. Two of the faculty members shall be from academic voting units other than those at University Park.

The term of office for members and alternates will be three years commencing on July 1. The terms will be staggered to provide for continuity.

The Senate Committee on Committees and Rules will present a list of nominees to fill vacancies and expiring terms on the Committee at the next to last meeting of the Senate each academic year. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Election of Committee members and alternates will be by secret ballot. No member of this Committee may serve concurrently on the Standing Joint Committee on Tenure and/or the University Promotion and Tenure Review Committee. [End delete]

[Add] Membership and Alternates: Twelve members elected by the Senate – eight faculty members and four members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority (through the college level) for promotion and tenure. For both the group of faculty members and the group of alternate faculty members, each group shall consist of:

· a minimum of three employed on non-tenure line contracts

· a minimum of three of the employed on tenure-line contracts

· a minimum of three will be from academic voting units at University Park

· a minimum of three faculty will be from academic voting units other than University Park of which at least one will be employed on a non-tenure-line contract and at least two will be employed on tenure-line contracts.

All members and alternates will have either earned or been hired in with at least one level of promotion. The committee chair will be chosen by the committee members from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair. The membership criteria outlined above and the membership criteria given for the committee in AC76 will be kept in agreement.[End Add]

The term of office for members and alternates will be three years commencing on July 1. The terms will be staggered to provide for continuity.

The Senate Committee on Committees and Rules will present a list of nominees to fill vacancies and expiring terms on the Committee at the next to last meeting of the Senate each academic year. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Election of Committee members and alternates will be by secret ballot. No member of this Committee may serve concurrently on the Standing Joint Committee on Tenure and/or the University Promotion and Tenure Review Committee. (committee for promotion)
Clean Copy:

AC76 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities (Formerly HR76)

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Establishment of the Committee

Membership and Alternates: Twelve members elected by the Senate – eight faculty members and four members of the Academic Leadership Council who have signatory authority (through the college level) for promotion and tenure. For both the group of faculty members and the group of alternate faculty members, each group shall consist of

- a minimum of three employed on non-tenure line contracts
- a minimum of three of the employed on tenure-line contracts
- a minimum of three will be from academic voting units at University Park
- a minimum of three faculty will be from academic voting units other than University Park of which at least one will be employed on a non-tenure-line contract and at least two will be employed on tenure-line contracts.

All members and alternates will have either earned or been hired in with at least one level of promotion. The committee chair will be chosen by the committee members from the elected faculty members and will serve a one-year term as chair. The membership criteria outlined above and the membership criteria given for the committee in AC76 will be kept in agreement.

The term of office for members and alternates will be three years commencing on July 1. The terms will be staggered to provide for continuity.

The Senate Committee on Committees and Rules will present a list of nominees to fill vacancies and expiring terms on the Committee at the next to last meeting of the Senate each academic year. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Election of Committee members and alternates will be by secret ballot. No member of this Committee may serve concurrently on the Standing Joint Committee on Tenure and/or the University Promotion and Tenure Review Committee. (committee for promotion)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS (2019-2020)

- Kathleen Bieschke
- Renée Bishop Pierce, Chair
- Richard Brazier
- Julia Bryan
- William Butler
• Gary Calore
• Alison Chetlen
• Ed Evans
• Beth Farmer
• David Fusco
• Julie Gallagher
• Leland Glenna
• Terrence Guay
• Kathryn Jablokow
• Rosemary Jolly
• Matthew Jordan
• Lisa Kitko
• Angela Linse
• Jonathan Mathews
• Rajen Mookerjee
• John Nousek
• Eric Novotny
• Laura Pauley
• Rosemarie Petrilla, Vice Chair
• Nicholas Pyeatt
• Richard Robinett
• Sue Rutherford Siegel
• Amit Sharma
• Stephen Snyder
• Emily Strohacker
• Bonj Szczygiel
Introduction and Rationale

On April 28, 2020, the University Faculty Senate endorsed a resolution on climate action. This recommendation is made to encourage the implementation, in coordination with University administrative leadership, of items identified for action in the resolution.

Recommendation

In coordination with the Senate, University administrative leadership should form a task force on climate action, consisting of staff and faculty who have expertise in sustainability and mitigating operational production of carbon emissions, as well as staff tasked with overseeing the operational and capital improvements of Penn State, and at least one member of the University Faculty Senate’s Committee on University Planning. This task force should be charged with exploring a range of approaches to reduce Penn State’s carbon emissions to reach, at minimum, the goals set forth in the University Faculty Senate Climate Resolution. The expectation is that the task force will present a specific plan for achieving these goals to University administrative leadership within a year, if possible, and with follow-up reports as appropriate. The plan should include a cost and impact analysis and approaches for broadly engaging students, employees, and, where appropriate, the broader Penn State community.
• Alok Sinha
• William Sitzabee
• Charles Specht
• Gary Thomas
• Mary Vollero
• Alex Wu
• Robert Zambanini
SENATE COUNCIL

Report from the More Rivers to Cross Response Task Force.

(Informational)

Rationale

The *More Rivers to Cross: Part 1 (University Park)* (MRTC1) report was disseminated by its authors, Drs. Gary King and Darryl Thomas, on January 20, 2020, the observed holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On that day, Dr. Nicholas Rowland, chair of the University Faculty Senate, received and reviewed the report, sharing and noting its magnitude and importance with other Senate officers. Chair Rowland and the Senate officers viewed this report as a comprehensive and thoroughly summarized statement of concern and need by a community of faculty members, thus warranting the immediate attention of the Senate. On January 21, Chair Rowland received an inquiry regarding the Senate’s planned response to the MRTC1 report from Dr. Joshua Kirby, Senate Councilor representing the College of Education. Councilor Kirby noted the critical importance of addressing the challenges identified in the report for the sake of Black and underrepresented faculty members in his home unit.

Chair Rowland identified that an initial step for responding to the report was to engage a select number of key committees of the Senate to form a small task force to thoroughly read, discuss, process, and create connections related to the MRTC1 report. Councilor Kirby was appointed as chair of the task force, and members of the task force were solicited from the chairs of the Senate Committees on Educational Equity and Campus Environment, Education, Intra-University Relations, Faculty Affairs, and Student Life.

The task force was created with seven members, and, subsequently, charged with providing a focused and timely first response to the MRTC1 report on behalf of the Senate. The task force was intentionally small, and the aim for its composition was collaboration among representative perspectives of the Senate committees. The task force was charged to work on behalf of the Senate as a whole with a thorough first read and summarization for the Senate Record, giving due diligence to the data and challenges presented, learning from the report authors, initiating a continuing dialogue with the authors and the members of the Black faculty community, and providing recommendations for the Senate’s engagement in addressing the challenges faced by Black and other underrepresented faculty members across the University system.

The task force maintained regular contact with Chair Rowland throughout its assignment. Chair-Elect Elizabeth Seymour, a primary stakeholder audience for the report, was also briefed at intervals. In March 2020, the University community’s response to COVID-19 challenges ultimately altered the task force’s timeline in consultation with Senate leadership. Despite the abrupt transition to schedules and operations, the COVID-19 pandemic has not diminished the necessity of a full and informed response to the MRTC1 Report by the Senate or the University more fully. In fact, the pandemic has shown the entire university community and beyond that the university is indeed capable of quickly implementing significant changes when properly
motivated. The task force composing this report believe that change is within our reach on matters relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion across the entire faculty, and spanning the university community. We ask the university to devote similar investments in time and attention to these matters and demonstrate a similar willingness to change when it comes to systemic pervasive social issues. While the Senate should always monitor faculty representation of all people of color and other non-dominant qualities, the data presented in MRTC1 clearly illustrate that African American faculty members are severely and historically underrepresented across our university and thus necessitate particular attention.

The remainder of this report is intended to provide the University Faculty Senators with a framework for moving forward with concrete action. It includes a summary of the key findings of the MRTC1 report as well as responses to it from within the University and externally. Moreover, it places the current initial responses in a larger historical context regarding the University’s responses to numerous prior reports that have documented racism within Penn State. Finally, this document offers a series of recommendations which the task force stresses are only the first steps of a more substantial and comprehensive university response.

**Task Force Vision**

Penn State University explicitly states that it “is committed to and accountable for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all its forms.” (See Penn State Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion [http://equity.psu.edu/diversity-statement].) It has been established in University Policy AD-91 Discrimination and Harassment and Related Inappropriate Conduct [https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ad91] that “Discriminatory conduct … violates the dignity of individuals and impedes the realization of the University’s educational mission, and will not be tolerated” (emphasis added). But in fact, we are far from achieving equity; violations have happened and continue to happen, and discriminatory conduct has been and still is tolerated. It has been abetted by the failures of individuals across the University—administrators, faculty members, and staff alike—and by the structure of the University itself. There can be no other conclusion to draw from the reading of the More Rivers To Cross: Part 1 (University Park) report. For over forty years, African American faculty members, staff, and students have raised concerns, documented injustices, and articulated frustrations about the lack of racial diversity and the persistence of explicit and subtle racism within the University’s walls. The relentlessly low numbers of faculty members, staff, and students of color tell an important part of the story, but they do not tell it all. When one turns to the narratives of personal experiences, from the myriad subtle indignities, to the explicit racist words and actions that our community members of color experience, the professional as well as the basic human costs of racism begin to become clear. Damage has been done to members of the Penn State community, and it continues to be done We need more than another study. We need more than another committee to assess the problems. Reports issued by Black faculty members from 1981, 1999, 2000, 2013 and now 2020 are more than enough to ascertain the breadth and depth of the problems. It is now incumbent on each of us individually and all of us together as the University Faculty Senate, to act so that More Rivers to Cross becomes the last report needed to document racism and inequality at Penn State.
Executive Summary of MRTC1 Report

The More Rivers to Cross: Part 1 (University Park) report was written to (1) document the lack of racial diversity among Penn State’s faculty members, and (2) describe the racism and discrimination experienced in the past and present by African American faculty members. Issued January 20, 2020, the MRTC1 report focuses on the University Park campus, and is the first part of an intended two-part report. Part 2 of the report will focus on the experiences and challenges faced by African American faculty members at the University’s Commonwealth Campuses. In MRTC1, the authors provide details about the current situation as well as the history of racism and discrimination at the University Park campus.

While not an exhaustive historical accounting, the MRTC1 report documents pivotal moments as well as sustained efforts by African American faculty members and students to expose systemic as well as individual racism and discrimination at Penn State dating back to at least the 1960s. The report highlights important student actions and faculty efforts over the decades. One example described in the report was the student protests in 2001 which included a 10-day occupation of the student union building, the HUB-Robeson Center, at University Park. In response to those actions and the media attention they garnered, the University administration created A Plan to Enhance Diversity at Penn State. A second notable example occurred in 2013, when Penn State’s Forum on Black Affairs (FOBA) published a report titled 2013 Status of Black Faculty and Staff at the Pennsylvania State University (https://www.fobapsu.org/our-history). This report was an extension of previous reports written in 1981, 1999, and 2000 on “the status of Black People at Penn State.” In the 2013 FOBA report, faculty and staff delineated four challenges for the University to address in order to improve the climate for African American faculty:

1. Overcoming stagnation in increasing Black faculty at Penn State,
2. Increasing representation in senior leadership,
3. Ensuring transparency in reporting data, and
4. Changing African American faculty members’ experiences of bias and isolation on campus.

The report proposed several recommendations for the University to address these challenges; however, evidence of the University’s response to the 2013 recommendations is not documented in journalistic, scholarly, or legislative materials available to the current Senate task force.

The MRTC1 report also references two other recent examples. It discusses the University’s recent “All In” initiative, stating that in spite of this attempt at improving race relations at Penn State, there is much work to be done. A live forum in April 2019, An Afternoon with African American Faculty at Penn State: More Rivers to Cross, also contributed to the need for producing the MRTC1 report. The live forum featured a presentation focused on the difficulties encountered by African American faculty members at the University Park Campus. Overall, MRTC1 is borne of nearly 60 years of history of racism and discrimination specific to our University community.

The MRTC1 includes a comprehensive discussion of the nationwide problem of underrepresentation of African American faculty in universities. Drawing on a wealth of
empirical research, Dr. King and Dr. Thomas discuss various reasons why African American faculty members are underrepresented. For example, there are relatively few African American students in the U.S. getting PhDs, and those who are may not be as likely to receive their degrees from elite universities and working with prominent mentors. Without looking further into applicants’ qualifications as candidates, African American candidates may be overlooked in hiring. Many faculty search committees at predominantly white universities are not well-trained to recruit racially diverse faculty members. Ironically, often the very few African American faculty members or other faculty members of color are asked to serve on multiple search committees because of the expectation that they will be better able to find other faculty members of color to hire. Although this responsibility should be everyone’s, the existing burden of African American faculty recruitment on the African American faculty members themselves adds service burdens and potentially slows their progress toward tenure or promotion.

Additionally, the MRTC1 report presents findings from national research studies that describe the challenges that African American faculty members face on predominantly white college campuses once they are hired. Research discussed in the report also shows that the unwelcoming environment on predominantly white college campuses may make it difficult to retain those African American faculty members. There are many challenges demonstrated in this wide body of research literature. One problem is the “invisible labor” required of faculty members of color. As discussed above, African American faculty members are often sought out to serve on various committees to ensure that the committee is “diverse.” Other invisible labor involves supporting African American undergraduate and graduate students when they encounter racism on campus. African American faculty members describe a corresponding “battle fatigue” that comes from surviving these types of invisible labor as well as regular microaggressions at work. Another problem African American faculty members contend with is a feeling of being hypervisible—because they are one of few faculty members of color, they sense that they are required to be “twice as good” as their white counterparts. Along with this hypervisibility, African American faculty members have suggested that the quality of their research is routinely questioned or devalued. The MRTC1 authors describe African American faculty members’ feelings of exclusion from social networks in their departments and a corresponding lack of support that faculty members should expect to receive from their colleagues and from administrators. Finally, the report details the problem faculty members of color and female faculty members’ experience in relation to student evaluations. The report shows that numerous studies document that female faculty members, and/or faculty of color, are subject to sexism and racism in their students’ evaluations of the faculty member’s effectiveness as instructors.

Drs. King and Thomas, the authors, demonstrated in MRTC1 that many of the experiences that were found repeatedly in published scholarship (regarding matters external to Penn State) also surfaced in prior reports by Black faculty members at Penn State (e.g., 1981, 1999, 2000, 2013), and have been corroborated by reports of recent experiences by current African American faculty members at the University Park Campus. They provide data to show how the number of African American faculty members at Penn State has decreased over the past several decades. MRTC1 cites the 2013 FOBA report which found that the growth of Black faculty members at Penn State has been “less than 1 percent in over 30 years in relation to the growth in the total number of faculty.” The authors go on to add to this picture by presenting more recent data. For example, there was a 22.1% decrease in African American tenure track faculty members between 2004
and 2018, and there was a general decrease in the number of African American faculty members in that same period of time. The report also details college-specific underrepresentation of African American faculty members. Some other groups of faculty members of color, such as Latinx, Asian, and international faculty, have increased their presence at Penn State during this same time period.

Finally, MRTC1 offers possible next steps and recommendations, based on data specific to Penn State, previous research, and the authors’ years of personal experience with the struggles of being African American faculty at Penn State.

**Historical Context and Response to MRTC1**

In a meeting between the task force and report authors, Drs. King and Thomas indicated that the report was disseminated broadly across Pennsylvania, as it highlights issues that are critical to both the University and The Commonwealth. At the University Faculty Senate meeting on January 28, 2020, Chair Rowland noted that the report is “something that every Senator should read,” and President Barron and Provost Jones offered comments and answered questions from Senators related to the report, which are captured in the [Senate Record](https://senate.psu.edu/senators/agendas-records/january-28-2020-record/#Minutes). This discussion was summarized as the featured topic of [Penn State News](https://news.psu.edu/story/606308/2020/01/30/academics/senate-discusses-report-status-african-american-professors-penn) on January 30, 2020. The [Penn State News](https://news.psu.edu/story/606308/2020/01/30/academics/senate-discusses-report-status-african-american-professors-penn) article emphasized the significance placed on the report by President Barron and Provost Jones, who spoke about shared governance and accountability being necessary to solve the issues identified in the report. The article focused on initiatives that were already underway across the University, such as considering changes to hiring practice guidelines and comprehensive reviews of Affirmative Action Plans by deans and chancellors. During his remarks, President Barron acknowledged the shortcomings of the “All In” initiative. He also discussed the issue of transparency, identified as one of the four challenges faced by African American faculty in the MRTC1 report. The report calls for more transparency in data, however President Barron cited small numbers as the reason for not being able to share Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) indices or salary information without making individuals identifiable. In response, President Barron suggested to Chair Rowland, and, indeed, the Senate as a whole, that a small working group established by the Senate, in coordination with administrative University leadership, and held to a standard of confidentiality, be empowered to review such data. Chair Rowland confirmed the utility of such a working group and vowed to form it. In his remarks, Provost Jones particularly emphasized accountability, both within the organizational structure of the university and to ourselves.

The MRTC1 report has been noted by student organizations, such as the University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA), and is discussed in student publications, such as the [Daily Collegian](https://www.collegian.psu.edu/news/campus/article_01a7368e-4df9-11ea-8605-d33a2c2a43ab.html). On February 13, 2020, a [Daily Collegian article](https://www.collegian.psu.edu/news/campus/article_01a7368e-4df9-11ea-8605-d33a2c2a43ab.html) presented a summary of the report’s data on African American faculty in each of University Park’s academic colleges. The chair of the UPUA Academic Affairs Committee circulated the report to all committee members and noted several existing committee initiatives that were related to diversity and bias: 1) working to improve student evaluations (SRTEs) by addressing bias, drafting new questions, and considering incentives for students to complete them; 2) developing
global citizen and fluency training to address microaggressions and bias in the classroom; and 3) conducting a survey of students to document their experiences related to bias in the classroom.

Local media sources have also featured the MRTC1 report. On February 16, 2020, a Centre Daily Times article (https://www.centredaily.com/news/local/education/penn-state/article239468688.html) highlighted some of the shortcomings in faculty search committees and student evaluations that are discussed in the report. The article implied that proposed changes to AC-13 under review by the Senate are in response to the report. In fact, these changes have been in progress since approximately Fall 2018 and were presented to the Senate as a legislative report on April 28, 2020. Broadcast media also took note of the MRTC1 report. On March 6, 2020, WPSU broadcast an interview with the report authors on the radio program, “Take Note” (https://radio.wpsu.org/post/take-note-psu-professors-more-rivers-cross-report-which-outlines-shortage-black-faculty). In the discussion, the authors emphasized some of the key challenges identified in the report including stagnation (“marching in place” as the percentage of African American faculty at Penn State has remained exceedingly, consistently low at 1-3% of the faculty since 1976), transparency, isolation, and invisible labor. They also pointed out that the number of tenure-track faculty has declined since 2004 even though the number of African Americans receiving doctorates increased in the same time period. The report’s authors noted that the “All In” initiative had commendable motives, but lacked tangible actions, a point President Barron stressed during his comments to the Faculty Senate.

There is some indication that the MRTC1 report is receiving the attention that it warrants outside the University. At the Pennsylvania House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for State-Related Universities on March 3, 2020, Representative Stephen Kinsey (D-Philadelphia) addressed President Barron (See https://pctv.com/pa-budget/ and launch the video titled, “PA House Appropriations Committee budget hearing with Lincoln University, University of Pittsburgh, Temple University & Penn State University”). Rep. Kinsey reported that elected officials had received concerns regarding the lack of minority faculty at Penn State and that he had reached out to President Barron’s administration for a response. Rep. Kinsey commended President Barron’s administration for arranging an upcoming meeting at Penn State for them to have a discussion and see how they can be helpful. The MRTC1 report has also received further dissemination in online higher education resources, i.e. Inside Higher Ed (February 18, 2020) (https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/02/18/report-finds-biases-hiring-black-faculty-penn-state) and the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (JBHE, February 10, 2020) (https://www.jbhe.com/2020/02/the-dwindling-number-of-black-tenured-and-tenure-track-faculty-at-penn-state/). The JBHE article, along with WPSU, were the only responses identified by the task force that provided a link to the full MRTC1 report.

While the MRTC1 report is hopefully stimulating discussion and action across the university, there has been minimal official, public response as of April 24, 2020, three months after the report was first shared. The members of the task force represent various Colleges and Commonwealth Campuses, yet even after extended inquiries to Senators we are aware of only Dean Kimberly Lawless of the College of Education as being a unit-level official who disseminated a link to MRTC1 to their entire college (on January 21, 2020).
It is critical that the MRTC1 report is heeded as the call to action that the authors intended it to be. We believe there have been too many past calls (see Table 1) that have not led to tangible results and actions, particularly in terms of recruiting and retaining African American faculty. Historically, African American student protests have occurred on an approximate 10-year cycle (e.g., 1968, 1979, 1988, 2001). Notably, the student demands presented to the administration in 1968, 1988, and 2001 all requested that the University dedicate more resources to increasing the number of African American faculty.
Table 1. *Timeline of selected past protests, reports, actions related to diversity at Penn State*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protests/Appeals</th>
<th>Faculty Senate Reports/Actions</th>
<th>University Reports/Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960 – Direct Action for Racial Equality (DARE) organized “barbershop poster-walk” to bring attention to discriminatory practices in State College</td>
<td>1962 – Senate voted that all student organizations must remove any constitutional rules that restrict membership based on race or religions</td>
<td>1969 - Afro-American Studies concentration added, 1969 - Jesse Arnelle elected first African American member of the Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 – DARE campaigned to remove restrictions on fraternity/sorority membership</td>
<td></td>
<td>1971 – Student operated Black Cultural Center on campus, 1972 – Paul Robeson Cultural Center established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968 (May 13)* – Student protest at Old Main with demands presented to VP of Student Affairs, 1969 (May 18) - Jesse Arnelle gave speech on lack of social progress at Penn State at Football Awards Banquet and declined first Annual Alumni Award</td>
<td>1969 – Student protest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969 – PA higher education operating under racially segregated system, according to Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in US Dept. of Education</td>
<td>1979 – Student protest</td>
<td>1987 – Campus Environment Team created at request of President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988* – Student protest</td>
<td>1989 – Added three credits of diversity coursework to degree requirements</td>
<td>1989 – Creation of position of vice-provost for educational equity, Commission of Racial and Ethnic Diversity, construction of new Paul Robeson Cultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 – Coalition on Campus and Classroom Climate established to address concerns about “chilly climate” for underrepresented groups at Penn State</td>
<td>1990 – Employee Opinion Survey conducted by Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity</td>
<td>1990 – Employee Opinion Survey conducted by Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001* – Black Caucus members and supporters occupied the HUB (“The Village”)</td>
<td>2001 – Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs charged with reporting on Best Practices for Recruitment/Retention of Women and Minority Faculty (informational report presented to Senate in 2002)</td>
<td>2001 – After negotiations with student protestors, University endorsed “A Plan to Enhance Diversity at Penn State” (included funding for Africana Research Institute, review of university’s diversity requirements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Joint Diversity Awareness Task Force (JDATF) charged by Provost and Faculty Senate Chair (recommendations presented in 2015, task force then continued with new charge in 2015)</td>
<td>2013 – Joint Diversity Awareness Task Force (JDATF) charged by Provost and Faculty Senate Chair (recommendations presented in 2015, task force then continued with new charge in 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Forum on Black Affairs (FOBA) published “2013 Status of Black Faculty and Staff at Penn State” which presented four key challenges along with specific recommendations</td>
<td>MRTC1 cites University response to 2013 FOBA report as unknown (2013 FOBA report was extension of previous reports in 1981, 1999, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>JDATF presented advisory reports on “Embedding Diversity Policy” and “Diversity Best Practices”</td>
<td>2016 – JDATF presented advisory reports on “Embedding Diversity Policy” and “Diversity Best Practices”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Committee on Educational Equity presented forensic report on concerns about SRTE bias</td>
<td>2017 – Committee on Educational Equity presented forensic report on concerns about SRTE bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Special Committee on Tenure and Equity formed (advisory report presented in 2019, highlights need for additional data collection)</td>
<td>2017 – Special Committee on Tenure and Equity formed (advisory report presented in 2019, highlights need for additional data collection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Protests over police-involved shooting of Osaze Osagie</td>
<td>2019 – Protests over police-involved shooting of Osaze Osagie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>MRTC1 report on the Status of African American Professors at University Park released</td>
<td>2020 (Jan. 20) – MRTC1 report on the Status of African American Professors at University Park released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Faculty Senate task force on MRTC1 report initiated</td>
<td>2020 (Feb. 3) – Faculty Senate task force on MRTC1 report initiated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: Sources for the events summarized in Table 1 include Penn State University’s Black History Chronology (http://blackhistory.psu.edu/chronology), the Honors Thesis by R. Hoecker (https://www.blackhistory.psu.edu/assets/pdf/theblackandwhitebehindtheblueandwhite-RobinHoecker.pdf), this article about Jesse Arnelle (https://www.blackhistory.psu.edu/assets/timeline/African_American_Chronicles_Arnelle_1968speech.pdf) and this article about Jesse Arnelle (https://onwardstate.com/2014/02/07/jesse-arnelle-a-catalyst-for-change-in-1968/), and University Faculty Senate historical records. The task force extends sincere appreciation to Senate Historian Roger Egolf for locating many useful documents.

Note 2: (asterisk) * = Student demands during each of these protests included increasing the number of African American faculty.
Conclusions

The points below summarize earlier findings and highlight the task force’s key takeaways from their reading of the MRTC1 report, and the task force’s investigations, interviews, and discussions with regard to issues raised in MRTC1.

1. The MRTC1 report is a fact-based, authoritative reference source on the state of African American faculty at Penn State University’s University Park campus. The authors employed official data, sound methodology, and reviewed their findings with a collection of collaborators to ensure objectively defensible results. The authors and their collaborators have done the university a great service.

2. A follow up report, MRTC2, offering a similar analysis for the Commonwealth Campuses’ context, is underway. Preliminary findings as well as testimony collected by the task force indicate that the same general problems exist across the Commonwealth Campuses of the University and are even worse at some campuses.

3. The issues documented in the report impact the entire university body, including students, staff, faculty, and the extended university community. This MRTC1 report is effectively a statement of need, defining a critical and chronic deficiency of African American recruitment, advancement, retention and respect on the Penn State faculty.

4. While the overall diversity of the Penn State faculty is an important goal, the evidence clearly indicates that racism affects Black faculty to a greater extent than other groups included in the diversity pool. Therefore, the issues regarding African American faculty require focused attention and should not simply be merged into a generic diversity, equity, and inclusion response.

5. Appreciating diversity within the university must include employing more African Americans and people of color; and yet, hiring and retention alone are not sufficient. The University culture must evolve to appreciate the concomitant diversity of culture and individuality as they are manifest in communication, collaboration, problems solving, and all aspects of conducting research, teaching, learning, service, and engagement. Equally, we need diversity in our University’s people, and we need diversity in our people’s perspectives.

6. Though these issues are not unique to Penn State, this is an opportunity to become a national leader in overcoming these problems.

7. Decades of guidelines, encouragement, and financial support from the central administration have been essentially passive, lacking tangible enforcement of progress. The authors of MRTC1 repeatedly use the expression “benign neglect.” This phrase references U.S. political history, when advisor Daniel Patrick Moynihan recommended in a memo to President Richard Nixon in 1970 a period of “benign neglect” toward addressing the civil rights concerns of African Americans (See https://www.nytimes.com/1970/03/01/archives/benign-neglect-on-race-is-proposed-by-moynihan-moynihan-urges.html). This “benign neglect” has resulted in very limited progress, indicating deep systemic problems that will not resolve on their own simply by making resources
available. Meaningful progress will require comprehensive intervention involving the entire University.

Overall, the task force asserts that a primary responsibility of the Senate is to address issues of faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion to the full extent of its authority and influence. The Senate is capable of authorizing and influencing the creation of new and revision of existing policies and processes that affect diversity, equity, and inclusion across the University faculty. Through its long-held and highly valued collaboration in shared governance with the University administration, the Senate is capable of advancing the University beyond decades of study and rhetoric and toward action and change in pursuit of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive faculty.

Recommendations for Faculty Senate Action

Based on the January 2020 report titled *More Rivers To Cross: Part 1 (University Park)*, the task force recommends that the University Faculty Senate do everything in its power, including policies within its legislative purview and recommendations in its advisory and consultative role, to address the challenges to the hiring, retention, satisfaction, and success of African American faculty at Penn State University.

We perceive that the actions necessary to address the challenges faced by African American faculty have broad scope and/or involve complex interdependencies of University governance. We urge the Senate to devote its time, energy, expertise, and authority to build upon our recommendations in the coming year, further refining their potency and efficacy for action that will indeed address the persistent and systemic racism as well as faculty diversity and inclusion described above. The task force considers the following recommendations to be actionable pursuits that will unite the Senate and its shared governance partners across the University. We call upon the Senate to engage with the Office of the President, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the University Board of Trustees to catalyze the component actions for these recommendations to ultimately establish systemic reforms that permanently enhance the conditions for significant growth in faculty diversity across the University and that conclusively address the reality of racism and its serious negative effects on members of the Penn State community. The following recommendations are for the consideration of University Faculty Senate leadership as was the task force’s charge. Thus, to this end, the task force recommends the following for Faculty Senate action:

**Recommendation 1: Establish and empower an all-encompassing and change-focused committee charged to identify, catalyze, and coordinate reforms across all stakeholders to mitigate and eliminate barriers to the hiring, retention, satisfaction, and success of African American faculty at Penn State University.**

The justification for this recommendation derives from the failure to address issues of diversifying faculty throughout the history of Penn State, particularly in relation to the hiring and retention of African American faculty. Well-intentioned policies, process changes, or other proposed solutions have failed because of a lack of sustained commitment to fully address all of the systemic intricacies that create barriers to Black faculty success, especially racism and discrimination that have been documented by African American faculty over the decades in a series of reports.
In particular, we recommend the following with respect to the design and implementation of an empowered and all-encompassing committee:

- Call for the Board of Trustees to commit to engagement and action to identify and eliminate point-specific and systemic barriers to the hiring, retention, and ultimate success of African American faculty.

- Identify key personnel and essential bodies of governance, management, and influence, within and beyond University organization itself.

- Plot a specific roadmap for developing a University environment that promotes the hiring, retention and effective support of African American faculty by naming specific roles, offices, committees, and constituencies, and the reforms for which they are responsible to implement.

The Senate is capable of leveraging its organizational strength and broad network for the purposes of gathering together a group of empowered representatives who are committed to action. The MRTC1 report documents the degree to which the challenges faced by African American faculty have been studied, discussed, and documented. It is now time to engage the entire system to create its change.

A fully empowered committee to serve as the catalysts of change must ensure that its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) oriented reforms are codified into the overall University’s modus operandi. Their reforms would be documented and disseminated via a work plan represented by Recommendation 2.

**Recommendation 2: Create, maintain, and support a progressive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Work Plan modelled on Penn State University’s Sustainability Work Plan (2018-2021).**

The task force acknowledges the efficiency and effectiveness of Penn State’s Sustainability Work Plan (2018-2021) (http://sustainability.psu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/SI%20Work%20Plan%207-27-2018.pdf). By requirement, and by necessity, a mission of sustainability has been integrated into all of the University’s functions. The Sustainability Work Plan created a framework that is applicable to each Penn State Value (https://universityethics.psu.edu/penn-state-values), and clearly communicates that sustainability is each Penn Stater’s responsibility. The Sustainability Work Plan established new cultural norms for the Penn State community. It is now time for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work Plan that enhances the strength, and sustainability, of the University community so that the community, in turn, supports a diverse faculty. The following are items to consider in addressing this recommendation:

- Utilize the framework concept to operationalize DEI throughout all aspects of the University. Penn State University has formulated a DEI statement (http://equity.psu.edu/diversity-statement). The task force notes that several universities have fully-developed DEI work plans; for example, the University of Iowa (https://diversity.uiowa.edu/action-planning/action-plan), and the University of Wyoming (https://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/_files/odei-strategicplan2018-r5.pdf). A fully-developed DEI Work Plan at Penn State would foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in the composition of the Penn State faculty across all aspects of the University, including individual employee
recruitment, hiring, promotion/advancement, and evaluation, and also including institutional services, cross-functional operations, community (e.g. “town and gown”) relations, instructional and curricular values, and extracurricular enrichment opportunities.

- Implement the conditions necessary to integrate this work plan into every purview of University governance, operations, academics, and culture. There is a necessity for systemic change that modifies actual processes, protocols, policies, and even perceptions that comprise the numerous decisions and actions made by each individual Penn Stater in the performance of their job or affiliation with the University.

- Include provisions in the DEI Work Plan that specifically address the concerns raised by African American faculty and students over the past fifty years and most recently in the MRTC1 report. The MRTC1 report, and its precursors, speak to a distinct history with racism and discrimination toward African American faculty that continues today.

**Recommendation 3: Commit Senate resources to support the prompt completion of the Commonwealth Campus-focused MRTC2 report.**

The authors of MRTC1 are working on Part 2 (MRTC2) that will include the Commonwealth Campuses. This report will enable the complete University community to have a full understanding of the challenges and barriers that persist in the hiring, retention, satisfaction and success of African American faculty across all locations. It is essential that the report documenting the experiences and data on the Commonwealth Campuses, which enroll nearly 40% of Penn State’s total undergraduate population, be completed as soon as possible. Effective solutions require a comprehensive understanding of the whole university picture. The following are items to consider in addressing this recommendation:

- Utilize Senate networks to identify a liaison at each Commonwealth Campus who will work with the MRTC2 authors to provide specific data and experiential or anecdotal evidence on behalf of their campus.

- Identify additional sources of evidence, including data and people, that would create a full and authentic report regarding the Commonwealth Campuses, and facilitate access to those sources for inclusion in MRTC2.

- If requested, assist the authors with their preparation and/or dissemination of the MRTC2 report.

- Once the MRTC2 report is disseminated by the authors, the Senate should promptly and formally receive, review, and deliberate appropriate action in response to the report.

**Recommendation 4: Establish an annual report that details the status of, and the initiatives to enhance, faculty diversity and inclusion across Penn State University.**

The justification for this recommendation derives from our task force’s recognition that information captured in the MRTC1 report about the challenges in hiring, retention, support and
success of African American faculty at Penn State, should not have been the burden of the authors, but be the responsibility of the University. In order for the university to ensure the hiring, retention, success and satisfaction of its faculty of color, including but not limited to its African American faculty, it needs to collect and document its explicit efforts, progress, problems, and challenges. The data intended in this recommendation are primarily quantitative in nature and should be tracked to measure progress and identify problems. It will also allow for useful comparisons to similar institutions. The following are items to consider in addressing this recommendation:

- Design a recurring report that functions as an accountability measure for all units across the university. Information collected in this report should include actions that can be documented and measured such as hirings, formal and informal service load, professional development support, and promotions.

- Benchmark against other Big Ten and other large, non-urban university campuses to provide a high-level report card as a continuing review of the successes and shortcomings of the University’s specific methods to recruit, hire, and retain African American faculty throughout all locations and units.

- Appoint a Faculty Senate committee with the responsibility to create and monitor this report. The Senate must continue and expand precedents set by the MRTC1 report and its multiple report precursors by documenting the University’s challenges, progresses, pitfalls, and actions to building a robust faculty community that reflect the University’s values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

**Recommendation 5: Establish hiring policies, processes, resources, and incentives designed to substantially increase representation of African American faculty across the University.**

The MRTC1 report explicitly identifies the need to review University policies AC-13 (Recommended Procedure for Hiring New Faculty) and AC-22 (Search Procedures for Academic Administrative Positions), which outline the procedures for job searches and the hiring of faculty. The task force recognizes that since the Fall of 2018, AC-13 has been under review and revision, and that Senate recommended significant revisions to AC-13 at its April 2020 meeting. An effective revision of AC-13 is an essential starting point to ensure that our methods match our commitment to diversity and inclusion at Penn State. AC-13 and all other policies must be continually reviewed and revised in light of the recommendations in this report.

This task force underscores that there are notable inconsistencies in the resources and support available for different units across the university that can inhibit the ability to draw from a diverse pool and hire a diverse faculty. The following are items to consider in addressing this recommendation:

- Establish budgetary support at the university level for costs/initiatives that will generate a diverse pool of candidates. This item is to ensure that every unit across the university has the same opportunity to meet the expectation and commitment to perform searches that diversify their faculty pool without burdening their budgets.
Tangible incentives must be created and regularly assessed for University- and unit-level administrators that support the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the faculty composition of the University. The incentives will reward designed efforts that have enhanced DEI at the University and also fuel the development of new, creative, and authentic approaches to the hiring, retention, satisfaction, and success of African American faculty.

Disseminate resources consistently throughout the University to ensure that all job searches are drawing from the widest, strongest, and most relevant pool of candidates as possible. Resources could include the creation and maintenance of a database of job advertising sites and other relevant resources.

**Recommendation 6: Establish faculty annual review** ([https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac40](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac40)), **promotion** ([https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac21](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac21)), and **tenure** ([https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac23](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac23)) **evaluation criteria that overcome the documented biases of teaching evaluation tools like SRTEs and the disproportionate service responsibilities of African American faculty.**

Current evaluation methods have been shown to include bias and do not equitably account for Penn State’s mission of research, teaching, and service. The following are items to consider in addressing this recommendation:

Eliminate the current Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) instrument. Both the lived experience of faculty and an increasing amount of scholarly literature document the biases in teaching evaluation tools which negatively impact women and faculty of color. In turn, the shared governance of faculty and the administration must develop a robust and equitable assessment of teaching effectiveness that coincides with Penn State’s instructional mission ([https://www.psu.edu/this-is-penn-state/leadership-and-mission/mission-and-character](https://www.psu.edu/this-is-penn-state/leadership-and-mission/mission-and-character)).

Consider all forms of service responsibilities of faculty of color in annual review, promotion, and tenure evaluation criteria. The University must acknowledge and respond to the disproportionate service burdens that faculty of color hold, and reformulate P&T evaluation criteria to establish methods that allow these burdens to be shared, and establish methods that will enable these burdens to be appropriately recognized in the P&T evaluation process.

**Charge to the Senate**

The University Faculty Senate is a vital element of shared governance, that in consultation with the University president has significant authority on all matters that pertain to the educational interests of the University and on all academic and scholarly matters that concern the faculty. This deliberative and legislative body of which we are all a part has the power to introduce, shape, and reinvigorate University policies that affect the professional lives of every one of us and our colleagues. Recognizing the Senate’s authority, this report has sought to demonstrate that as Senators we have not only the ability, but also the obligation, to redress the lack of racial
diversity of our faculty and the causes of racism within our University. Our Senate must also hold the University leadership accountable for its actions or failure to act. Over the past forty years, in report after report, the African American faculty at Penn State University have documented the professional and personal costs of these realities. While the injustices that the Black faculty face are indeed outrageous, we want to state unequivocally that moral outrage is not action. Handwringing does not change work cultures or improve people’s lives.

We in the Senate are fortunate to be in a position to act in ways that are substantive and transformational for our University. As a first step, we urge each of you to read the complete More Rivers to Cross: Part 1 (University Park) report thoroughly. Following your read, share it with your respective faculty units and initiate a discussion about local challenges to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Then, communicate what you learn from your home-unit peers to Senate and University leadership. This task force has developed its own interpretations and formulated its own recommendations based on its charge and the information that was immediately at hand. There is plenty of space in this subject to welcome your contributions. Together we must ensure that the University Faculty Senate does everything in its power to hold itself and the University administration accountable for implementing the necessary policy changes, ensuring the effective hiring practices, and committing to the cultural transformations required to make MRTC1 the last needed warning about the lack of racial diversity and the persistence of racism at Penn State University.

More Rivers to Cross Response Task Force Membership

- Dr. Christopher Byrne, Associate Professor of Mathematics, and member of Senate Committee on Student Life
- Dr. Julie Gallagher, Associate Professor of History and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and member of Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
- Dr. Megan Marshall, Associate Teaching Professor of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and member of the Senate Committee on Education
- Dr. Karyn McKinney Marvasti, Associate Professor of Sociology at Penn State Altoona, and Vice Chair of Senate Committee on Intra-University Relations and member of Senate Council
- Mr. Joaquim Diego Santos, chair of the University Park Undergraduate Association Academic Affairs Committee, student senator, and member of the Senate Committee on Education
- Mr. Terry Watson, Assistant Director of Student Disability Services for Penn State World Campus, and member of the Senate Committee on Educational Equity and Campus Environment
- Dr. Joshua Kirby, Assistant Teaching Professor of Learning, Design, and Technology, member of the Senate Council, and task force chair
SENATE COUNCIL

Report on Fall 2019 Commonwealth Campus Visits

(Informational)

“We are small. We work together. We are the type of people who want to do this anyway. ”

– a Penn State Beaver staff member

The 2019-20 Senate Officers: Nicholas Rowland, chair; Elizabeth Seymour, chair-elect; Michael Bérubé, immediate past chair, and Judy Ozment, secretary, visited seven Commonwealth Campuses during the 2019-20 academic year: Penn State Erie (September 23, 2019), Penn State Shenango (September 24, 2019), Penn State Beaver (September 24, 2019), Penn State Berks (October 14, 2019), Penn State Lehigh Valley (October 14, 2019), Penn State Mont Alto (October 21, 2019), and Penn State York (October 22, 2019). It is important to recognize that these visits occurred in the Fall of 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

During these visits, the Senate Officers met with staff, students, faculty, and administrators. Each group was met with separately to encourage frank discussions. Two basic questions were asked in each meeting: “What makes your unit a good place to work and learn?” and “What is sub-optimal or needs improvement?” These simple questions led to rich discussions.

Executive Summary – Commonwealth Campuses

While each campus varied in enrollment, academic programs, and the nature of its student populations, each group had positive things to say. There were many upbeat comments about the homey-feel at their campus. They touted many benefits of working and learning in a tight-knit community that is genuinely dedicated to helping each other succeed. Students the officers met at every campus noted the value of building strong bonds with staff, faculty, and each other, through small classes and good undergraduate research and co-curricular opportunities.

When asked about challenges, some common themes were revealed:

Enrollment
Several campuses’ staff and faculty described anxiety and frustration related to declining campus enrollments. These feelings were compounded when University Park took more students from their service area and/or when the campus was denied permission to pursue initiatives that they believed could help improve their enrollments.

Regionalized Human Resources (HR)
Sharing HR personnel has significantly reduced the quantity and quality of HR services. HR advice is too often considered to be too generic—non-localized and non-specific. Regional HR representatives are also perceived as have muddled reporting lines. Instances of broken trust and ineffective HR practices has resulted in campus staff turning to a variety of shadow self-support systems, bypassing HR. Thus, the “efficiencies” gained by the University in setting up regional HR have put more HR work on campus staff and faculty, who are not HR experts. Some HR training cannot be done properly with online pre-recorded sessions, which lack context and interaction.
Timely Academic Feedback
Some students reported delays in getting grades on assignments and/or receiving limited feedback on graded work. They also reported some faculty inconsistently and incompletely using Canvas.

Advising
Students say some good professors are not good advisers. Some faculty may be good at advising, but it is still not their priority. Many faculty think of advising as peripheral. Staff and faculty report some students got poor advice. Some faculty described situations where professional advisers gave pre-major students incorrect advice. Some students feel their advisers can’t answer their questions, especially students in 2+2 programs. Several advisors complained about increasing complications involving World Campus and the new general education not working well in LionPATH.

Increasingly Vulnerable Student Populations
Many Penn State students have more than just financial needs. Several campus communities raised escalating concerns about being able to effectively serve vulnerable student populations.
- Students have increasing mental health needs. The demand for counselling services is growing and there are insufficient counsellors to meet it.
- Students from economically challenged families often come with complex life issues, including food/shelter insecurities and limited understanding of the skills they need to develop to be successful.
- Returning adult learners, especially those with families and/or jobs, require different kinds of services, schedule flexibilities, and resources than traditional students. Adult students requested that they be consulted more frequently, since the university’s perception of their needs are not always consistent with their actual needs.

Staff Burn-Out
Faculty and students consistently expressed concerns about over-worked and underpaid staff getting burned out. Staff described doing multiple jobs, having no back-ups, and being unable to call out when they had a medical need. There is often no depth and no spare time for cross-training. This was identified by faculty at some campuses as jeopardizing the retention of their staff. (Due to ongoing COVID-19 situation, such problems will be of heightened concern in the coming fall, for obvious reasons.)

Tenure-Line Workload Issues
Some tenure line faculty were hired with many responsibilities, such as teaching at multiple campuses, managing academic programs, and doing critical service, such as recruitment. These obligations stretched some faculty so much that it hindered their research progress, then they were denied tenure. Teaching line faculty and staff often described doing more than their fair share around campus to try to protect pre-tenured faculty. Some even confessed to feeling resentful, saying “not everything should be about promotion and tenure.” Staff at several campuses said they would like to see faculty get more involved on campus, but everyone is too busy.

Centralization vs. Location-Specific Optimization
Campus faculty are wary of One Penn State 2025. Many said, “We don’t know what it is,” and “It looks like a framework for centralization, uniformity, and homogenizing us.” This is widely considered to be contradictory to responsive local programming. The students, staff, faculty, and administration talked about many on-going turf issues in critical functions, such as admissions, fundraising, budgeting, and enrollment management. Many campus communities expect an
implicit University Park bias is built into One Penn State 2025. One common sentiment was: the university must be very thoughtful about balancing centralization with much-needed location-specific optimization.

**Impersonal and Ineffective Interactions with University Park**
University Park was often described by campus students and staff as impersonal, uncaring, and increasingly unresponsive to their queries. The increased use of call centers with wait sequencing are felt to be quite impersonal, which is in stark contrast to how the campuses offices usually do business. University Park students have been known to call campus staff when they or their friends can’t get answers, because they know someone will answer the phone. Delays in processing requests sent to University Park are getting longer.

**Systems Training and Use**
Training on new electronic systems (SIMBA, Workday, Canvas, LionPATH, Starfish) has been uneven and incomplete.

**Workday Nightmare**
The implementation of Workday has made doing many things much more difficult—hampering productivity, creativity, and opportunity. The onboarding process is extensive. Some new faculty were not able to start preparing to teach before the first day of class. It takes a lot more time and energy just to get people hired and paid. In some instances, it was deemed not possible to get students hired to work on-campus jobs and get them paid in the same semester. “It is frustrating to have to spend so much more time doing things that do not ultimately improve what we do.”

**Risk Management is Heavy-Handed**
In recent years, Risk Management is reported to be steamrolling long-time practices without always consulting those who have routinely done these things in the past. Risk Management seems overly focused on preventing risks rather than managing them.

**On-Campus Food Service**
Students are more health conscious, now. Many students and campus staff complained about rising on-campus food prices, smaller portions, and low quality food. Healthy options are limited and very expensive. Administrators clarified that these decisions are all centralized; they have no local control over what food is served on campus or how much it costs.

**Faculty Service**
Many faculty recommended examining and overhauling the way “service” is communicated and evaluated as part of the faculty workload.

**Crisis Management Limits Effective Strategic Planning**
Frequent budgetary crises make the campuses focus so much on putting out fires and stretching limited budgets to make things work that it becomes very difficult to be strategic.
Campus Summaries

“When you’ve seen one Penn State campus, you’ve seen one Penn State campus.”
– a Penn State York Campus administrator

The overarching common issues described previously are missing much of the rich details provided by Commonwealth Campus communities. They also don’t include other unique topics raised at each Commonwealth Campus. What follows is a campus-by-campus summary of all topics that were discussed.

**Penn State Erie** visited September 23, 2019 (15 staff, 11 students, 16+ faculty, 11 administrators)

The faculty appreciate being able to do research and teach at a full-fledged four-year college. They are proud that so many students start and finish at Behrend. Students discover a variety of excellent opportunities they have when they stay all four years at Behrend. Staff praised their new Chancellor’s recent deliberate efforts to think outside the box including faculty and staff.

The staff feel significantly stretched when trying to support large, important initiatives from University Park. The faculty echoed the staff’s concerns, saying that their college lacks sufficient resources to properly enact university initiatives. The staff described the balancing act needed to be the best stewards of reduced budgets. They also lamented limited success in involving faculty in structured social activities.

The staff along with the students discussed the need for healthier food options in on-campus food services. The students also criticized rising prices, smaller portion sizes, incomplete nutritional labels, and the lack of local control.

The students described difficulties associated with parking—especially in bad weather—and the struggles athletes have been facing to practice while their new recreational facility is being built.

The students gave high praise for the Learning Resource Center (LRC), but felt it was still lacking staff and support. The administration pointed out that half the tutors graduated last spring and that they are aware of the LRC resource needs.

The faculty expressed great appreciation for the college’s staff, but they had some concerns about the staff not being paid well enough for all they do, resulting in some staff turnover. The administration indicated that the reasons for the two most recent high-visibility staff departures were not related to compensation.

Faculty raised concerns about the lack of support for Behrend’s Schreyer Scholars.

The faculty discussed their many concerns about the implicit University-Park bias built into *One Penn State 2025*. They discussed at length how current admissions and fundraising practices are contrary to “One Penn State.” The administrators described getting resistance from the faculty on curricular reform initiatives, so they moved to initiatives on course coherence. After these discussions, the administration concluded that *One Penn State 2025* ought to be the focus of an upcoming townhall meeting.

Some faculty expressed disappointment with consistent lack of institutional action after reporting instances of bias or harassment. The senate officers described a new senate special committee addressing allegations of faculty misconduct.

The faculty expressed concern for the timeliness of receiving non-tenure track contracts, the reduced contract lengths, the lack of research resources for non-tenure-line faculty, and the
mechanism used for calculating teaching load for unusual courses (online, hybrid, team-taught, and N-courses, etc.). Administration said the current teaching/research/service requirements have been in place for a while, so that should not be a major point. Those are the workloads in all the schools.

The faculty expressed concern about not knowing how recent fund-raising funds were used. The administration explained to the officers that their recent campaign was for the *Pathways to Success: Summer Start Program* (PASSES) program.

In general, the administration indicated that nothing the officers reported to them from staff, students, and faculty was a surprise. They indicated having strong engagement with the faculty senate and have worked closely with faculty and staff to craft a vision for “What is a Behrend Graduate?”

**Penn State Shenango** visited September 24, 2019 (11 staff, 4 students, 9 faculty, 8 administrators)

Faculty and staff reminded the senate officers that Shenango has a very high percentage of nontraditional and low-income students.

Collectively, the students, staff, faculty, and administrators described their campus community as respectful, helpful, supportive, cheerful, collegial, communicative, patient, and friendly. The staff was proud to tell the senate officers how well they know their students. The staff also praised good community partnerships. Students said they loved small class sizes, the compact campus, and accessible staff and professors. The faculty said their students’ stories help inspire them to change their perspectives on how to teach.

Staff proudly described recent proactive achievements of their local Staff Advisory Council (SAC)—including initiatives like a food pantry, other support for students with food insecurities, and support for student internships. Their SAC provides staff representation for other campus leadership committees and serves as in-house advocates for staff. The staff also discussed recent outreach efforts to help destigmatize mental health counseling for students.

When asked about less than optional aspects, the staff described many examples of being overworked, understaffed, and doing multiple different jobs and the difficulties they face meeting everyone’s needs while trying to do so much. Throughout the day, the senate officers learned that everyone is worried about everyone else getting burned out.

Staff and faculty both expressed concerns about enrollment. Almost everyone on campus is involved in campus recruitment efforts. Staff urged more action on new programmatic offerings that could be attractive to prospective students. The faculty are concerned about sending mixed 2+2 messages to students, including limitations on what the World Campus provides and the need to advertise more pathways to degree completion for students who would rather not be at a big campus. Staff worried about offering more on-line classes to students who came to Shenango for a small residential experience. Faculty discussed the need for better publicity to the border counties. The new Discover Penn State Awards were discussed briefly.

Adult students spoke about some class scheduling concerns, including problems they had with evening and online courses. They asked to be consulted more about their actual scheduling needs.

Faculty expressed concern for too many expectations on new tenure-track faculty. Some are hired to teach at multiple campuses, play a key role in building an academic program, and are asked to do community outreach and recruitment promotion. All their recent tenure-track hires have been denied tenure. The administration admitted that this was a major concern; the last positive tenure decision was in 2005. Staff echoed these concerns, wishing to have their faculty more involved in campus life and community outreach, but knowing that they can’t be counted on for that. The
nontenure line faculty said they are called on to carry a greater outreach and recruitment load. The students volunteered their own perspectives on the loss of key faculty, saying it adversely affects the continuity needs of their major programs and jeopardizes the progress and persistence of many students. The administration reported currently having five new tenure track faculty at Shenango. The administration also said their number one concern was strong hires. They described some past hiring problems. The new administration did a SWOT analysis and have attempted to solve several problems they deemed to have led to past problems.

The faculty discussed the need for a networking structure among campuses to help improve important initiatives, such as mentoring. Some blame was put on the unique structure of their administration. The administration said some problems with the lack of mentoring are due to having a limited number of tenured faculty and no ADAA, as many other campuses have.

The faculty expressed pride in being able to provide undergraduate research opportunities. However, some students expressed difficulties finding research opportunities, supervision, and resources support.

The faculty described the difficulties associated with sharing courses with other campuses, using a clunky manual process. The senate officers described some of the One Penn State 2025 work being done to improve support for seamless multi-campus course delivery.

In further discussing One Penn State 2025, faculty described concerns about how the current budget model drives the institution too much. The senate officers pointed out that changes coming with the implementation of SIMBA might make that better. The faculty cautioned that if the university wants One Penn State 2025 to be successful, the university must continue to very thoughtful about how to balance conforming to a homogenized demographic and providing locally responsive programming.

There were mixed reports on electronic systems and other university-level support. The staff praised support from OVPCC, the University Registrar, Strategic Communications, the University Libraries Human Resources. However, several staff gave examples of how challenging and impersonal it is to navigate the regional Human Resource (HR) services, including HR not responding to questions about serious needs. The staff described some instances of broken trust and experiencing retaliation for reporting.

The faculty discussed low adjunct pay and their worries about the high use of adjunct faculty, including uneven training and concerns about following safety requirements, not meeting learning objectives, difficulties when reporting for accreditation, etc.

The faculty also addressed dissatisfaction in several aspects of the “service requirement” for faculty promotion, including how service roles are decided, what gets counted as “second level”-promotion service, and the limited opportunities for “university” service.

At the end of the day, the administration discussed personnel turn-over and position collapses are causing disruptions in the continuity of strategic thinking, crisis communication planning, and being so focused on putting out fires that it has been difficult to be strategic. They described being spread very thin and having no depth. It is even difficult for some people to take medical leave, since they have no backups. The administration concluded with, “We’re doing all we can.”

Penn State Beaver visited September 24, 2019 (5 staff, 3 students, 6 faculty, 8 administrators)

The faculty described the campus’s emphasis on teaching, building solid relationships with students and colleagues, and supportive and respectful administration as reasons for appreciating working at Penn State Beaver.
Penn State Beaver staff expressed pride in the low turnover among the staff. The staff discussed recent plans for improving how they on-board students, especially out-of-state students, including hosting a “Spirit Weekend” and tracking all students, not just those at risk. The staff praised the efforts of the basketball coach in making this work so well.

The staff and students both mentioned the desire for improving the looks of campus buildings, so they could better compete with the looks of a nearby community college. The students noted that things did look dated, but they felt that necessary functionality upkeep was good.

The staff indicated they are reasonably satisfied with their relationships with faculty, but they did describe some concerns about the many faculty that do not live nearby, including limited engagement with on-campus activities and having a limited understanding of students from the campus service area. The staff expressed general concerns about a perceived lack of regional awareness of their campus’ existence, though they did point out that they have seen more visibility now than in previous years since the administrators are doing more in the community and the campus has more non-Penn State organizations using the campus facilities and participating in continuing education programs.

The staff discussed transportation difficulties for students who don’t have vehicles. The students agreed. They described several issues with the local bus system and taxis, as well as limitations of the campus shuttle system. Both said students tend to make friends with others who have vehicles.

The staff addressed the mental health needs of the students, including the need to learn coping skills and how to ask for help.

The staff indicated that their biggest struggle is communication with the new leadership. They described recent activities happening recently to try to improve that through their Staff Congress. The Staff Congress’ chair was recently added to the campus Executive Council.

The students expressed a desire to be able to stay at Beaver as Schreyer Scholars through graduation. The administration agreed that would be amazing, but pointed to a hierarchy in honors at Penn State as the impediment.

The faculty talked about many complications when advising students—especially transfer students. The administration agreed and said that the complexity of the advising workload tends to be perpetual.

The faculty requested consideration for relaxing university-wide requirements related to time.

- They would like an altered registration timetable, so first-year students can schedule for Fall semester before April, when the Spring semester is winding down. The faculty said it is also now not possible to do summer followups with students who didn’t register yet. The administration agreed, saying that there is a greater risk to retention if a student doesn’t schedule for fall in the spring. This retention risk is higher for first-generation students.

- Some faculty asked for a compression of the mandatory 15-minute passing-time between classes, since it takes far less time to get from class to class on their small campus. Scheduling classes on campus is now more inefficient. Some faculty said they have found ways to use the extra time between classes.

- On the other hand, the faculty described concerns about the variability of local-control snow-day schedules, especially when teaching shared courses involving students from different campuses. The faculty discussed some of the disadvantages of using Zoom on snow days, including no internet, no power, and lack of privacy at home. (Note: This meeting occurred well before COVID-19 pandemic hit the university. This concern that will only be more urgent in the foreseeable future.)
It is important to recognize that the university must strike a balance between local optimization and university-wide optimization. Centralized decisions have and will continue to disadvantage some of the more vulnerable populations in the university. The senate officers indicated that One Penn State 2025 is looking at best practices for online classes, mixed schedules and resident+online instruction.

The reference to One Penn State 2025 caused the faculty to ask “what is it?” The senate officers gave a brief overview. Faculty discussed concerns, such as making sure that faculty have meaningful discussions before one decision is made. There are too many turf wars associated with these decisions. What creates advantages for one unit can often disadvantage other units.

The senate officers indicated that the first impetus of One Penn State 2025 was the issue of “a course is not a course” and University Park not playing well with transition students. One Penn State 2025 is designed to focus on students. The faculty senate officers also discussed with the administration various expected elements for the rollout of One Penn State 2025, including how to better focus on students and how to help faculty have more meaningful discussions about things that are recognized as something the university needs to figure out, such as competency/residency requirements, pathways to graduation, and the curriculum.

The faculty discussed issues related to lack of standards related to adjunct (part-time) faculty, including no raises, the limitations on the numbers of courses that could be taught by an adjunct faculty member, and variability in pay for 5-credit courses and independent study courses. Full-time over-load pay is based on adjunct pay. The administration concurred and added that they have not been able to raise adjunct salaries above $800 per credit. They indicated that it would be necessary to move collectively to address the adjunct pay issue.

The senate officers indicated that there was supposed to be a task force formed to review adjunct issues, but that had (at the time) not been initiated.

During the administration session, the faculty senate officers indicated that the UFS agenda will include examining concerns about teaching evaluations from students, including bias against minorities and women, and the late-semester timing of when students are asked to do such reviews.

Penn State Berks visited October 14, 2019 (15 staff, 3 students, 10 faculty, 11 administrators)

The students at Penn State Berks praised the Blue Zone events designed to build community. The faculty praised how well student affairs and academic affairs offices work together, due to strong interactions between First-Year Seminar (coordinated by a faculty member) and First-Year Experience program (which is run through student affairs).

The faculty described their recent efforts in the college to discuss how to fairly assess faculty workload and accomplishments across disciplines. The faculty feels the college built a strong faculty since becoming a stand-alone college and instituting many 4-year degree programs. Faculty reported very strong support for tenure track faculty, including formal and informal mentoring and encouragement from administration.

The staff expressed appreciation for having good relationships with their students and having good collaboration among offices.

The staff discussed diminished morale caused by downgrading/eliminating staff positions when someone retires and the increasing emphasis on retention and recruitment initiatives that encroach on their personal time and stretch their budgets. The staff also reported that shared HR services has fallen short of being helpful, so the staff have turned to each other for support. They also said
it is discouraging to have HR performance evaluations being ramped up (adding mid-year to end-of-year), while pay raises are still minimal, even with a great performance rating.

Staff discussed several problematic facilities maintenance issues (mold, leaking roof, heat, cold, smells, spotty internet) causing some workplaces to pose a health hazard and/or become ineffective workspaces. They requested more flexible working options in such instances. Faculty gave different examples being frequently frustrated over the years by an Maintenance & Operations (M&O) office that is unresponsive to instructional needs.

The staff expressed concerns about the budgetary and human resource strain they feel when trying to provide meaningful support for important programs that are vital to help vulnerable students build skills for success, such as PASSS.

The students discussed some dissatisfactions for on-campus food, including: increasing prices, limited quality, the high cost of healthy options, and inaccurate interpretations of cuisine from other cultures. Some students said they know several students who completely avoid buying food on campus.

Students discussed issues with getting timely Canvas feedback on class assignments and up-to-date course grades during the semester.

Students talked about issues with general advising, most often related to receiving incorrect information from pre-major professional advisors. The senate officers indicated that advising is being addressed in the senate and these issues would be discussed with CCSG. The students also said the University Bulletin website is not as easy to navigate and the online academic plans for degree programs don’t match what is done at Penn State Berks, making mentoring first-year students more difficult.

The students described concerns that advertising for Penn State seems to be focused on University Park. The second 2 in 2+2 is always University Park ignoring other 2+2 opportunities. That one-way-street sign needs to be removed. These suggestions indicate that a greater level of detail for the goals of One Penn State 2025 could be more widely disseminated to students.

Faculty discussed problems with having to compete with World Campus, since online courses are perceived to be easier. The faculty said they do not get credit for Berks students who are not taking Berks courses. They proposed setting a limit to the number of courses a resident student should be permitted to take.

Faculty gave several examples about rising class enrollment limits, especially in skills-based courses like mathematics and English, that are jeopardizing the success of students to learn those skills.

Faculty expressed their discontent with what Berks is doing for students in the nearby city of Reading, PA. The faculty described reducing high-touch programs (i.e., those involving campus groups going into the city and working side-by-side with partners there) and replacing them with superficial “swoop in and swoop out” programs (i.e., visit-talk-and-leave programs). The administration identified a few programs that did get discontinued due to budgetary limitations and funding sources drying up. The administration discussed how staff support and student mentoring funding is now coming entirely from gifts.

The faculty also criticized the Penn State marketing to Reading area high school students, describing several examples of what is missing the mark and other things that should be done, including fund-raising for scholarships and establishing meaningful bridges between the non-Hispanic community with the immigrant Hispanic community. The administration countered this perception by describing several recent initiatives in Reading—though they admitted that some
faculty might not be aware of these outreach efforts. The administration assured the officers that campus outreach to the Reading community is becoming more sensitive—changing messages with the help of their diversity committee to make diverse populations feel more welcome. The administration admitted that the prospective traditional-aged students may “get” those messages better than “us older folks.”

Faculty went on to describe the administration’s lack of attention to engaging in reflection and debriefing with participants, after rolling out a wide array of initiatives. These included student internships; complications that arose from a diversity questionnaire with limited scope and insufficient confidentiality; the inflexible, unresponsive, and sometimes unprofessional strategic communications office; friction between Aetna and the Saint Joseph’s hospital; and the dilemma of having partially filled residence halls. The administration did describe some of these initiatives more completely, but said there had only been rare moments for reflection.

Faculty said they feel a sense of powerlessness. They say they constantly give their opinions and ideas, but those don’t appear to get listened to. They discussed examples of where budget constraints are hurting disciplines that need costly supplies to teach certain classes properly. The administration echoed the faculty and staff’s budgetary concerns. They said they are working to prioritize expenditures, but admitted that they had to say no to lots of things this year.

The administration discussed changes in enrollments (down 10%) and increased competition in SE PA for students interested in residence halls, with new residence halls opening at Abington and Brandywine. The administration described being preoccupied with the budget this year and the additional work that has come with Workday and regional HR.

When discussing One Penn State 2025, the faculty cautioned against homogenizing the curriculum. They stressed that responsive programs must be built into a campus’s environment to be successful in serving the student population. The administration said weren’t sure yet what One Penn State 2025 would do for their campus. They agreed with the faculty about responsive programs, adding that current turf issues and an intentionally complex curricular process certainly does cause trouble with pursuing programs they’re interested in offering.

**Penn State Lehigh Valley** visited Oct. 14, 2019 (14 faculty, 3 students, 12 staff, 5 administrators)

Penn State Lehigh Valley faculty praised the astonishing lack of friction between faculty, staff, and administration and the amazing enrollment growth over recent years. They also praised the level of faculty travel support and instructional design support. The students and staff described many advantages of working together in the one building. Faculty and students described looking forward to the new building extension.

Faculty described concerns about important academic interests not being well served by the hiring priorities of the administration. They are losing tenure lines while the student population is increasing. Tenure-line faculty are only hired in programs with 4-year degrees. Tenure lines in the non-program faculty are systematically being replaced with fixed-term teaching faculty. Adjuncts are now pervasive in core subjects, such as English.

The faculty discussed problems they have with the current proctoring services, especially related to online courses; complying with ADA accommodations; and whenever an adjunct who is usually on campus only one day per week needs to give a make-up exam. The administration also described some of the issues they face with proctoring services for online courses. The senate officers described the faculty senate’s push to get solutions from the university on robust and flexible proctoring services.
The faculty expressed concerns about how difficult it has been to get primary facilities needs met by the university (e.g., exercise facilities, science labs, cafeteria, etc.)

The faculty discussed difficulties with fund raising in the Lehigh Valley in competition with Lehigh University. The administration also pointed out that some major donors in the area are already assigned to University Park.

Fixed-term faculty expressed concerns about not knowing what their salary will be when they sign a contract.

Faculty discussed their dissatisfaction with changes in how performance reviews are conducted and salary information is conveyed. The traditional salary letter was replaced with an impersonal email with instructions of how to get to WorkLion. Others discussed performance review letters lacking details about standards and being contradictory, such as: “You’re doing too much. Do more.”

The students and the staff discussed the need for more study areas. Students study in the halls, in their cars, in the elevator, in classrooms between classes, and at other colleges and universities. Students and staff both say that the lounge has become a game room. It is too social to be conducive to studying.

The students discussed the need for more variety and better access to food options. Long lines and slow service make it very difficult to get food between classes. They did note that the kitchen is being remodeled.

The students discussed the need for better athletic facilities. Right now, the locker room is too tiny and there is no dance studio. They also itemized injury-causing problems with the courts and fields (slippery, rocky). They recommended adding lighting, to extend time for practices.

The students described issues they have with some faculty, including not being treated fairly, not getting graded work back in a timely fashion, getting too little feedback on graded work, and limited and spotty use of Canvas by faculty.

The students talked at length about getting assigned too much work and how workload issues were a big problem for students who must also work for a living.

The students expressed some dissatisfaction with the content of the required first-year seminar, saying it had too much overlap with focused course-based learning success skills that they cover in other first-year classes. They recommended making it less redundant and including other types of life skills, such as doing taxes, writing resumes, and learning professional communication skills.

The students specifically requested that it be reported that they believe the required ESL 15 (i.e., the English-as-a-Second-Language course that meets the English 15 requirement for non-native speakers) is much more difficult for those students than ENGL 15 is for native English speakers.

The staff discussed being exhausted by the increasing demands on their time associated with the growing student population. They described having too little time to complete tasks, working late into the evening, and still not finishing what needed to be done. The administration noted that Penn State Lehigh Valley is perceived to be staff-heavy, but most of the staff do more than what is in their job description. There is so much collaboration among the staff that they know more about each other’s jobs. The administration also pointed out getting frequent calls to the campus staff from former Lehigh Valley students who are now at University Park with questions they and their friends can’t get answered there. The administration also noted that a lot of students come there after not being successful at University Park. They pointed out that student mental health needs are growing and the staff are the ones most acutely feeling the imminent dangers of some students personal/mental crash. They used to be able to call for assistance, but now they are being told not
to call.

The administration mentioned their one-building campus gets them more interest from students with mobility issues and other physical impairments, but they have insufficient resources to support these special needs, which can be quite costly (e.g., electric wheelchairs, specialized transportation, sign language interpreters).

The staff described how Workday and the shared HR “efficiencies” are now requiring each staff member do more of the HR work for themselves. They described several examples of how hiring, especially hiring students, is more difficult and time-consuming and how support from HR has become impersonal, ineffective, and argumentative. The administration echoed the staff’s concerns about HR, making it clear that it is the system that is flawed, not the people. Some training, such as that needed for a Title IX coordinator, cannot be done properly with online pre-recorded sessions, which seriously lack context and the ability to interact.

When trying to get Risk Management’s approvals on contracts, the staff described experiencing significant hurdles, long delays, and too little communication about where something is in the process.

The staff described being frustrated by frequently being asked questions they don’t know how to answer, being asked to do more work with fewer resources, and fearing the more budget cuts. However, they finished their session with the senate officers by saying, despite the many challenges, they do have a strong community that holds things together.

The administration said they were surprised that no one mentioned the lack of SIMBA training, then they discussed ongoing concerns about having had limited funds for electronic systems training (LionPATH, Canvas, Workday) and described future plans for SIMBA training.

The administration described a “Super Powers Group” they have put in place for key initiatives. It is a group of staff members that help roll out key staff-related professional development. It helps package necessary training in a way that makes it feel more like a bonus than additional asks.

**Penn State Mont Alto** visited October 21, 2019 (14 staff, 1 student, 19 faculty, 9 administrators)

Penn State Mont Alto faculty and staff really enjoy working with their students. They are grateful for each other’s helpfulness and for being able to celebrate each other’s accomplishments. The staff was excited for a new scholarship campaign that was recently rolled out. Faculty were excited for their new psychology program.

The staff also praised the Community Day Simulations, where Mont Alto students get together to participate in mock “mass casualty” scenarios, then get a chance to debrief their work with expert speakers. Staff also expressed appreciation for the rich historical quality of their campus.

Faculty praised the receipt of a grant to organize events that help engage and mentor their commuter students. The administration made it clear that these events would continue to be funded in the future.

The senate officers praised ample signage around campus. The administration indicated that they put a lot of thought into signage for smoking prevention.

When asked what could be improved, the staff admitted their relationships with the faculty could be better. Some faculty just come and teach then leave—they are not involved with the campus events, advising, or orientation. Some faculty are not using Starfish, LionPATH, or Canvas.

The staff discussed perceptions about the changing student body, including lower total number, more commuters, fewer in residence halls.
The newest residence hall has no one living there. The one that is used is on campus, but has no A/C. The relatively high cost of living on campus is driving many students to choose nearby apartments off-campus. The student session revealed similar opinions. They are confused about why the newer air-conditioned residence halls are not being used, even though students care more about A/C than having a kitchen. The administration explained that Housing and Food Services (H&FS) has full control over which hall is used. They described proposals to incentivize the use of the residence halls; H&FS said no and offered no alternatives. H&FS has a “capacity equation” that drives all decisions. The administration described the downward spiral they are seeing: fewer options and higher costs causes fewer students to choose on-campus housing and food services. The staff hoped the new Allied Health Building will attract more students to campus.

The staff has noticed that students are much more aware of their debt. They believe the campus needs to educate students better about maintaining debt.

When asked about an increase in mental health issues, the staff said the counsellor is busy all the time, helping students cope with anxiety, stress, transitions to college life and college work. The administration added that their Mental Health Council was recently changed from part-time to full-time and increased from 9-month to 11-month. All agreed that their counsellor is excellent. Concerns were raised about the limited options available in a rural area, especially when a student has no vehicle. The senate officers said the increased demand for student mental health services is increasing around the university.

The staff discussed concerns about budget cuts burning people out and jeopardizing retention, pointing out that it is a lot more cost effective to retain employees than to replace them.

The staff described additional difficulties they faced after the voluntary retirement program took out 75% of their campus’ staff. The administration indicated that their offices of Finance and Business and Student Services got hit the hardest.

When asked about doing multiple jobs, the staff discussed having no back-ups and having little support and few resources. The prevailing sentiment from the staff was that University Park doesn’t care about their campus. The senate officers countered that perception by describing President Barron’s presentation to the University’s Board of Trustees (BOT) designed to help them understand better the many reasons why and how the campuses are essential to Penn State’s mission. The senate officers also affirmed that the University Faculty Senate represents the entire university.

The student session revealed that the students are interested having a 4-year forestry major at Mont Alto.

Some 2+2 students don’t get involved in on-campus life.

Student Council has been talking about seeking better clarity from advising. They experience a lot of uncertainty about what a student needs to do to get ready for graduation. Council wants more. When asked for clarification, it was revealed that the 2+2 students have a much broader range of needs. Campus advisers focus mostly on getting those students the credits they need to move to the next campus. The faculty indicated that the new General Education is complicated and confusing. Two-year program students are not allowed to take integrative courses. Some health and wellness courses can’t be taken to meet the GHW requirement. The administration indicated that advising comes from staff, students, and faculty. Advising notes are critically important. They are seeing more faculty using advising notes, now. The administration described creating an annual SRTE-like student survey on advising and adding disgruntled faculty members to the Advising Council. Advising is complex, suggested solutions are sometimes contradictory, so there is no easy solution.
Some faculty described having some good connections with University faculty in their disciplines. Others expressed some concerns about being left out of funding opportunities offered to colleagues at University Park in their discipline. One faculty member described being a department of one and needing to rely on faculty from other places for disciplinary community and support; the department chair at University Park was credited with giving good support for these efforts.

Faculty discussed the advantages and limitations of the increasing use of Zoom for special interest meetings. (This was well before the pandemic put almost everything on Zoom). It was agreed that the experience is far worse when everyone else is together in a room but the one person on Zoom. Some spaces at University Park are not good spaces for Zoom meetings.

Faculty talked about asking for help from University Park related to faculty promotion. They brought in a professor and explained their processes for successful promotion. There was such a large gap between what he said is done individually by faculty in large departments and what is done collectively by faculty at small campuses, that the visitor eventually said, “I don’t know how to help you.”

The faculty discussed many aspects of advising that are not working well and the risks caused to students when they get the wrong advice. Advising errors are causing students to take longer to get their degrees.

The faculty discussed a serious lack of clarity and equity in how their service efforts are measured in promotion and tenure decisions. Advising a club and standing at a table for an event carry the same weight. What does 20% mean? Some faculty feel trapped performing specific service overload, since they are the one person on campus best suited to do it. The administration pointed out that faculty service can be designed with a coherent theme in the narrative statement of the dossier. The administration gave some examples of mentorship and meetings with faculty to discuss discipline-specific examples of how service can connect to teaching and research. The senate officers offered examples and suggestions. The administration affirmed their goal to continue seeking ways to maximize a personally rewarding mix of research, teaching, and service expectations for faculty.

The faculty discussed the limitations some students have with getting involved in co-curricular activities on campus, due to their need to work for a living. The administration agreed, saying that more grants and fellowships could be given. The administration discussed publicizing child care subsidy and attempting to run an Adult-Learner Focus Group in Chambersburg, but it had low attendance. The discussion turned to the need for broader prior learning assessment needed for students with prior experiences as seen in local community colleges. The senate officers pointed out that the university does have an Office of Prior Learning Assessment.

The faculty requested sabbaticals for teaching line faculty to help them re-invest in disciplinary skills development and recharge their batteries. They gave examples of teaching line faculty not being eligible for many funding opportunities and career accolades, like getting emeritus status.

The faculty discussed several problems with insurance benefits. It is becoming more and more expensive with less and less coverage. The senate officers discussed university-wide concerns about affordability and availability.

The administration concluded by praising their part-time adjunct faculty identifying the phenomenal job they do, especially in workforce training for adult and part-time learners. Adjunct faculty account for 25% of the instruction done and 21% of all the faculty at Mont Alto. The administration mentioned giving adjuncts a small raise recently. Adjuncts have representation on the local faculty senate and can also apply for funding to do professional development.
Penn State York visited October 22, 2019 (7 staff, 7 student, 5 faculty, 9 administrators)

The faculty said they appreciate being able to teach rigorous courses to small numbers of students.

The students praised free parking, good research opportunities, a communicative Student Affairs office, fun and exciting clubs and co-curricular opportunities, the mid-day common hours (M-F), free tutoring, helpful professors, free counsellor, and their large active international population. The administration praised their international students for their leadership and athletic abilities.

The administration praised the helpfulness of periodic staff meetings and the Staff Advisory Council, saying, “The staff helps us see better what’s going on at the campus.”

The staff described athletics opportunities for students, then outlined some issues impeding more sports teams being added. Women’s sports teams are more difficult to sustain, since the campus has only 40% women probably due to more male-oriented majors. The athletics staff also described unavoidable elevated costs for athletics teams associated with the University’s agreement with Nike. Having compliance mandates to purchase expensive brands limits purchasing power and strains the small athletics budget. Elevated costs were not offset by Nike rewards. There is only one regional faculty representative for athletics. They also described several instances where student athletes and faculty had problems and conflicts associated with the athletics travel-make-up process. They asked for streamlining the process and establishing a clear understanding of expectations.

When asked about relationships with faculty, the staff started off saying interactions were limited, but overall they felt they have a good working relationship.

The faculty senate officers asked about the new construction observed on campus and learned about the Entrepreneurial Studies program and their benefactor, Mr. Graham, a local businessman who is very supportive of the York community. The staff discussed scheduling and office space challenges experienced during construction. There was a great sense of urgency to get everything done by July, since the July Board of Trustees was scheduled to meet at the York campus.

(NOTE: This was before COVID-19 pandemic modified the BOT meeting schedule. Thus, this concern is now moot, but it was an issue for staff for over half of the 2019-20 academic year.)

When asked about connections with University Park, the staff pointed out that they lost their local financial aid office, and students are now referred to an impersonal call center, where people are wait sequenced.

The staff discussed several challenges associated with Risk Management, describing delays and extra work in processing personnel contracts.

When asked about their relationship with upper-level management, some staff admitted that they have not yet had a lot of connection with the new chancellor. Staff reported that the new chancellor interacts more with students than the last one. He attended a recent important event, but they wanted him to know that he appeared quite distracted by his phone. Several faculty said they are quite happy with the current chancellor, describing him as visible and interactive. Others indicated that there are still some morale issues. They would like to see more celebrations for scholars and teachers.

The students said they’d be well-served to have residence halls, which would allow wider range of co-curricular programming.

The students described some issues associated with the lack of professional advising. Faculty advising is assigned by discipline, and some good professors are not good advisers, especially for
2+2 programs. The senate officers identified these as ubiquitous issues, then discussed the distinction between curricular advising and disciplinary mentoring. The students conceded that they complicate the advising process by changing their program of study, which resulted in a change of advisers. Their first adviser was not notified of the reason for the change. The administration clarified that they do have an email process for notifying students when there is a change to their adviser.

Some students talked about having a 4-month delay in receiving their insurance cards when insurance was purchased through the university. The administration explained that York does not have a campus health service. The advocates office is now in place that might have a new social worker to help.

Students were eager to weigh in on *One Penn State 2025*, identifying several things that would have to change, including being able to use any Penn State gym, take any Penn State class, earn any Penn State minor. The officers described how the university is examining the distributed nature of Penn State and how to address location-specific barriers.

The faculty discussed food service challenges, including not having many students come through the student building to get food between classes.

The faculty had many complaints about the tiered health benefits structure, but questioned the reason for the final tier being under $100K when there are many people paid more than that. The officers discussed some recent reports from the senate benefits committee.

Faculty complained about the top-down demand for them to use Starfish, without anyone providing any evidence that using Starfish improves retention.

Faculty described York being behind in technologically advanced classrooms and requested more autonomy about how to design classrooms.

Faculty discussed the gender gap within disciplines and how obtaining an additional degree and more experience did not translate to higher salary. Faculty described having targeted programs for women on the tenure track.

Faculty also discussed the problems faced with class scheduling, including the demand to schedule unpopular Friday classes and the mandated 15-minute passing time between classes. Their regional competition has made popular schedule adjustments (e.g., not scheduling classes on Friday) to satisfy the local students’ interests, but Penn State York faculty were told they can’t do that. This sends mixed messages about how important retention is to the university.

Faculty described a two-year old pot hole in the student parking lot and being dismayed that the campus lacked the funds to repair the parking lot.

Faculty lament move from being an academic community to a corporate community. They feel like there are more top-down demands from people who don’t have much understanding of the higher education culture.

The faculty fretted about the apparent weakening of shared governance in decision-making. The senate officers gave some examples where shared governance has worked.

The faculty described frustrations about not having more influence in recent risk management decisions, especially regarding things they have been doing a certain way for decades.

The faculty discussed various Workday problems, such as getting people paid, as well as new faculty not having access before the first day of class. They lamented the lack of flexibility to develop efficient systems for the campus community. It reportedly hurt creativity and opportunity. Some described it being impossible to get students paid in the same semester they
were working. Some described trying to use professional organization funds to pay students, but Risk Management said no. Some faculty switched to giving students independent study credits, but then got in trouble for offering too many independent study courses. It is very frustrating to be required to do many more new things that do not ultimately improve the outcome.

The faculty described having heavy recruitment obligations, because only the faculty can recruit for York-specific programs. They said the York admissions people are only allowed to do general Penn State recruiting. The administration also reported significant dissatisfaction for generic Penn State advertising. The fear of loss is so great that everybody is struggling and finding it more difficult to move forward. The 2+2 message is not as positive as it used to be. Offering comparable financial aid packages is critical. They indicated they should consider offering more programs. They fear things may get worse before it gets better.

The faculty complained about Penn State billboard ad campaign not being specific enough—none say Penn State York. The administration corrected this statement. Penn State York is on the billboards and 11% of their students credit these billboards for bringing them to Penn State York.

The faculty discussed SRTEs, and how there should be evidence-based decisions for how learning assessment is done. The senate officers described a task force for evaluating this.

The faculty complained about not being able to run an under-enrolled course. They asked for equitable size for running experimental pilots. The administration indicated that they do already let a lot of under-enrolled sections run.

The faculty indicated that it is difficult to get clarity on what One Penn State 2025 is and what it will do. The senate officers described some of the senate’s goals for coming up with practical action items. The faculty describe mounting frustrations for One Penn State 2025, after having received a lack of accurate information and limited training for LionPATH and Workday.

The administration gave several more examples of hiring problems faced using Workday. Why would the university want some of our highest paid employees doing this?

The administration described advising issues caused by the limitations of LionPATH to handle the new General Education requirements.

The administration said they are looking into building a residence hall.

The administration showed appreciation for President Barron’s pitch to the Board of Trustees about the demographics and missions of Penn State campuses being quite variable. They asked that the university do that more often.

The administration indicated that the “Discover Penn State” initiative may have a detrimental effect on the commuter campuses.

Prepared by:
Judy Ozment, Faculty Senate Secretary, in consultation with Faculty Senate Chair Nicholas Rowland, Chair-Elect Elizabeth Seymour, and Immediate Past Chair Michael Bérubé.
SENATE COUNCIL

- Michael Bérubé
- Elizabeth Boyer
- Carey Eckhardt
- Janet Hughes
- Maureen Jones
- Brian King
- Josh Kirby
- Lisa Mangel
- Karyn McKinney
- John Nousek
- Judy Ozment
- Rosemarie Petrilla
- Lisa Posey
- Nicholas Rowland, Chair
- Beth Seymour
- Alok Sinha
- Stephen Snyder
- Mark Stephens
- Martha Strickland
- Bonj Szczygiel
SENATE COUNCIL

Report on Spring 2020 College Visits

(Informational)

In March 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic caused Pennsylvania Governor Wolf to issue mandatory stay-at-home restrictions statewide to curb the spread of the virus. The academic units that were scheduled for in-person visits from the Senate Officers were offered two alternatives: meet as scheduled through Zoom or postpone to a later date.

The 2019-20 Senate Officers: Nicholas Rowland, chair; Elizabeth Seymour, chair-elect; Michael Bérubé, immediate past chair, and Judy Ozment, secretary, visited five academic units via Zoom during Spring 2020, including the College of Agricultural Sciences (April 13, 2020), the Schreyer Honors College (April 20, 2020), the College of Arts and Architecture (April 21, 2020), the College of Information Sciences and Technology (April 21, 2020), and the University Libraries (April 30, 2020). Visits that had been scheduled with the Division of Undergraduate Studies and the Smeal College of Business were postponed beyond the end of the Spring semester.

Senate Officers met in groups with staff, students, faculty, and administrators. Each group joined a separate Zoom session to help encourage open and frank discussions. People also took advantage of the option to write comments in Zoom’s Chat feature and to send additional information to the chair through email. These text-based alternatives provided some people greater opportunities to give more complete information and to secure greater confidentiality when addressing sensitive issues. They provided additional dimensions to the information the officers received.

Two basic questions were asked in each session: “What makes your college a good place?” and “What could be improved?” The on-going pandemic also prompted the question: “How are you managing transitions related to COVID-19?” These questions led to rich discussions.

Executive Summary

While colleges vary in their enrollment, academic programs, and the nature of their student populations, there were common positives described at all of them. Consistent themes included describing each other as collaborative, supportive, respectful, and having strong skills. The colleges expressed appreciation for many aspects of their being small colleges in the university. Other common themes were evident:

- COVID-19 Pandemic Transitions Issues
Communications Issues
Faculty and staff discussed concerns about college and university administrators providing uneven distribution of information, making decisions without seeking input from stakeholders, incompletely answering questions, providing leadership, providing support. While some praised their unit’s administrators for good leadership and communication about COVID-19 transition needs, many people described communication gaps and a lack of input into decisions made.

Huge Commitment of Time and Effort
Faculty describe spending long hours planning and preparing alternate lessons and activities, teaching their classes (mostly through Zoom), conferencing with students to alter plans for completing the semester’s work, and evaluating alternative on-line work. Advising and student affairs staff described holding more formal and informal Zoom sessions with students. Many said some of their students needed someone to talk to—relying on them more now than they did in the first half of the semester.

Acute and Troubling Access and Equity Issues
Many students, staff, and faculty described various home-life complexities. There were many reports of technical issues (which this report will discuss below) and disruptions from being at home, but these were not the most worrisome aspects. Many faculty, staff, and students discussed how personally difficult it was for some students, particularly LGBTQ students, to explore issues, be themselves, and share their ideas freely while at home. Many said that when students are living together on/near campus, it provides them an equalizing, safe, three-dimensional learning community—which is beneficial to most students and essential for many of our most vulnerable students.

Remote Instruction Issues
Lacking many dimensions of the residential experience, faculty and staff lamented the difficulties associated with providing well-rounded education. Many faculty described inefficiencies and technical difficulties. Zoom is a meeting platform that many people said does not replicate a three-dimensional classroom very well. Several faculty even said that it subverted and hampered pedagogy in situations where an in-person experience is crucial (e.g., the performing arts and dairy farming) or the students have limited/no access to physical resources (specialty equipment, materials, facilities, plants, and animals). The demand for synchronicity was frequently criticized as ham-stringing a faculty member’s best judgement for how to convert their courses to be effective in a remote-learning arena. Some said it was difficult to properly support their students where they were, such as requiring students to joining class Zoom meetings when their family’s internet was strained by other household needs or, as was the case for many international students or students in other time zones, very late at night or very early in the morning.

Enrollment Concerns
People discussed fears associated with potential enrollment declines, citing many students expressing disappointment with limited educational value they received in Spring 2020. The students were quick to say that they knew faculty were doing all they could under the circumstances, but many also said watching PowerPoint and videos was not the education they signed up for.

Budget Concerns
Some people discussed fears that projected budget rescission could exceed their non-personnel budget and that the personnel easiest to cut were by no means the least useful members of their units, citing student workers and staff as vital to the operations of their college’s operations. Many people felt that budget decisions would affect some units in
very different ways, so the university would benefit from having more open discussions about budget decisions.

- **Feasibility and Logistics Concerns for Return-to-Campus Plans**
  Some faculty, staff, and students discussed worries about shared offices, safe classrooms, and other individual and collective health risks. Some questioned timelines for decisions and making any one-size-fits-all decisions. Others questioned what happens if the virus has a second wave in the fall. Most people felt that the focuses for decisions should be health, critical resource needs, and flexibility.

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Issues**
  Students, staff, and faculty expressed concerns about the lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their respective colleges. Administrators described various recent efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, including promoting development for scholarships and creating “an employer of choice” vision for faculty and staff hiring. Many units felt their limited success to attract diverse faculty was due to strong competition for top talent with peer institutions and the private sector and not having competitive salaries. Many pointed out that the State College community is still not a sufficiently attractive community for top talent of color.

  Some students described being dissatisfied with how their college handled reports of intolerance and bias. In particular, LGBTQ students were reported to feel unwelcome in some parts of the university. Students reporting bias were promised there would be sensitivity training, but said that really didn’t happen.

  Some students gave examples of how their college’s programs and curricula were too centered on the accomplishments of white men.

  One student said his graduate work involved the study of implicit bias and systematic oppression.

- **Reserving Rooms**
  There were several reports of dissatisfaction in the current process of reserving rooms on campus for classes and programs. Staff reported having to scramble for less-optimal alternatives, after losing classrooms that they had a reserved for years. They criticized the current system for not being equipped to account for a reservation’s special needs. Some staff felt that reserving rooms for courses should be given priority over reservations for other purposes. Some staff also said that priority should be given to requestors who had reserved the room in the past, over new reservation requests for that room.

- **Advising**
  Advising was identified as becoming a more complex process, especially with the addition of more complex rules for General Education. LionPATH does not handle the Integrative Studies General Education requirement automatically, which causes more possibilities for misunderstanding, confusion, and errors by advisers and students.

- **Lack of Consultation on Systems Decisions**
  Several units expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of consultation done with faculty, staff, and professionals whose job is it to work with administration systems (LionPATH,
WorkDay, Simba, etc.) Several said the administration did not even request input from them. It was commonly felt that input volunteered by many staff and faculty was not consistently integrated, appreciated, or even heard.

- **Complex Curricular Process**
  Faculty discussed the complications arising from the complex, time-consuming process curricular change process. Some units were updating and improving their college’s curricular processes. The officers noted the work of a Curricular Processes Task Force at the beginning of the year, noting that the Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs was looking into making changes at the Senate level.

**Individual College Summaries**

The individual college meetings included rich details and some unique perspectives and concerns. The next two sections of this report summarize what was discussed at these sessions. First is the summary of things said about the COVID-19 transition. Following that, there is a summary of broader comments and concerns from faculty, staff, students, and administrators of each unit.

**The COVID-19 Transition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Agricultural Sciences (April 13; 82 staff, 26 students, 29 faculty, ~12 administrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Much anxiety and pressure accompanied the transition to virtual/remote work during the COVID-19 crisis. Many people discussed tricky life-work balance. Inefficiencies and limitations were discussed at length, including the lack of essential job functions (files, equipment, facilities, etc.). Students recognized that everyone was trying really hard to adapt, but they also freely admitted that their education during the pandemic was unsatisfying. They gave good examples of faculty using Zoom well; however, the prevailing sentiment was that PowerPoint slides and videos were insufficient to replace hands-on lab and field work (e.g., the dairy farms, making cheese, etc.). When discussing remote learning, students indicated that they had more difficulty paying attention in class, described being assigned heavy online workloads, found it harder to get motivated/excited for doing that work, and struggled to juggle and complete all their assignments. Students praised faculty who showed some understanding; however, they also felt like many faculty seemed to assume students had more free time. Graduate students serving as Teaching Assistants (TAs) reported some faculty just “mailing it in,” making their TA work much more challenging.

At that time (April 13), the students expressed concern about the clarity of information for the new SAT/V/Z grading system, indicating the need for proper advice for making decisions, especially related to certification. The Senate officers assured them that more information was coming and that there would be Senate process for reverting back to the quality grade earned, if
needed. Later, administrators described gathering information on how professional schools and certification boards planned to treat this semester.

Ag Ex staff expressed concerns for the many Pennsylvania businesses who depend on them, reminding the Senate officers that many of their business owners are also Penn State alums.

The staff pointed to recent college investments in technology (Atlas, etc.) as being critical to helping them adapt to a virtual environment. Staff expressed concerns about the Garden Centers being denied (by the governor) “essential business” status.

While the staff was grateful for integrated college-wide messaging during COVID-19 crisis, they collectively agreed that they felt over-communicated about COVID-19 and under-communicated about other things. The administration said they appreciated learning about this perceived imbalance. Extension staff recommended starting an extension-staff-only listserv. Staff strongly encouraged administration to do an autopsy of recent decision-making.

Staff indicated that PA state budget cuts could have a much larger impact on this college. Administrators agreed, noting that serious budget cuts have already hit them twice since 2010.

The administration described receiving many concerns about commencement. They said the graduates and their families were so looked forward to celebrating together in-person.

**Schreyer Honors College** (April 20; 19 staff, 5 students, 5 faculty, 9 administrators)

**COVID-19 Transition**

When asked what Schreyer looks like during the COVID-19 transition, the staff identified their college as being very responsive and supportive, including promoting the use of best practices. They praised the SHC leaders for recognizing that technology needs were critical. They admitted to feeling stretched, especially the staff in the public relations (PR) and information technology (IT) teams. The staff described continuing face-to-face admissions work at a distance, robust development work to seek scholarships and stay involved with alumni contacts, career development events through Zoom, planning a robust welcome for new Scholars in the fall, and even holding casual Zoom sessions to help replicate their close-knit living-learning community. They even created a virtual gong, so a graduate could still complete the ceremonial act of banging the gong when submitting their honors thesis.

Faculty noted that everyone seemed to be doing a great job of converting to on-line engagement. Honors advisers reported being in contact with students in their discipline. Faculty said they were amazed how well students shifted to remote learning. They said the quality of classroom interactions was amazing.

The officers asked about how the pandemic might affect students’ progress. The staff noted that Spring 2020 graduates are essentially done with their Schreyer requirements, though some students did defer to Summer or Fall. Faculty praised the college for extending spring thesis proposal submission deadlines.
Staff discussed asking Juniors to consider novel approaches to thesis work that wouldn’t require being on campus and asking students to apply right away for thesis funding, even though awards could not be made until Risk Management cleared their work as safe. They are also encouraging students to consider completing thesis literature reviews. Faculty indicated that Schreyer Juniors are in bigger trouble for making progress, due lab access restrictions and cancellation of internships and study abroad.

Flexible plans for fall, starting with fall orientation, were being made. The staff said they had a clear sense that Schreyer Scholars wanted to come back to campus in the fall.

The faculty praised the design of the SAT/V/Z grading system to help students. They praised Starfish for helping flag students who were not connecting to remote classes. The faculty discussed concerns about access and time-zone issues for students in other countries, ghosting on Canvas, having to bring students home from overseas, and having to re-write program requirements for students who could not complete the experiences they signed up for. Faculty hoped that honors thesis completion requirements would be sensitive to the fact that some students did not have access to any of the physical information resources from the libraries.

Faculty addressed various issues faced by students, including those with very different home lives, students with non-optimal learning situations, and students in jeopardy of not completing certification requirements.

Faculty discussed the need for leadership to help people maintain productivity and happiness in a sustained crisis. They recommended the upper-level administration publish a collection of web links addressing such things and reflecting on all that we’ve learned about higher education during this pandemic, because “the future of higher education is being rethought.”

| College of Arts and Architecture (April 21; 14 staff, 18 students, 8 faculty, 8 administrators) |
| COVID-19 Transition: |

The staff pointed out that their new dean’s listening tour became a crisis management tour with the onset of COVID-19. Faculty and staff praised the Office of Digital Learning for help with the COVID-19 transition to working at home. Faculty praised the energy, creativity, and inventiveness of their students.

Students praised faculty who were accommodating and flexible, creative substitutions using materials they could find at home (Legos, paper, etc.), and the effective online use of interactive concept boards and 3D modeling. Some students said their project work after Spring Break was planned to be done digitally anyway, so it translated well to the remote format.

The students and staff noted that, even though people were being quite inventive, it was just not possible to replicate at home the motivation people get when interacting in the studios.

Staff advisers said one-on-one advising appointments were still building good relationships, providing valuable interactions and insights.
Faculty described time consuming efforts needed for the transition to remote learning. Some described how their normal, frequent drop-by interactions in the studio had expanded to much longer sessions online, tripling or quadrupling the number of interactive hours spent with students. It was typical to learn of 16-hour+ work days. For example, one faculty member described working 12-hours per day doing student-by-student adjustments to master’s level fieldwork plans, then doing 4-5 hours of their own work.

Students and staff described ongoing difficulties that students faced, especially those in programs that rely on residential experiences, including not having access to instruments (piano, guitar, etc.), supplies (clay, ceramics, paint, etc.), equipment (rigging, etc.), special spaces (theater, digging in the soil pits, etc.), and technology (cutting edge software, printers, etc.). Many faculty emphasized that the **power of place** is a critical element of their endeavors. Space matters pedagogically. Physicality is critical. What their students are creating is their professional portfolio—which is far more than just a GPA.

Remotely, people are working from very different spaces—many with families and lives that greatly complicate working, learning, and growing. Faculty said they felt surprised and intimidated with how much pressure was put on them to find remote learning solutions. Faculty, staff, and students described students having challenges with personal time-management and organization, faculty changing deadlines for assignments—some into the final week of classes. Other problems included limited-bandwidth internet, insufficient phone and computer storage, limited minutes on phones, and on-screen fatigue. The staff worried that, if this continues, the students who are really struggling will struggle even more. The students concluded that some kinds of hands-on experiences will never translate to online. The faculty described being able to focus on other learning objectives, for now, but admitted they will eventually run out of those things.

Every group expressed extreme frustrations with the Zoom interface. Many agreed it was subverting their pedagogy. Some identified it as not being synchronous enough, especially when trying to work with percussive synchronicity, performances, and ensembles. Some identified Zoom as a meeting platform that does not come close to replicating the collective brainstorming and problem-solving that happens in a three-dimensional space, especially a studio or a theater, when the class is looking at art together from the same vantage point. It was difficult to share hands-on brainstorming together and to collectively craft artist ideas through Zoom. Many faculty described missing the intense collective reflective experiences when working together on a production. Faculty expressed serious concerns that the university administration might become too focused on how cheap and efficient online learning is. One staff member concluded by saying, “I don’t see how anyone could look seriously at what we’re doing this semester and say we should do this intentionally.”

Staff described working with students whose Maymester plans, summer jobs, and internships got cancelled. Students said they needed to know more about their alternatives. Staff indicated that students were becoming more resistant to the idea of paying tuition for something that couldn’t be hands on and looking into other options (gap year, community college, etc.). One faculty
member offered the results of an informal survey in her class, asking students who would come back if Fall was remote; only two said yes. Faculty asked for clarity on a decision date for fall semester, since people must make plans. The administration said they recognized the many needs for answers in time to get things in place for fall. They described some of the many details that go into making decisions—some were out of the college’s and university’s control, including local transportation, local businesses, virus testing and contact tracing, saying, “We’re at the mercy of the virus and government decisions.”

Faculty expressed concerns about feasibility and logistics of coming back to campus in the fall, including social distancing and sanitation in classrooms and the chances of a second COVID-19 wave in the fall. The officers indicated that the best thing faculty can do was to put contingency plans in place while awaiting more news. The officers and the college administrators discussed how answering such questions touch every aspect of higher education.

The administration discussed the large opportunity costs associated with policy decisions. They urged the president and provost to provide flexibility and as much information as possible in such times of crisis. Colleges face different sets of problems, some are unique. Some things can be taught remotely, but some are not readily translatable. Would it be possible to start the semester in residence in November, if not in August? For the A&A college, some time in-residence is essential to delivering an excellent education.

Faculty wondered about future administrative mandates, such as the imposed mandate to go synchronous in the spring semester. They asked if the Senate needed policies for such things. The Senate officers discussed faculty Senate policy considerations, including what it means to be “in residence.” How would a faculty member be sanctioned for not teaching in a specific way? The officers pointed out that the precipitous announcements made after Spring Break were clearly driven by the pandemic emergency shutdown, which accelerated necessary and understandable blanket administrative decisions. Until then, the officers said, “Who would have thought that we’d need a policy saying that faculty cannot be told what goes on in their classroom?” The faculty indicated that any mandated teaching methods that are not based on quality of learning won’t work.

Faculty spent time discussing the huge importance of campus being an equalizing space. Faculty said students were greatly missing what students do for each other—cross-peer support in joint and collective ways. Not only are the studios safe spaces for creating, but they are also often viewed by students—especially those from vulnerable populations (such as LGBTQ students)—as safe places to live their truth, form their identity, and find support. Faculty said the kinds of things students could share in class was stifled because they were at home with family members. The administration thanked the officers for reporting these concerns. They agreed wholeheartedly with the characterization of their college as a safe space and not just for the students. The Senate officers said they had not heard an equity argument that was more poignant.

Staff mentioned noticing that the A&A college and its faculty were getting much better recognition for their particular skills during the COVID-19 than they did before; the arts were
valuable in times like this. They praised recent public-facing virtual performances produced by the college. They also described how some of their students had discovered new and unique opportunities in the university, such as a student being asked to do a design and photography project for another college.

Many staff self-identified as the invisible people—the ones who work behind the scenes, doing all the set up for instruction, making systems work, and catching crises before they happen. Before campus closed in March, maintenance staff described growing increasingly anxious about family health concerns, while they became increasingly more careful cleaning musical instruments between uses. They said they were relieved to be at home for health reasons, but really looked forward to getting back.

College employees indicate that there are serious concerns about possible budget rescissions due to COVID-19 economic issues. This college has fewer opportunities to secure external funding than some colleges and may be faced with personnel cuts. It is important that everyone keep principles of equity and a comprehensive educational mission in mind as decisions are approached on these matters. Faculty were concerned about the hiring freeze including colleagues on renewable contracts. They said some of their colleagues are crucial to the existence of their programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Information Sciences and Technology (April 21; 19 staff, 4 students, 8+ faculty, 8 administrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 Transition:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many staff said Dean Sears was an amazing leader during the COVID-19 situation, providing careful, detailed information, direction, and assurances and making the experience a positive one for everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff felt especially lucky to have leadership that supports online delivery, which enhanced their preparedness for the COVID-19 transition. They praised extensive resources built over the last 15 years from the college’s robust online delivery systems. They described faculty talented in online delivery helping other faculty get up to speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone praised the helpfulness of the IT Help Desk and Learning Design, including helping get people up to speed in Zoom. People also praised the flexibilities they were offered, learning about various options, and being able to decide what they wanted to use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff said it was enormously valuable to have the IST Director of Learning Design on a number of committees across the university, as it was important to get a perspective of how the university was adapting to remote learning. They praised enormous levels of collegiality among units in the university as being crucial to taking care of business during the COVID-19 transition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students discussed Spring 2020 transition survey of students. Some comments were just “people being mad at the situation rather than at IST.” Substantive survey comments indicated that several faculty were doing good work, but they wanted faculty to provide more real-world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
modules and to allow students to “re-do” assignments. Respondents discussed not getting as much out of lectures and readings as they do with hands-on learning. They also complained about being tested on technical details that were not covered in class that they said contributed to escalated cheating on exams. The administration noted that they have growing concerns about the use of sites like Chegg and Course Hero. They hired students to find things on Course Hero to get them taken down. Unfortunately, as fast as they could get things removed, they were replaced with new ones.

Faculty discussed various aspects of remote teaching. They said they most people did a really nice job of doing the Zoom Pivot, noting that they were pleasantly surprised that Zoom could handle the large numbers of students participating and that engagement and participation was larger than expected. Some faculty noted their female students were much more engaged. They also liked Zoom features like Chat, polling, and breakout rooms. Some faculty noted that they had already been recording their class lectures before the shift to remote learning.

From the cybersecurity vantage point, the faculty expressed concerns about Zoom security risks, including what happens behind the scenes and connections with servers in foreign countries. The faculty briefly discussed other options with better security and noted that students were not included in the decision to select Zoom.

Faculty said one of the biggest transition problems in March was the demand to remain synchronous. They said they wanted some answers for future offerings. They strongly requested being able to choose whether their courses would be synchronous or asynchronous. Many had strong opinions about what they wanted to do.

Faculty discussed the problem that some specialty software was limited, so students couldn’t use it at home. At the time of the meeting, they were in the process of making adjustments, working with partners to shift the burden away from students and to help the students connect to the labs virtually, so they could use lab software at home with a virtual desktop environment. Some faculty were quick to point out that these expanded access features should be routinely made available to the IST World Campus students in the future, even after this pandemic is over.

Faculty noted that having students working on group projects remotely was challenging, especially when students were in different time zones. They concluded that some things would not work as planned, so they had to reduce that part of course. Changing gears and thinking through alternatives took an extraordinary amount of time, although some faculty noted that it was much easier/simpler to get guest presenters to “come to class” remotely.

Faculty described pulling together a list of technical resources for students (Office 365, Zoom, etc.). They said it would be useful for the college and the university to provide coherent messaging about such resources to faculty, staff, and students. Others noted that additional messaging about libraries and institutional information resources should also be shared, including how to access proprietary media through the library’s institutional licenses.
Faculty described surveying their students for impressive things they learned while doing remote learning so they could consider carrying them forward as good hybrid practices in the future. These included using cloud services, screen-sharing computer code on Zoom, and designing useful alternatives for snow days.

Research faculty noted that the college initiated a seed grant opportunity for COVID-19 initiatives to support students whose internships were cancelled. These grants were to provide alternative opportunities for students to meet internship requirement for their major.

Administrators mentioned significant crossover with crushing Zoom-meeting schedules during the days of pandemic.

University Libraries (April 30; 23 staff, 4 students, 20 faculty, ~12 administrators)

COVID-19 Transition:

So much was unknown about the COVID-19 pandemic, making planning difficult. The Senate officers noted diligent work being done university-wide and announcements for Fall semester would be June 15.

The staff were quite pleased with the leadership and communication skills of the libraries dean. The dean hosted well-attended weekly forums during the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff also said Town Halls and HR communications had been helpful.

The staff said the pandemic shutdown exposed some holes in the libraries’ communications channels, but those were being repaired. They appreciated getting more frequent communications and hoped it would continue after the crisis is over.

Staff appreciated special COVID-19 related resources, including having publishers open access to their resources. They commended Provost Jones for talking up Open Educational Resources (OER) and providing funding for faculty to prepare their own resources. They hope faculty will learn more about it. Staff recommended cross-training staff to pick up more OER, so they can promote OER quickly when asked.

Staff discussed their concerns about a budget rescission. They felt the libraries would benefit from having much more open discussion and transparency about budget decisions. Many popular and valuable services (front line, special collections, etc.) involve the use of wage payroll student employees working alongside full-time staff and/or faculty. The staff worried about cuts in wage payroll and staff. If the libraries lose wage and staff employees, but must provide more services to the university, the college must be more flexible with how work gets done, including having faculty take up some of the services that staff do now.

The Senate officers asked the students what they would push to preserve in the libraries. Immediately, the first answer was interlibrary loan (ILL) as it is used heavily by many people. The students also identified graduate assistantships and internships as being very important to them.
The faculty advocated for stable internet across the Commonwealth. It is really a visceral issue that has become acutely problematic during the COVID-19 shut-down. They lobbied for 5G, over broadband.

Faculty identified the huge amount of teaching they do, noting having done over 100 sessions in the last six weeks of the semester during COVID-19 shutdown.

The faculty worried about how social distancing would be extremely difficult in shared offices.

The administration discussed trying to be transparent and having up-to-date information in communications. They discussed aspects of adjusting to a very different way of work in undergraduate services, commonwealth campuses, communications, and cross-training. They said they have been using the COVID-19 situation to address concerns in these areas.

The administration described a big push to guide library users to rigorous quality resources in the curriculum. On campus, once students got into the library, they got hooked. However, when everyone is at home, it is not as easy for students to see what resources are there. During the shutdown, the library made a robust effort in virtual services that were used heavily. Their one-shot teaching arrangements were lauded as a critical way to get more students involved.

**Other Items Discussed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Agricultural Sciences (April 13; 82 staff, 26 students, 29 faculty, ~12 administrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Because of Agricultural Extension (Ag Ext) and applied research, the College of Agricultural Sciences (Ag Sci) was identified as uniquely tied to external stakeholders. They all feel they have a huge real-world impact, including an explicit commitment to the three parts of the Land Grant Mission.

Staff and faculty praised having dedicated employees and colleagues who care and respect each other. They said they appreciate autonomy, trust, and stimulating interactions. Several faculty praised their facilities and cross-university sharing of analytics resources.

Students praised amazing faculty and advisers, the extensive technical depth and breadth of their programs, effective research opportunities, their college’s support for international experiences, and their intimate involvement with hands-on engagement in lab and field opportunities.

Extension staff described ongoing difficulties getting/keeping extension educators. Administrators agreed, saying that Penn State identifies these educators as staff, which limits the reward options. People with these skill sets (especially PhDs) can find much higher salaries in private industry and in some peer institutions. The administrators described focusing recent attention on creating “an employer of choice” hiring vision. Staff also encouraged higher visibility of college-level climate and diversity committees to actively help with critical morale building and retention.
Some staff mentioned being hopeful about the new Workday recruiting process, which looked at the time (April 13) like it might be easier and faster to use; however, the COVID-19 hiring freeze had limited their ability to test it.

Graduate students expressed some dissatisfaction for the ambiguity in their graduate program guidelines, saying they got different answers when asking the same question of different people. They also said that the published graduate student guide was incomplete and out-of-date. When this concern was relayed to the administration, they explained the highly individualized nature of their graduate programs. The Graduate School’s policy handbook the student was referring to was designed to be used university-wide, so it would not have details about each program. They assured the officers that the chair of graduate studies in each program always had the final word on what was required of its students.

Students expressed concerns about the lack of faculty diversity, mentioning several details from the recent “More Rivers to Cross” report and reporting the very small numbers of black faculty currently employed in the college. The administration assured the Senate officers that they understood their students’ concerns and described several recent efforts to hire more faculty of color. They concluded saying, “We’re just not in a sufficiently attractive community.” and “Substantive changes [to the community’s attractiveness] would require bigger players than the top administration of the college.”

Some students described disappointment in how the college had handled past reported acts of bias. They said sensitivity training that they were promised didn’t seem to happen. Students felt that LGTBQ students did not feel welcomed. When this sentiment was relayed to the administration, their first reaction was, “This is very disappointing.” They described several things they had instituted recently, including an LGTB-focused panel (planned for April -- pre-COVID-19) and the recent formation of a brand-new student organization in the college called “Students for Cultivating Change.”

When concluding the Senate officers’ visit, Ag Sci students requested that they get more time during these visits and that graduate students and undergraduates be given different sessions. The Senate chair pointed out that these were extraordinary times and the very large turnout might explain why the session might have felt rushed. He promised the record would indicated that the Agricultural Sciences students wanted more time.

It was privately expressed that some students have significant concerns about “ghosting” or “ghost pledging” in the agricultural fraternity, Alpha Zeta. It was reported that students felt the fraternity had contrived to give bids to ineligible students, such as first-semester students.

Faculty advisers discussed difficulties and frustrations with managing the new General Education requirements. Even though there is a Gen Ed tool available, it was still deemed difficult to understand the different categories. Faculty advisers asked for more training.

Faculty discussed issues with parking that were widely felt to reduce educational value for students and risk compromising their customers’ satisfaction. They described students getting
tickets for parking in almost-empty lots near remote Ag facilities for their coursework (dairy farm, poultry center, etc.). Shuttle times were deemed insufficient, so faculty felt forced to lower the total required time students must spend in those facilities because of parking limitations. Faculty also complained about the college being required to pay high parking fees so that the meat lab customers could pick up something they bought. College administration said that parking was outside their scope and hoped for support from the provost.

Faculty expressed discontent about very long waits (up to 1 hour) experienced while trying to escape the parking garage at 5pm.

Faculty described unreasonable problems when dealing with Aetna, such as repeatedly being denied claims (e.g., 6-7 times). Senate officers replied that they have been raising such Aetna issues with the president and provost at Faculty Advisory Council meetings and the Health Care Advisory Council, in hopes of affecting change in contract renegotiations.

Faculty said they believed Penn State does too little on wellness programming, lamenting the obvious gap between “we care about your health” and “we will help you maintain it.” Faculty described the increasing financial burden faced by employees just to gain access to campus recreational facilities. They said fees have become so prohibitively high that some faculty and many staff are now unwilling/unable to pay. They asked for consideration of free access to “low-tech” facilities (e.g., racquetball courts, indoor track, etc.) for all employees. College administrators said they hoped the president and provost would be supportive. The officers noted that the Board of Trustees ultimately controls decisions about fees.

Faculty described various concerns about non-reimbursable expenses, such as dependent care when traveling on university business and annual dues for professional memberships. The Senate officers said there would likely be concerns about people abusing such systems. Faculty discussed variabilities in departmental policies for reimbursable expenses. The college administration noted that a deeper dive would need to be made about departmental variations and that child care was outside their scope. They hoped for some support from the provost on this issue.

The Ag Sci faculty governance organization leaders discussed recent revisions in their constitution’s bylaws and standing rules calling for greater faculty engagement. They described changing the governance system from being administration-controlled to being faculty-controlled. They said it was an ongoing and slow process to entice faculty to serve on their standing committees.

Faculty noted concerns about the complex, time-consuming process for making curricular changes, citing examples and describing some associated advising challenges for programs. The officers noted the work of a Curricular Processes Task Force at the beginning of the year and that the Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs was looking into making changes.

Schreyer Honors College (April 20; 19 staff, 5 students, 5 faculty, 9 administrators)
The Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) members praised the breadth of the Schreyer experience, noting that many colleges’ students are represented in the Schreyer Honors College (SHC).

Students praised the small-school feel with large-school resources, supportive relationships, and unique opportunities. They appreciated being competitive together, without competing with each other.

Staff and faculty identified their passion for high-achieving Schreyer Scholars. Staff described being proud and mindful of representing the Schreyer name, working together and striving to set the bar high for themselves, each other, and their students.

Staff and faculty praised the SHC leadership, including recent cross-unit task forces charged to think of new ways to do things, embrace novel ideas, take some chances, and assess the Schreyer Experience. Staff described how honors faculty are eager to get involved with and champion Scholars. They praised the Faculty Advisory Committee’s dedication and recent efforts to shape learning outcomes for Scholars. The staff pointed to specific faculty-focused programs in the college (e.g., Leadership JumpStart, Distinguished Honors Faculty Program, etc.) that help extend student learning outside the classroom. Alongside course base honors experiences, the staff described providing wider and broader range of services to the students, including more self-care programs.

The SHC staff characterized the college as operating something like a small start-up or small college. In that light, they do sometimes feel their teams are stretched thin and could use more help; although some other staff said the SHC staff is the right size for an academic unit that is no student's primary affiliation.

When asked about challenges, the staff discussed the desire for a more diverse student body. The administration indicated that the diversity issue is a real problem faced by many honors colleges across the country. The under-represented minorities (URM) population tends to be more risk-adverse and may be reluctant to associate with honors. The administration described some recent efforts, including creating a new board for URM students and hiring an Assistant Dean (AD) for Equity and Inclusion. This AD had been reaching out to discuss SHC to current Penn State URM students eligible to be Schreyer Scholars.

Scholarship funding is considered to be especially helpful for attracting diverse populations of color and URM with Schreyer-quality credentials. Staff noted that it was currently not possible for them to counter lucrative offers received by prospective students of color from other places.

When further addressing recruitment and retention of students, the administration described plans (pre-COVID-19) to initiate a summer bridge program to give HONORS 101 to high-achieving students who might be at risk when starting college, in hopes of providing them a cohort community. These plans were moved to start in Summer 2021. The administration described getting many requests for emergency funds from vulnerable students, fielded by the Director of Development and Alumni Relations. Recently, the Assistant Dean for Equity and
Inclusion had been joining the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs when engaging with students at risk. The administration concluded by saying that they always practice a great deal of flexibility and use a very personalized approach when intervening with students at risk.

While most opportunities are available to all Scholars, there was some discussion of the lack of scholarship support for students who enter the college in their second or third years. Some staff indicated that new scholarships should be need-based scholarships, not limited to when the student entered the college, because a substantial number of Schreyer Scholars have up to $30,000 of "unmet need," several of whom are out-of-state URM students. SHC Administration said they would love to be able to provide scholarships to more Schreyer Scholars and are pursuing large gifts development toward those goals.

The staff praised their recent 2018 renovations, saying that the facilities in the control of the college are great. However, they complained that common facilities, shared with Housing in the residence halls buildings, are not perceived as being up to the caliber expected in the SHC.

Staff expressed significant disappointment in the university room-request process, describing the recent loss of a specific large classroom that had been used for years for their Thesis Boot Camps, because students were allowed to reserve room for study groups. The room had key networking capabilities needed for the Boot Camp, which were perceived by the staff as not needed for the study groups.

SHC students discussed uneven quality of advising, noting that some advisers are fantastic, but others are less than pleasant and some make mistakes. When asked for details about mistakes, they said it wasn’t mistakes in Schreyer focused advising, but problems with complex multiple degree program planning.

Students described how the 14-credit upper-division honors requirement and thesis requirement are more difficult to meet than the honors requirements in their first two years. They contend that these requirements prevent people from being free to do things they want to do and learn, like studying abroad. The administration found it surprising that people felt unable to study abroad, since students do get some honors credits waived when they do. Some students criticized limited honors courses offerings and/or having to do honors options in their major courses. One identified getting limited help to plan their honors thesis and one contended that the thesis requirement was not very valuable in their program of study. The students felt that greater flexibility and more options in the requirements would be helpful. The administration said the FAC discussed the 14-credit requirement recently. The administration indicated that honors requirements at this level are intended for disciplinary depth. Honors options and thesis work are flexible enough and are designed to help students gain experience with self-structured honors work.

Students requested offering more special-topics honors seminars and better advertising the Paterno Fellows (PF) honors seminars. The administration said the PF seminars are available in LionPATH and didn’t need more advertising. Students also suggested offering an ENGL 202H course to help strengthen the Schreyer community in the Junior year and bring Scholars more of
what they need. The administration said that ENGL 202H had been finalized and was expected to run in Fall 2020.

In Fall 2019, the Faculty Advisory Committee discussed what should done about observed increases in student stress. They felt that high achieving, super-involved students could benefit from information about time management. They also wanted to know if Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) was getting a boost in funding and staff to meet the increasing demand seen by faculty. The officers described recent presentations from Ben Lock about provisional services, but much about funding was unclear in April.

**College of Arts and Architecture** (April 21; 14 staff, 18 students, 8 faculty, 8 administrators)

Faculty and students in the College of Arts and Architecture (A&A) praised intense, rich, personal interactions with each other and collaborative spaces. Staff praised helpful, talented colleagues. They expressed pride that the students navigated the college so beautifully. They discussed collaborating on shared goals, such as goals for diversity and inclusion.

Staff expressed continuing frustrations with college and university communications staff for treating creative activities as entertainment, not as scholarly work comparable to traditional research. They felt that this practice creates a continued lack of visibility for scholarship in the arts.

Staff discussed cross-college efforts for updating and expanding the first-year experiences for students, including dealing with college life and trauma, as well as integrating the students into majors. Staff described issues they’ve faced when not included in curricular decisions, especially related to first-year seminars, saying that they are the ones who must fill the in gaps if a curricular experience doesn’t span what the students really need to learn effectively. They asked to be consulted on curricular decisions.

Staff discussed having a difficult time when seeking room reservations for their large classes (>350). The Optimizer did not assign classrooms for some courses, so those classes had to be moved to 8 am to get rooms. They concluded that perhaps the university, as a whole, is trying to offer more large classes than it has physical capacity to accommodate. (This will clearly get worse as COVID-19 social distancing requires larger spaces to accommodate smaller numbers of people.)

Graduate students discussed difficulties they experience because they had little to no prior teaching experience and/or limited preparation for teaching before getting set loose in a classroom. They said just sending them a link is insufficient. They asked to get more proper training and guidance.

Minority students described how their program’s curriculum was not diverse. They said that when minority students come to a very white Penn State (University Park), they are immediately taken out of their comfort zone, so it was unfortunate that this discomfort persisted in most of their coursework, noting that at least five of their required courses focused almost exclusively on
the work of white European males. They said they had to go looking on their own to find professionals who look like themselves. They felt this was ridiculous. Required courses in a well-rounded education should provide ample opportunity to include others. They found this situation disconcerting, and noted that some students had been discouraged enough to drop out of the major.

Students described dissatisfaction in followup from several students reporting acts of intolerance by a faculty member. They also complained about faculty in a few courses changing their syllabus mid-semester, including the class schedule, mode of delivery, and the amount of work required. (This was before the COVID-19 shift to remote learning.)

Graduate student described frustrations with obtaining software and other cutting-edge technology in a timely manner, citing delays and several levels of bureaucracy impeding critical rapid access.

Students conveyed a request from students with special needs that they be consulted more. The Senate officers put them in touch with leaders of the Disability Access Initiative.

Students discussed facility maintenance concerns on the third floor of the School of Visual Arts, including reports of defective sinks and reports of asbestos falling from the ceiling.

Students requested greater efforts to have a more connected college, perhaps including shows, showcases, and events throughout the college.

One student complained that their college has no representation in the newly elected 2020-21 University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) student government.

Students in the Graphic Design program feel their program is seen as an outsider in the Stuckeman School compared to Architecture and Landscape Architecture. They feel that the other two programs get more advanced technology, equipment, and space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Information Sciences and Technology (April 21; 19 staff, 4 students, 8+ faculty, 8 administrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Staff and students praised the closeness of their small-college community in the College of Information Sciences and Technology (IST). Staff appreciated working with professional colleagues and having many opportunities for professional growth. Staff especially praised Michelle Corby, Assistant Dean of Academic Services, and Karen Brewster, Director of Administrative Operations and Faculty Affairs, for helping the staff to think and function much more collaboratively.

Staff praised the college’s young alumni for doing amazing things in their jobs and careers.
Students praised their professors. Faculty praised the astounding growth in the undergraduate population, resulting also in a growth of the tenure track faculty, bringing the college more research in new area.

Information Technology (IT) staff said they were especially grateful to be IT staff in the College of IST.

Staff identified the college as being in a growth mode, which includes exciting new opportunities along with growing pains. Important capacity-building issues had created some upheaval and occupied a significant amount of the staff’s time, including how many advisers are needed, how much space, how many classes must be offered, etc.

Staff expressed general concerns about their college outgrowing one building and potentially losing some attention from college leadership when the dean and other college leaders move to another building. The administration said they appreciated learning of these concerns.

Staff explained that IST doesn’t have departments, so all existing support systems are college-wide. However, they described recent changes in faculty governance and new programmatic faculty leadership (in the form of “Professors in Charge” and “Coordinators” for Faculty Areas). Staff identified these as good growing pains, but admitted to working on figuring out the new structure (i.e., who to go to for what). The administration confirmed that Faculty Areas were new and everyone was still learning.

Some staff expressed concerns about the college’s decision to separate reporting lines (faculty report only to faculty, staff report only to staff). While there were valid reasons for doing this, it created a communications divide (e.g., separate listservs), which severed some connections between faculty and staff. The administration expressed interest in learning about the listserv concerns. They said they have recently been promoting the use of the Faculty&Staff listserv, but that was still a work in progress.

Staff praised the increased college-level support for students, including student engagement, student organizations, and diversity engagement. They noted the college was working on filling key positions.

Staff reported feeling a mismatch on what is celebrated in the college and what is achieved, citing frequent announcements about grant awards and less attention paid to teaching or staff accomplishments. They requested the college recognize others more often. Administration explained that news of grant awards happens year-round, but there are fewer occasions when teaching and staff are recognized with awards.

The IST staff suggested that Penn State 2025 should completely rethink how the university does online learning. They said World Campus has been an amazing champion and has helped bring awareness to the importance of online learning, but they believe there are better models for delivering online education. The staff described concerns that the IST college pays too little attention to the needs of their online students when rolling out new degrees, determining
teaching loads, and doing course and program revisions. They said that college must continue to focus on meaningful ways to grow opportunities for online learners in IST.

Many of the students described how IST was a discovery college for them, describing transitions from Science or Engineering. They praised the availability of interdisciplinary research and helpful advisers. Graduate students clarified that there were few inter-lab collaborations in IST, though they did know of some collaborative connections throughout the college and with other colleges.

The student survey respondents requested that the IST faculty provide more information about careers, since they know that 90% of them were in the workforce before they started teaching. They especially wanted better clarity on careers for graduates that don’t want to do programing.

Students discussed limitations on scheduling courses, including the strict enrollment controls on the entry level course, IST 110, that prevents non-majors from exploring IST majors. They also expressed concerns about students not being allowed to schedule courses for their minor as early as they can schedule their major courses. They said it would be especially helpful for seniors to be able to schedule all the courses they need in their senior year at the earlier date.

Students who had worked in industry before starting IST programs recommended providing more practical experience to all students, beyond internships, and giving internship credit waivers to students who had prior experience in industry.

Faculty discussed frustrations working with Senate and university management systems (curriculum, LionPATH, etc.). They said it was their staff who were trying to get these systems to work. Getting answers to questions was frustrating—sometimes the questions asked were not understood and they’d get answers that didn’t make sense, sometimes it was not clear what questions to ask. They said there needs to be a better bridge between policies and the systems. Administration noted that their Faculty Council was working on a proposal for curriculum oversight in specific Faculty Areas to help clarify curriculum management and get better buy-in from the faculty on how to use it in the college.

Faculty discussed significant discontent during the piecemeal rollout of various university systems (e.g., LionPATH, WorkDay, classroom scheduling system, etc.). These huge institutional processes were led by outside experts and they were difficult to influence. They said faculty voices were not heard, voices from the Commonwealth campuses were not heard, and even IT voices from across units were depreciated in the rollout process. Messages from professionals whose job it is to work with these systems were not integrated, appreciated, or listened to. IST Faculty concluded that it was such an enormous job to play an effective role and there were such limited rewards for doing that kind of service, that it wasn’t worth carving time away from their other professional obligations to push further. Administration agreed that it would be easily a half-time job just to sit on the laps of the people designing these programs. They said that if a faculty member had been asked to put significant time into the design or decision-making processes, then the college could have put some resources into that, but there
wasn’t an ask. One administrator noted that this was not unique to Penn State. Having been at two other institutions, they saw little consultation there, either.

The faculty pointed out disconnects between policies and the systems used, such as the assignment of classrooms. For example, the use of a specific classroom in the past should allow preferential access to that same classroom in the future, but after the new system was implemented, they were told the system doesn’t do that. They concluded with, “Making the organization change to what the system can do is backwards.” The college administration said that many of their college’s systems have been implemented from the point of view of people who study systems implementation.

Research faculty indicated that the college had been very supportive, including seed grants for new tenure-track faculty. They said the rapid growth and changing programs in the college had provided more opportunity to collaborate with other programs around the university (e.g., the Intercollege Data Sciences program). The administration discussed other challenges associated with growth change management, including providing mentoring and process support for larger numbers of faculty going through promotion and tenure. They concluded by saying “growth problems are good problems to have.”

Faculty noted that messaging about research around the university still tends to be college-focused and college-specific. It would be nice to have consistent messaging across college for intercollege research for attracting students, faculty, and sponsors.

**University Libraries** (April 30; 23 staff, 4 students, 20 faculty, ~12 administrators)

The libraries staff said it is a great place to work with students, faculty, the community, and even other universities to meet people’s needs. Staff praised transparency, collaboration, networking, and the extensive skill sets of their colleagues.

Libraries Student Advisory Board members praised the libraries for being informative and helpfulness.

The faculty appreciated the libraries’ entrepreneurial spirit, the wealth of resources—both financial and intellectual, being part of an active cohort, and being able to provide uniquely valuable research contributions. The faculty prided themselves as being one of the most productive library faculty, which was considered especially remarkable since there is no advanced degree in library sciences at Penn State. They also expressed pride in the amazing amount of excellent teaching done by librarians—from foundational information literacy to data science to copyright and beyond.

The staff and faculty both said that many people in the college wish for stable leadership in the Libraries. Recent turnovers in associate deans (ADs) has created challenges and soon the dean was retiring. There had also been new department heads in many areas. The faculty said their leadership’s vision keeps changing. The staff said they want their voice to be included in decision-making. The new ADs changed how people get information. The staff said they see it as
a problem that people must leave the university to get promoted, then come back at a higher level. The faculty noted that the current dean had made it clear that she does not hire from within for leadership positions, yet leaders hired from outside don’t always appreciate how they award tenure in the libraries. The faculty said this was a factor in the turnover in ADs. The administration said they understood the concerns expressed about the AD turnover. The reality was that these people were very good, so they were highly recruited and had been picked up by other leading university libraries.

The staff described initiatives to shift the libraries’ role from focusing just on University Park to broaden it to be one university library geographically dispersed. They have tools, workshops, human assistance—such as “Ask a Librarian” and Information Resource Specialists, course reserves, Canvas reserves, databases, lending services, and many instructional resources for faculty. The students and staff both said the library isn’t always advertised well enough to help people know what they need to know. They said they want a greater awareness effort to change the cultural perception of the libraries, so people would see that they are a limitless wellspring of information and resources, not just big buildings on campus. They said there is only so much the libraries’ communications team can do, but staff and the Student Advisory Board continued to look for how to send these messages, especially to get students actively engaged. The staff pointed to difficulties that arise as a result of the lack of a comprehensive university calendar.

When asked what is typically done to get students involved, the staff described the role of Engagement Librarians, the annual fall open house, visiting classes, individual support for upper-level students, workshops, and exhibits.

Several staff said that it is paramount for the university to continue to promote Open Access Resources (OAR) and Open Educational Resources (OER), because it is good not to have to pay twice for the same resources. They would love to see students asking their instructors to look into such resources.

The staff said they have seen a drop in the number of standing-appointment staff, as they are being replaced by fixed-term faculty. The staff said that before the COVID-19 crisis there was a lot of hiring, but they have fewer staff. They said they would see a position sit open for a while, then have the administration decide not to fill it. There are many staff who take work home at night—which may be commendable, but risks people being over-worked. They said, in many cases, advertising a “fixed-term” position negatively affects the applicant pool. Fewer staff are doing more jobs, wearing different hats. The administration said the perception of a shift from standing to fixed-term perception was not accurate. Standing appointments were not converted to fixed-term. It is actually the opposite. They said they have very few Fixed Term I appointments.

Staff said they do not currently have a Library Staff Organization and probably should. There were extended conversations among the staff about variable workloads and duties, causing several people to conclude that they don’t really have a good idea of what goes on from department to department regarding structures, trends, or concerns.
The staff discussed past issues with rankism and classism—not just staff vs. faculty but also staff vs. staff (e.g. part-time vs full-time). At a recent Rankism Task Force, some faculty advocated for a staff ombudsperson. The administration provided some longitudinal perspective, saying that the staff used to have more community focused events, a staff organization, and a staff Ombudsperson.

Staff praised the many successes and accomplishments of the Diversity Committee and the Onboarding Committee—such as Diversity Day, Discovery Day, Staff Library Conferences, and campus visits.

Staff indicated that they would appreciate receiving a new emergency evacuation plan for Pattee and Paterno Libraries. When relaying this news to the administration, the Senate officers were told that evacuation protocols are in place—they even know who can and cannot physically get out of the building without breaching confidentiality.

Tenure-line faculty described challenges they have faced trying to meet tenure and promotion requirements, due to lack of professional flexibility. It is difficult to juggle what needs to be taken care in the library with one’s own professional advancement needs. Library faculty have a variety of production and operations roles and a longer annual contract (48 weeks vs. 36 weeks). Faculty mentioned that their Library Faculty Organization (LFO) have recently begun addressing the issue of faculty being required to do low-level work, such as UPS package handling. Faculty explained that roles and responsibilities of faculty and staff are often significantly confused, with numerous examples of faculty and staff positions having nearly identical or analogous responsibilities, except that faculty also “do research.” A lack of understanding by the people who are designing the positions creates tension and leads to the dubious, though perhaps well-meaning, attitude professed by administrators and managers that they do “not differentiate between faculty and staff.” This attitude is disconcerting to faculty who perceive their role to be unique in the libraries.

The faculty pointed out that library faculty at the campuses have even bigger issues. Many of them are the only librarian at their campus, so it is very difficult for them to take time away from the library to get research done or even to take a day off when sick.

Faculty noted that none of the associate deans (ADs) is a full professor, yet it is the AD that must put someone forward for promotion. The hiring pool for AD-level administrators is quite limited, if they were to narrow the focus to seeking an administrator who has a track record for leading well on promotion and tenure.

Faculty noted that turnover can be greater if the college attracts tenure-line faculty only to have them find that the tenure process is not well-supported or understood by the managers and administrators. Some faculty specifically said that they would not have been recruited to Penn State without a tenure-line opportunity.

The Senate officers and faculty briefly discussed reasons why none of the Commonwealth Campus librarians were in attendance at the Zoom session. It was eventually determined that that
librarians from campuses are represented in the University Faculty Senate by their campus representatives, so only University Park library faculty and staff were invited. The officers made note to have the Senate office get a more inclusive list.

Faculty were disappointed that the libraries were being blamed for pushing the Open Access policy, rather than it being a university-wide decision.

Faculty expressed serious concerns about World Campus choosing to hire instructors with “independent contractor” status, rather than “instructor” status. This is a big concern for the libraries, because faculty members with this employment status cannot be given access to services in the libraries.

Faculty urged that the Senate advocate upwards to abolish the term “wage” to identify an entire class of employees, citing it as an archaic term that promotes rankism and has no place in the organization. They said that central HR informed them that “wage” is not an official term, so it is the university culture that needs to change to get the term changed.

Faculty complained that SIMBA requires much more of the work be done exclusively by the department head, taking jobs away from professional staff and putting more work on the department head. This is a particular problem at the campuses, where staff is already limited.

Several library faculty put in a pitch for the university’s print-based learning resources and physical collections. Deliberative and thoughtful decisions must be made for how the college maintains and preserves our excellent collections. People have spent decades working to develop these resources and many people in the university value these collections.

The library administration said they still need to find more ways to get the attention of faculty to strengthen faculty partnerships. They want to help faculty meet their own learning objectives. They asked the Senate to promote these partnerships. The Libraries dean noted that the Libraries/IT standing Senate committee has been used effectively to help expose the faculty to the libraries.

Prepared by:
Judy Ozment, Faculty Senate Secretary, in consultation with Faculty Senate Chair Nicholas Rowland, Chair-Elect Elizabeth Seymour, and Immediate Past Chair Michael Bérubé.
SENATE COUNCIL

- Michael Bérubé
- Elizabeth Boyer
- Carey Eckhardt
- Janet Hughes
- Maureen Jones
- Brian King
- Josh Kirby
- Lisa Mangel
- Karyn McKinney
- John Nousek
- Judy Ozment
- Rosemarie Petrilla
- Lisa Posey
- Nicholas Rowland, Chair
- Beth Seymour
- Alok Sinha
- Stephen Snyder
- Mark Stephens
- Martha Strickland
- Bonj Szczygiel
SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

Interim Report: Curricular Policy and Process Reform

(Informational)

The Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs (SCCA) is committed to keeping Senators and the Penn State community engaged and informed about the ongoing efforts to review our curricular policies and procedures and to keep open opportunities for input. This interim report summarizes ongoing discussions and next steps for SCCA:

During the January 2020 plenary session of Faculty Senate, SCCA requested Senators’ comments on the general topic of consultation in the curricular process. The feedback that was received is attached in appendix A.

SCCA also received the final report of the Curriculum Process Reform Task Force (CPRTF) which is attached in appendix B. Reviewing and recommending changes to curriculum process and procedure is the purview of SCCA; the committee will work with Senate leadership to develop a plan and timeline for considering the Task Force report, and bringing possible recommendations to the Senate body for curriculum policy and process updates in the upcoming academic year.

Finally, SCCA is charged with and maintains partnerships with several offices supporting curriculum, including the Learning Outcomes Assessment office and the Registrar’s office. SCCA representatives are part of the group working on implementation of the new curriculum management system (CIM), and toward integration of this with the new Assessment Management System and with the Bulletin. Already our colleagues in the Registrar’s office have worked to reduce the curriculum change implementation timeline in LionPATH by 6 months. We expect these collaborations and ongoing projects to make additional meaningful improvements to the ways Penn State faculty engage with curriculum; we will bring informational reports to Senate as these move forward.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

• Jeff Adams
• Emmanuel Almonte
• Michael Bartolacci, co-Vice Chair
• Anne Behler
• Justine Blanford
• Laurie Breakey
• David Callejo
• Lisa Chewning
• Wendy Coduti
• Melisa Czymoniewicz-Klippel
• Peter Forster
• Paula Hamaty
• David Han
• Harold Hayford, co-Vice Chair
• Lawrence Kass
• Kenneth Keiler
• William Kenyon
• Suzanna Linn
• Timothy McNellis
• Robert Melton
• Janet Schulenberg
• Andrea Sillner
• Cynthia Simmons
• Margaret Slattery
• Karin Sprow Forté
• Evelyn Thomchick
• Alfred Warner
• Mary Beth Williams, Chair
• Jeffrey Wong
APPENDIX A. SENATE FEEDBACK ON CURRICULAR CONSULTATION

What does Curricular Consultation mean to you?
“allowing all affected faculty departments and campuses to provide input to curricular additions and changes, either directly or through representatives.

“engaging multiple faculty stakeholders at multiple stages. It could mean to flip the consultation to the front end and have the curriculums committee be comprised of those key faculty who would be consulted later.”

“one that truly takes on the many gaps in workarounds that students have found. I know students who are taking 27 credits and freely admit that it is purely instructional reasons. Any thinking we do about the curriculum is meaningless without a commitment to actually creating meaningful limits to student enrollment.”

“it means consulting relevant peers and administrators in order to inform program development and maintenance”

“consultation with connected parties is imperative to ensure in cohesion and discouraging redundancies. Consultation on courses also helps ensure that faculty have the appropriate resources and expertise for course proposals.”

“it means substantive consultation that helps ensure the academic quality of Penn State courses in degrees, supports collaborations were multiple units have an interest, appropriately adjudicate apparent duplications, etc. [ which doesn’t always happen, that’s but that’s what I think it means. ]”

“Long labyrinth of forms that ask for redundant and/or irrelevant information. Then multiple faculty who are overworked and don’t have a trained eye for curriculum votes or ask for unnecessary details that are UP driven”

“all departments to teach a similar course or have students required to take the course have been given the opportunity to respond to the changes. It does not mean that all impacted departments are in favor of the changes”

“consultation and curricular development and revision for faculty. Consultation on content for learners”

“Academic advising to make sure (guaranteeing ) on time graduation”

“nothing. But if I had to guess it sounds like something that a consulting firm would recommend”

“the opportunity to work together and to be heard and listen to regarding curriculum. Some conceptual overlap across “same “course across the University””
“a Penn State course is a Penn State course no matter what campus it is taken”

“the ability of other department/unit to have input regarding changes/impact on the development of courses/curriculum not normally considered beyond the department/unit level”

“working together with colleagues in similar disciplines to formulate curriculum in collaboration. Seeking input”

“that relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to advise. Consent, however is not required at a consultant level”

**What should curricular consultation at Penn State look like?**

“What should curricular consultation at Penn State look like?

“a designated process with appropriate contacts updated regularly”

“perhaps the consultation should be with a disciplinary committee. Individual consultations often become a volume back and forth, so addressing the process to mitigate or reduce the volume would help to streamline the process perhaps.”

“it should not only deal with the idea, but also deal with the messy social fact of students gaming the system. If we don’t deal with weak links in that system, the whole system is meaningless.”

“curricular consultation should be a set of perspectives to help find any issues in a program. (Example missing Gen Ed requirements.) It should not be a content commenting process. Departments have experts in their field, non-expert should not be influencing program content, consultation should also be quicker and more responsive/flexible”

“what do you mean? I have reviewed emails telling me to look at proposals for a new courses in my area of expertise. I think that it is fine the way it is done. If you mean big curricular questions – as in how should we structure our degrees or general learning objectives, I think faculty in the field need to meet face-to-face. That includes faculty at different campuses.”

“we are too large to know what everyone else is doing, nor should we be overly concerned with this. Except when adding courses that incorporate material being taught in other places. Also if changes to a program impact, positively or negatively, another program (it’s listing courses and other programs for major requirements)”

“1. It would be a big help if you could better target consultations. For example, I’d like to receive notifications for all proposals dealing with literature, rather than having to find them, rather late on a curriculum report. Now I receive them sometimes, if someone names me, but it’s very spotty. One mechanism might be to allow faculty to fill out a profile to indicate what we’d like to receive, and those items would automatically be sent.
2. Two weeks isn’t enough time over the summer, during term breaks, or right at the start or end of semesters. Please be more realistic in this regard. Three weeks? Four? And send reminders.

3. This isn’t specifically for only consultation, but please create fast-track, very simple, one page formats for routine course changes (course numbers, prerequisites, etc.) and recertifications for courses that have met the new criteria. There is still the perception, and sometimes validly, that the forms are too long, too repetitive, require the same or similar information to be entered more than once, etc. if there is a repeat, have the form auto fill the repetitive parts. thanks for listening!”

“clearly trained/informed curricular experts provide initial → process → refinement of curricular efforts focused on aligning with institutional Learning outcomes”

“mirrored off Schreyer college academic plan check in. Student centered g→individual focus and personalized”

“I have no idea. See above (consulting firm)”

“’ the consensus of all stakeholders should be considered”

“eliminating liberal arts competency policy. Does not allow courses taken at other Penn State campus is to come for students who are 2+2 to college of Liberal arts programs. Students who may come “home “for summer and want to take a class etc. Eliminating programs having policies, such as criminology at UP requiring CRIM 250, only be taken at UP other offer that many other campuses throughout the Commonwealth”

“all preliminary courses have the same objectives no matter where the course is taught, and yearly review and development among instructors regarding “best practices” and/or innovations. Availability of any student, any campus to understand the course objectives”

“I understand that we need to not leave out relevant stakeholders but it seems …. these who may have an opinion gets larger and larger. A more concise, focus set of consultants with speed up the process”
APPENDIX B. FINAL REPORT FROM CURRICULAR PROCESS REFORM TASK FORCE

Final Report and Recommendations of the Curricular Process Reform Task Force

Background:
On May 7, 2019, Nicholas Rowland, Chair, University Faculty Senate, charged the “Curricular Process Reform” Task Force (CPRTF) to create two reports (or a single bundled report) for the University Faculty Senate Standing Committee on Curricular Affairs (SCCA) that:
• Provides a rationale for reforming curricular process;
• Identifies opportunities for process reform, for example, in terms of efficiency or continuity;
• Recommends both short-term and long-term changes to curricular process.

The rationale for this charge derives from the second principle element of the One Penn State 2025 vision to “achieve curricular coherence.” As stated in the charge:
An achievable, concrete first step toward enhancing Penn State’s faculty-led curriculum is to reform the curricular process, which will facilitate enhancements to curricular clarity, coherence, and variety in time. In addition, once opportunities for improving the curricular process are identified, for example, in terms of efficiency or continuity, a secondary opportunity for exploration is curricular coherence in general and the state of the curriculum itself.

During the Task Force’s charge meeting, the group decided that the work would take two closely related tacks, one focused on defining, in general terms, the curriculum at Penn State and the other reviewing and recommending changes to the curriculum process.

To pursue its charge, the members decided to meet twice monthly to discuss these two broad threads. The members are deeply committed to facilitating the maintenance and continued evolution of a robust curriculum and engaged in a thoughtful conversation ranging over wide, though interrelated, topics. They addressed key questions such as the nature and function of curriculum, the role of faculty, our responsibility to students, and how Penn State’s curriculum reflects one university geographically distributed.

Vision for Undergraduate Curriculum and Supporting Processes:
We begin by stating what might be obvious but is worth emphasizing: our curriculum exists to serve the needs of our students as they seek to complete degrees and other credentials signifying valuable learning that will enrich their lives. Moreover, as a land-grant university, Penn State exists: “to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.” In the twenty-first century, Penn State’s public mission continues through our multi-campus structure, which provides educational opportunities to the citizens of Pennsylvania and beyond. Our structure allows us to meet the imperative of broad inclusion and of providing access to education for diverse populations.

1    Morrill Land-Grant Act (1862)
To frame the key issues and describe the characteristics of a high-quality curriculum, we have drafted a vision for Penn State’s curriculum organized into three categories: Foundational Principles; The Curriculum and its Role; and Characteristics of a High-Quality Curriculum.

I. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

A. Honoring our differences
   With its size and diversity, Penn State serves a very broad range of students who are seeking higher education for many reasons, and who bring with them a range of previous experiences. Our ability to serve the diverse needs of these different student populations derives from the breadth of expertise of our faculty and staff and their commitment to applying this expertise diligently to serve their students. The creation, maintenance, and delivery of the curriculum balances uniformity in the essential learning outcomes supported by the curriculum with appreciation for the diversity of learning environments across the commonwealth.

B. Respect our colleagues
   Faculty are the disciplinary experts – we must respect and trust each other to thoughtfully develop curricula. We must begin with the assumption that we all care deeply about students and their learning.

C. Support faculty communities
   Collaboration among faculty to review, revise, and innovate is essential to keeping a curriculum current. This collaboration requires a sustained and supported commitment from both faculty and administration.

D. Use faculty and staff time wisely and efficiently
   The most important resource we invest in the curricular process is faculty and staff time. This includes the time of those creating new and changed courses and curriculum, and those conducting appropriate reviews. In a university as distributed and comprehensive as Penn State, real and important areas of disagreement will occur and devoting faculty time to address these is critical. Routine changes should be easy (coming from a position of collaboration built on trust).

II. THE CURRICULUM AND ITS ROLE

A. Defining the curriculum
   The curriculum refers to the set of requirements students complete to earn any Penn State degree. These requirements include how courses are defined (description, learning outcomes, prerequisites, etc.) and how courses are combined to meet the requirements for certificates, minors, majors (including options), and degrees.

B. The function of the curriculum
   Penn State’s curriculum is the framework that sets the expectations for the essential learning outcomes for a Penn State-educated student. Through the articulation of general
education requirements; the specific requirements for majors, minors, and certificates; and overall credit requirements, the curriculum supports both shared and tailored learning outcomes that enable graduates to thrive in their personal, social, civic, and vocational lives.

C. The role of the faculty in the curriculum
The creation and maintenance of the curriculum is the shared responsibility of all faculty. The faculty participates in the curriculum through the development, revision, and delivery of courses; therefore, the faculty’s knowledge of the curriculum and the faculty’s teaching is integral to supporting the curriculum. Faculty drive the design of new and revised degree programs to ensure that the curriculum evolves along with developments and discoveries within disciplines, which is often made possible by interdisciplinary collaboration. Faculty inform the priorities of general education as constituent members of the academy.

D. The function of curricular processes
Curricular processes should support the creation, maintenance, and delivery of a curriculum that is responsive to changing educational needs; that supports university, college, division, and department strategic priorities; that embraces disciplinary expertise and interdisciplinary collaboration; and that promotes intentional progression of student learning. Curricular processes should enable faculty to participate in the curriculum, encourage effective collaboration among faculty, and invite faculty to aspire to support and improve the curriculum.

E. Our responsibility to students
Students from across the commonwealth are part of a shared learning environment, and Penn State’s curriculum should be constructed to encourage and enable participation by all students in the full university experience. Curricular processes should be efficient and dynamic to allow curricular innovations that maintain a high-quality curriculum and pedagogical innovations that ensure alignment between our stated curriculum and our students’ experiences.

F. How the curriculum can reflect one university
Our institutional structure allows Penn State to serve students in diverse contexts, to draw upon the distinct affordances of communities throughout the commonwealth, and to tailor administrative and academic units to the priorities that make sense in particular locations. Differences among campuses are a strength of the institution because they reflect and enable responsiveness to the local constituency and community. The curriculum embodies shared principles, requirements, opportunities, and essential learning outcomes that apply to all Penn State students while embracing the diversity of learning environments across the commonwealth.
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF A HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULUM

A. Purposeful and authoritative
Curricula are constructed around the essential learning outcomes that the faculty determine are important for students. Essential learning outcomes are what students should know and be able to do as a result of their sum total experiences at the University, including the requirements for the major, general education, university-wide requirements, and electives. This focus on outcomes recognizes that students may take different courses to meet common learning objectives and empowers faculty to draw upon their disciplinary expertise to promote learning in ways suitable for their students.

B. Orderly
Curricular requirements should not conflict with each other; they should be free of gaps and needless repetitions; they should invite rational progression through courses; they should be in alignment with the disciplinary expertise and qualifications of the faculty.

C. Flexible
The requirements of the curriculum should not impede student education. The curriculum should support and encourage student exploration and pursuit of intellectual areas of interest to them. More specifically, curricula should allow moving between campuses, pursuing double majors and minors, and participating in enrichment learning activities (e.g., study abroad). Faculty and campuses should have the flexibility to bring their individual and collaborative expertise to contribute synergistically to curricula.

D. Balanced
The curriculum should enable students to achieve general education learning outcomes, develop core and specialized expertise within major programs of study, and pursue learning opportunities that develop their facilities as well-rounded citizens in a global society. Major requirements that dictate the disposition of general education and elective credits can undermine balance in the student’s educational experience. Alternatively, distributing students’ 120 credits evenly across aspects of the educational experience (e.g., 30 credits for the major core, 30 credits for courses that support the major, 30 credits for general education, and 30 credits for electives) would balance the multi-faceted aims of a high quality curriculum.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Drawing on our collective experiences with the process, informed by many conversations with faculty and staff from across Penn State, and researching existing documents created by prior groups considering these same curricular topics, we identified several issues for consideration. The series of statements below, some with additional commentary, are presented to frame the recommendations at the conclusion of the report. We begin with a set of items related to the curricular process, which was the primary charge to the committee. We also identified some specific curricular issues and priorities that are challenges because they are inconsistent with the
ideals laid out above. These are connected: a cumbersome process prevents efficient curricular evolution and results in even larger issues developing. A reformed process will allow Penn State faculty to address many of these topics. Finally, we provide some additional context regarding a new curriculum management system that is in its pre-implementation phase.

I. THE PROCESS

A. Curricular processes should allow efficient adjustments to program requirements to ensure Penn State prepares students for the emerging world with which they are engaging intellectually, socially, civically, and professionally.

B. All faculty members, regardless of their location or academic home, are part of the University faculty in their discipline(s). In the context of the curriculum, this implies that the discipline’s faculty in the different colleges work together collegially in the development of new and revised academic programs and courses. Academic leadership enables efforts on the part of the faculty in this regard, including the identification and support of disciplinary leadership. It is important to be cognizant that differences in unit structures across campuses can impede easy identification of and communication within disciplinary and/or topical communities.

C. As experts within their disciplines and interdisciplinary pursuits, members of faculty have authority over the priorities and practices relevant to their discipline(s). The notion of discipline is not isomorphic with department or academic unit, but neither is it unbounded. Respectful curricular processes promote collaboration within and between disciplinary communities. While the curriculum in specific disciplines does not belong to any department, mutual respect and trust of disciplinary scholarly expertise is an important part of the collaborative process.

D. Perhaps the single most challenging component of our current system is consultation, which is the process by which we attempt to ensure appropriate transparency with all faculty and staff potentially impacted by a new or changed curriculum. Our consultation process is also intended to document these interactions. Tacitly, consultation may also be intended to promote collaboration, but there is a general sense that this is not effective as currently enacted. There is clear recognition of the importance of disciplinary communities in supporting robust and inclusive collaboration and consultation processes, and software systems alone cannot be the vehicle to make this happen. We identified several challenges to meaningful collaboration:
   a. the current consultation and review process does not facilitate authentic and constructive engagement in curricular proposals;
   b. the distinct qualities of campuses can be overlooked, rather than appreciated, in the development of new curricular programs;
   c. often, subject matter and disciplinary expertise is juxtaposed against, rather than complemented by, expertise about curricula; and
   d. faculty can feel vulnerable when engaging in the curricular process.
E. Managing a curricular process across the breadth and depth of Penn State would arguably be impossible (or at least impossibly slow) without the use of supporting technologies. These technologies must support our processes and continually evolve for greater efficiency. Moreover, our supporting technologies (e.g., LionPATH) must act to support greater agility in our curriculum and its delivery.

There is a perception, and often the reality, that it is easier and faster to create new courses and programs rather than change existing ones. This is both technical and cultural: for example, the lag time for course and program change to be implemented is unacceptably long. Much of the delay is based on how changes are implemented in LionPATH. In addition, simple changes, including editorial ones, often require full proposals. There should be a straightforward and open process to correct errors and deal with minor corrections.

F. Courses and curricula act in support of student learning, and whether implicit or explicit, all faculty teach with the goal of having their students meet expected outcomes. These outcomes are what define courses and curricula: faculty have the right and the responsibility to implement unique pedagogies in courses in support of student learning; and curricula often provide multiple pathways in support of the same common learning outcomes.

However, the standards for writing learning outcomes vary by discipline, making it difficult to align within, across, and between disciplines and curricula. Moreover, writing learning outcomes appropriate for publication (for example, to appear in the Bulletin) is difficult and there is no coordinated support for faculty to do so. As a result, explicit learning outcomes are not available for all majors and courses, and these are not necessarily aligned across the University.

II. CURRICULAR ISSUES

A. Providing clear pathways for degree completion
Penn State has a long commitment to supporting the 2+2 model of student mobility. This model is not practical for every major because of the need for specialized lower-division courses but a commitment for student access and mobility must be a consideration in all curriculum design. We must support the 2+2 model where possible and communicate clearly to students and families when we cannot.

B. Prescription of General Education courses
Many degree programs prescribe courses for General Education and/or don’t create space for elective credits. As a result, program requirements reduce or eliminate the learning opportunities intended via General Education. It is important to consider whether such prescription is necessary to meet the core learning goals of the major.

C. Prescription of degree requirements such that electives are reduced or eliminated
Many of our majors (when combined with General Education and University requirements) provide few free electives. In addition, some majors provide for free electives by requiring more than our minimum 120 credits, which impacts time to degree and affordability.
D. **Prerequisites and course-sequencing**

There are many courses in which students are very unlikely to succeed without the skills and knowledge developed in the required prerequisites. Disciplinary faculty understand best what students need to progress within their own curriculum and the process of prescribing and updating prerequisites should respect this expertise. However, ensuring student preparation through prerequisites must always be balanced against the degree to which prerequisites limit the pathways through a curriculum and potentially extend time-to-degree for students who fail a key prerequisite course. Prerequisites are not always explicitly relevant building blocks that scaffold subsequent learning. Instead, they sometimes appear to function purely as barriers to course or program enrollment, are enforced to varying degrees, and are overridden in various ways for various reasons.

For prerequisite courses taken outside the discipline, it is important to ensure the course delivers the needed content and clarify that the specific content cannot be adequately acquired in another way (e.g., in the context of the within-discipline course).

Finally, we should be careful that adding prerequisites to specific courses is not, in fact, adding hidden requirements to a curriculum.

E. **Course-sequencing and its relationship to course availability**

Curricula that are highly sequenced, often the result of prerequisites, can lead to graduation delays for students when courses are not available during the semester that students are prepared to take them. This can be exacerbated for students seeking to complete degree requirements within the 2+2 model and for students at smaller campuses or in smaller programs in which not all courses can be offered regularly. As a result, some students are delayed in finishing their required coursework, increasing the cost of their degree. We recognize that this is often a resource issue, although there may sometimes be alternative ways to structure our curricula to help us come closer to providing students with the ability to graduate in a timely manner. We encourage careful attention to these issues in the curricular review process and support innovative approaches such as course sharing that can be used to better meet our students’ needs.

F. **Entrance to major requirements**

There are several programs in which administrative entrance to major (ETM) requirements are used to limit the number of students admitted to majors. This process is beyond the scope of the curriculum. However, many majors have academic ETM requirements that specify a cumulative GPA above 2.0, which can limit student choices, advantage students with economic privilege, and reward students who focus on minimizing risks to their GPA rather than intellectual growth.

G. **Residency requirements for specific enrollment units**

Current Senate policy allows academic units to require up to 24 credits in the major to be taken from the enrolling unit (which cannot be specified except for a capstone course). We should consider whether the 24-credit rule is appropriate for Penn State in the 21st century and consider the implications of making changes to the rule. And, given that the rule provides flexibility, we should consider how we communicate individual college requirements and expectations to students.
H. Balance between location-specific strengths and university-wide opportunities

Multi-campus collaboration for program delivery is long-standing at Penn State and provides opportunities to leverage faculty expertise and innovative technologies while making Penn State degree programs accessible to students who might not otherwise complete them in residence. Ideally, shared programs should provide a balance of online and in-residence courses and provide a learning environment that ensures the same commitment to students’ learning outcomes as provided through residential delivery. While the University defines course delivery methods (hybrid, online, etc.), there are no corresponding guidelines or policies that describe the proportion of courses needed for a residential or shared program. Development of these guidelines and communication to students would strengthen the University’s commitment to ensuring a high-quality learning environment for students who choose to enroll in the programs.

I. Overall complexity

Program requirements often require students to select courses that meet multiple degree requirements simultaneously. This puts disproportionate demand on specific courses, creates bottlenecks in enrollment, and complicates evaluation of degree progress. We often balance this complexity with a reliance on substitutions, which raises several concerns:

- there is an equity issue because of the need for student self-advocacy;
- this creates demands on records staff where there is already high turnover;
- there is a lack of universality of general education substitutions;
- the decisions on substitutions are not carried with a student as they move across units; and
- there is inconsistency in substitutions across units.

III. NEW CURRICULUM SYSTEM

One of the challenges the Task Force has faced is that we are in a time of transition regarding the electronic system that supports the curricular process. Irrespective of the system that we adopt, there will be opportunities to address some of these long-standing issues. When implementing the new system, we must be vigilant to avoid, to the degree possible, the frustrations that result when new systems fail to meet our expectations and needs.

Close coordination with SCCA will be critical to any curriculum system migration. The Task Force endorses the following principles for consideration by SCCA and other entities involved in implementing a new system:

- Forms for new courses or curricula should be easily customizable without IT support. This would include the ability to reword questions, provide clarifying help, and add help buttons in response to user concerns.
- The workflow must be customizable by Senate Office staff and/or appropriate academic units (as opposed to requiring vendor or IT intervention). This will allow colleges and campuses to maintain or adjust their unique curriculum review structures.
• Information provided for course review (new or changes) should focus on the core information that would be expected to apply to all faculty teaching the course. Specific elements that are appropriately changed by faculty to meet particular teaching environments or preferred pedagogies should be limited.
• Succinct instructions should be provided to help faculty with elements with which they might not be immediately familiar (e.g., grade modes, travel, variable credit, etc.), and with additional information to describe any policy restrictions.
• We should avoid requesting information for which there will be a standard “correct” answer.
• Although the process can support reminding faculty of important policies surrounding courses and programs, we should not use the forms as a test of faculty knowledge. We must trust that faculty will abide by our community standards in serving the best interests of the students.
• All review and discussion must be managed within the new system (as it is with the current system). There should be no need for faculty to use outside systems to share comments, have online discussions, etc.
• Any new system must provide an archiving functionality that integrates with our current process so that a single record of curricular actions can be maintained.
• Non-response to a request for consultation cannot stall the review process, but we should avoid defaulting these to a vote of affirmative approval when the review period times out because this can be misleading. Overall, we should encourage affirmative voting.

Recommendations:
Based on these philosophies, challenges, and opportunities the Task Force brings three recommendations to SCCA:

Recommendation 1: Create processes and systems that support the development and maintenance of a curriculum that meets the characteristics of a high-quality curriculum. The Task Force recognizes that faculty will always be striving to improve the curriculum; developing and maintaining a high-quality curriculum is only possible with processes and systems that support this. As with the curriculum itself, we have drafted (above) a set of principles for consideration by SCCA that serve as guideposts for the hard work ahead of reforming our processes to better support our faculty in this critical work.

Recommendation 2: Conduct a holistic review of all Senate curricular policies and procedures, and make recommendations for how to better align those policies and procedures to create curricula that meet the guiding philosophies. The expectation is that such a review would reveal unnecessary policies and restrictions that, if removed, would allow faculty to better design courses and programs to meet students’ needs.

Recommendation 3: Review the underlying intent of common curricular structures, examine how these are encountered by students, advisers, and faculty, and where appropriate, provide
information and support to the responsible units to review the underlying issue(s). A broader study of the curriculum needs to be undertaken to provide guidance.

While Penn State graduates students who have received an outstanding education, the Task Force recognizes that students, faculty, and advisers routinely encounter challenges that could be addressed through changes to our curriculum. There is opportunity to clarify pathways for students, foster intellectual risk-taking among students, and ease the burden of substitutions on faculty and staff.

**Task Force Membership:**
This report is the result of a collaborative effort in which all members participated. All those listed below have leant their support to the overall report with the understanding there are a number of specific elements on which not all members agree. It is appropriate to recognize the important positive contributions that every member made to the process, but no one member should be considered accountable for every element of the report.

Jeff Adams, Co-Chair  
Dawn Blasko  
Penny Carlson  
Kadi Corter  
Michele Duffey  
Denise Solomon  
Janet Schulenberg  
Beth Seymour, Co-Chair  
Rod Troester  
Mary Beth Williams
REPORT WITHDRAWN

SENATE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND FACULTY AFFAIRS

First Day Complete

(Informational)

A report on “First Day Complete” will be presented by Cathy Pacheco, a Regional Manager of Barnes & Noble College.

Background

First Day Complete (FDC) is being piloted by a working group at Penn State University Park. FDC is an inclusive educational resource access model. It provides students with their required course materials for a discounted per credit charge. This model supports academic success by ensuring that every student is prepared on or before their first day of class each semester.

The mission of the FDC working group is to provide the Provost with a recommendation regarding whether the FDC model is in alignment with the University’s affordability goals, and, if it is, whether the University should proceed with a parallel pilot at the Commonwealth Campuses (CWC). The FDC working group is composed of representatives from various units including CWC leadership, Strategic Communications, University Faculty Senate, Student Governments, the Provost office, the Bursar’s office, the Registrar, Information Technology, and Lion Path.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION (2019-2020)

- Vinita Acharya
- Kelly Austin
- Barbara Barr
- Erin Boas
- Gretchen Casper
- Delia Conti
- Renata Engel
- Joyce Furfaro, Vice-Chair
- Yvonne Gaudelius
- Vicki Hewitt
- Peggy Johnson
- Peter Linehan
- Megan Marshall
- Katherine Masters
- Jacob Moore
- Richard Page
• Kathleen Phillips
• Karen Pollack
• Brianne Pragg
• Jay Precht
• Michele Rice
• Diego Santos
• Wen Shen
• David Smith
• Michele Stine, Chair
• Samia Suliman
• Stephen Van Hook
• Tiffany Whitcomb
• Chelsea Wood

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS (2019-2020)

• Kathy Bieschke
• Renée Bishop Pierce, Chair
• Richard Brazier
• Julia Bryan
• William Butler
• Gary Calore
• Alison Chetlen
• Ed Evans
• Beth Farmer
• David Fusco
• Julie Gallagher
• Leland Glenna
• Terrence Guay
• Kathryn Jablokow
• Rosemary Jolly
• Matthew Jordan
• Lisa Kitko
• Angela Linse
• Jonathan Mathews
• Rajen Mookerjee
• John Nousek
• Eric Novotny
• Laura Pauley
• Rosemarie Petrilla, Vice Chair
• Nicholas Pyeatt
• Richard Robinett
• Sue Rutherford Siegel
• Amit Sharma
• Stephen Snyder
• Emily Strohacker
• Bonj Szczygiel
REPORT POSTPONED UNTIL OCTOBER 20, 2020 MEETING

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY BENEFITS

Review of the Principles for the Design of Penn State Health Care Plans

(Informational)

Purpose
The purpose of this report is to review the underlying principles for the design of Penn State health care plans, and, thus, based on existing evidence, data and trends, to inform faculty and aid in the collective determination of whether or not those principles have been effectively implemented and whether or not modifications may be necessary. Also, while this is an informational report, throughout the report there will implications for future potential recommendations to university leadership as well as potential questions for future discussion at the Senate-level during a plenary session. For sake of clarity, this document does not contain explicit recommendations, appropriate for an advisory/consultative report, and does not contain explicit questions, appropriate for a forensic report. In the report, each of the six principles outlined in a March 2016 report will examined, and, please note, the first principle – because of its vast scope and complex underlying justification – constitutes nearly half of the space of the entire report.

Background
In March 2016, the University Faculty Senate was presented an Advisory/Consultative report entitled “Principles for the Design of Penn State Health Care Plans,” which laid out the guiding principles by which Penn State’s health insurance plans would be designed. The Senate endorsed those principles, and they were and have continued to be implemented. A paraphrased summary of the six principles laid out in that report include:

1) A principle of choice for employees in health care plans.
2) A principle of overall cost sharing of 75% of total medical claims paid by university and 25% paid by the employee.
3) A principle of affordability and equity.
4) A principle of informed utilization.
5) The principle of quality, transparency, accessibility, and cost effectiveness should guide the negotiation and management of contracts for healthcare services.
6) A principle of fostering and promoting a culture of health should guide the design of plan features and programs that promote healthy choices and activities, shared efforts to establish tobacco-free campuses, and support the consistent and effective management of health risks.

Many of the actions taken since the implementation of these principles were addressed in reports presented to the University Faculty Senate prior to the March 2016 report that outlined these principles. Those prior reports include the “Report of the Healthcare Task Force” (April 18, 2014), “Report on Employee Contributions to Penn State’s Self-Insured Healthcare Costs” (March 17, 2015), “Report on Health Insurance Plans: An Overview of Issues” (October 27, 2015), the

Unless otherwise stated, data presented in this report are from 2018, the most recent data available at the time of this review. This report will review the important theoretical issues, data, and feedback from faculty for each of the guiding principles above.

**Glossary**

There are several terms used throughout this report that are vital to understand their definition. Below is a list of the key terms and their meaning (as used in this report):

- **Out-of-Pocket (OOP) expenses**: This refers to the portion of the allowed claims that are paid by the employee. This includes the deductible, copay (fixed $ amount), and coinsurance (% of total claim).
- **Premiums (contributions)**: The premium is the amount deducted from the employee’s paycheck each pay period to pay for their health insurance. At Penn State, under the present system, this is a fixed percentage of the employee’s salary and this amount is paid regardless of the amount of health claims filed. In some tables presented in this report, the term “contributions” is used, but its definition is the same as premiums.
- **High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)**: At Penn State, the HDHP is the PPO Savings plan. An HDHP is a plan that features higher deductibles but lower premiums than the traditional PPO plan (see below). For calendar year 2020, the tax law requires that a HDHP must have a minimum deductible of $1,400 for an individual or $2,800 minimum for a family plan. The tax law also sets maximum out-of-pocket limits to $6,900 for an individual and $13,800 for a family plan. The PPO Savings plan has what is called a non-embedded deductible; therefore, the maximum out-of-pocket limits permitted under the terms of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2020 under that type of HDHP sponsored by any employer are $6,900 for an individual and $8,150 for families. (Source: https://www.healthcare.gov/high-deductible-health-plan/hdhp-hsa-information/)
- **Health Savings Account (HSA)**: HDHP’s usually have the option of having an employee set up a tax-free account that can be used to pay for health care expenses. Those accounts are known as Health Savings Accounts. One advantage of an HSA is that any money in the account not spent can be rolled over to the next year and remain tax-free. Not all employers contribute money to their employees’ HSAs but Penn State does based on the employee’s income.
- **Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan**: This is a more traditional type of health insurance plan which tend to have lower deductibles but higher premiums. Further, if the health plan member uses “in-network” providers, the member will be responsible for paying only a small copay or low coinsurance after meeting their deductible.
- **Flexible Spending Account (FSA)**: An employee enrolled in a PPO Plan can also deposit money into an account tax-free to use for purchases of health care. However, unlike an
HSA, an employee cannot roll over any unused money in their FSA at the end of the calendar year. If the money is not spent, it is lost. Penn State has designed its FSA to permit up to a $500 carry over, which is permitted by the IRS.

- **Member:** A member is either the employee or family member enrolled in one of the Penn State health plans.

**Additional Information**

It should be understood that Penn State is self-insured, i.e. that it is the university that pays the allowed portion of all health care claims that are not paid by the employee. Aetna (for medical claims) and CVS/Caremark (for prescriptions) act as third-party administrators. In other words, Aetna and CVS/Caremark process claims and provide member services such as care management programs, member communications, etc. Further, Aetna and CVS/Caremark have negotiated prices with health care providers and established which providers are the “in-network.”

The principle of charging premiums proportional to the employee’s salary was instituted in 2012. The offering of a choice of plans began in 2014 and the university’s third-party administrators for insurance switched from Highmark/Express Scripts to Aetna/CVS Caremark in 2018.

**Principle 1: The Principle of Choice**

The University now offers Penn State employees the choice of enrolling in a traditional Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan or choosing a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a Health Savings Account (HSA) that the university does contribute to.

Among peer institutions, 17 of the 25 offer their employees more than one health plan. Several institutions offer more than two plan choices. In most cases, the choices consist of a traditional PPO and some type of HDHP plan. Other choices may include HMOs, plans especially tailored for employees working in certain areas, or plans with fewer services covered. In any case, plan choice is quite common. One distinct feature of Penn State health care plan choices is that the Penn State contributes money to the employee’s Health Saving Account. While all of the institutions offering an HDHP have a Health Savings Account feature, most do not contribute to the employee’s HSA.

**Theory Behind HDHP Plans and Their Benefits:** The concept of HDHP’s was introduced in 1993 by John C. Goodman and Gerald Musgrave. The main issue that HDHP’s were designed to confront was the Third-Party Payer problem. As Goodman explains “if health care is free at the point of delivery, people have an incentive to consume it until it is almost worthless to them. This implies a great deal of unnecessary care.”

---

1. The Peer Institutions referred to in this report are those institutions listed as Peers in the Annual Faculty Salary Survey and listed at the end of this report
In the figure above, if consumers paid for health care out-of-pocket entirely (and health care was a perfectly competitive industry), the prevailing amount of health care consumed would be where the demand curve for health care intersects the supply curve of health care, 10 units and the prevailing price would be $25. However, if the consumer is not the one paying the entire cost of health care, there will be more health care consumed. In this example, if the consumer’s OOP was only $5, they would “demand” 18 units of health care. In order for suppliers to be willing to provide that much health care, they must receive a price = $45. Thus, with the third-party payer total spending on health care is 18 units times $45 per unit = $810. Without insurance, consumers would pay only $25 per unit for 10 units or $250.

This example may be a bit extreme, but it illustrates the concept of third-party payer. With insurance, consumers (may) overconsume health care which drives up the cost of health care and causes excessive spending on health care. The theory is that with HDHP’s consumers pay the full price for their health care services (up to their deductible) so they only spend on health care which they believe to be important enough to justify spending the full cost.

In addition, advocates of HDHP/HSA plans argue that these types of plans not only result in less overall spending on health care, but also incentivize consumers to be more prudent in their health care choices. Additionally, having to pay the full price of health care out of their own pocket, consumers will shop around for the best price (of equal quality) and consider which health care services are important and which ones may not be. With a low deductible plan, the consumer may simply have a $20 copay (after paying some small deductible) for a doctor’s office visit and thus,

---

3 https://slideplayer.com/slide/4829051/15/images/47/Third-Party-Payer+Markets.jpg
choose to visit the doctor’s office even for minor maladies that might require no doctor’s visit.

Even the staunchest advocates recognize one problem with this theory is that lower income consumers may only be able to afford very limited health care and choose to not partake of necessary health care services. Thus, some suggest combining the HDHP with a Health Savings Account that the employer can contribute to so that the lower income consumer can still afford to see a doctor when needed. Also, by limiting the deductibles to some reasonable level, patients who require expensive medical care will receive highly discounted medical care after reaching their deductible. Until the patient exceeds their out-of-pocket maximum, the patient still has a disincentive to seek health care, which should reduce total spending on health care.

The advantage of HDHP’s to employers is clear. Theory suggests that HDHP’s lead to less health care spending by their employees, directly lowering costs to employers who are self-insured, or indirectly by having to pay lower premiums for those employers who are not self-insured.

**Advantage of HDHP’s to Employees:** The two main advantages of HDHP’s to employers are the expectation that there will be less spending on health care by its employees and their employees will be better “shoppers” for health care, but what’s in it for employees?

The advantage of HDHP’s to employees is that some employees may be able to decrease their total spending on health care when they consider OOP and premiums. They may be trading lower premiums for more OOP, but for those who anticipate low total expenditures, the decrease in the premiums they pay may outweigh the increased OOP. This is even more true if the employer also contributes money to the employee’s HSA.

Another advantage to the employee is that money deposited into an HSA is tax free. For example, if an employee deposits $1,000 into their HSA, their taxable income is reduced by $1,000. While people enrolled in the PPO plan can also deposit money into a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), the money in an FSA cannot be rolled over to the next year. Thus, a person in a traditional health plan should only deposit enough money into their FSA to cover their health care expenses and no more. An employee enrolled in the HDHP can deposit more than their expected health care expenses into an HSA and receive the tax-free advantage and be able to roll over the money remaining in their HSA year to year, tax free. There are annual IRS limits for contributions under HSAs, but currently there are no limits to the growth of, and maximum account balance that can be retained.

Another obvious advantage of Penn State’s HDHP is that Penn State will contribute money to the employee’s HSA account (amount varies by income) and since that money does not have to be spent on health care in the year it is deposited, the employee is essentially earning additional income tax-free.

**Arguments in Opposition to HDHP Plans:** First, errors have been identified in the theory of HDHP. Thus, one of the problems with applying the Third-Party Payer problem to health care is that it
assumes that the consumers’ demand for health care accurately reflects the benefits to the user of consuming health care. In other words, most people are not trained in medicine, it is unlikely that they truly know what health care services are important to them. If a doctor sends a patient for an MRI and that MRI will cost the patient $100 in coinsurance, the patient is generally not in a position to determine how much that MRI should be worth to them. If consumers undervalue health services, the assumption that they will overconsume health care when they do not pay the full price for their services is invalid. Mack (2016) notes that HDHP’s are rooted in the classic economic idea of the “rational consumer.” He points out, though, that the assumption of “rational consumers” requires that consumers “have all the relevant facts about the products or services they are planning to purchase.” This is not necessarily true when it comes to health care, as most people do not know enough about medicine to determine the importance of certain health care services.

Another problem is that there are external benefits from consuming health care services. “An external benefit occurs when producing or consuming a good, in turn, causes a benefit to a third party. The existence of external benefits (also known as positive externalities) means that the social benefit (the benefit to the consumer and society in general) will be greater than private benefit.” In the case where consuming a good creates an external benefit, the quantity that would be consumed where supply and demand intersect, as in figure 1, is not the best outcome since the external benefits have not been accounted for. The fewer the people who are sick, the less likely that someone who has not been to the doctor will become sick. Thus, one person’s decision to see their doctor may prevent others from needing to see their doctor. Also, having patients who get sick recover faster by consuming health care services saves businesses money because of less absenteeism. Having more people consuming necessary health care services reduces the likelihood that someone will face a serious condition requiring an emergency room visit and lengthy hospital stay. If that person who ends up needing expensive emergency services cannot pay for those services, others who have insurance or pay taxes will end up paying for those services directly or indirectly. Thus, there are considerable external benefits with regards to health care.

Another flaw in applying the Third-Party Payer problem to health care is that it is often the third party, the health insurance company paying or administering claims, is more knowledgeable about the true cost and benefit of those services than the buyer. The idea behind HMO’s is that instead of the patient, who may know very little about the value of recommended health services, choosing to consume health services, the Primary Care Physician (PCP), who is more knowledgeable will make those decisions and give a referral to the patient if the PCP thinks the services are necessary.

Second, another serious flaw in the theory in support of HDHP/HSA plans is that less may not be better. If the consumer has to face the entire cost of a doctor’s visits, that consumer may forgo seeing a doctor when their symptoms are mild or bearable. Many times, if their condition was not serious, the symptoms will disappear on their own. However, if their symptoms are the result of a

---

5 (from https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/glossary/external-benefits/).
more serious nature, skipping the doctor may lead to a medical emergency resulting in a hospital stay, which is quite a bit more expensive than a doctor’s visit, prescriptions, and follow-up testing. By trying to save a couple of hundred dollars, the patient who skipped seeing a physician right away can accrue sizable, but avoidable, future health care costs in the tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, most of which will be covered by the insurer or self-insured party. Thus, encouraging people to be more thoughtful about using health care services, the main premise of HDHP plans, may actually lead to significantly higher costs in the future.

One of the conclusions drawn by a study conducted by the USC Schaeffer Center, consumers with HDHP’s are reducing their spending on health care, but not in smart ways: “Our research has shown that consumers on these plans do not increase their use of preventive care, which would reduce overall costs. We don’t see an increase in price shopping for care. We also don’t see a reduction in use of unnecessary medical services.”6

Knowledge@Wharton (2019) reported that some major companies have backed away from HDHP plans. JPMorgan eliminated high deductible plans for workers making less than $60,000 a year. CVS is re-evaluating their offerings of HDHP’s because they have found that some of their workers had stopped filling critical prescriptions. Also, in the same article, Wharton Health Care Management Professor Atul Gupta describes medicine as “an expert-based service where you basically do what the doctor asks you to do…The average consumer doesn’t very often know what’s wasteful and what’s not wasteful.” He also notes “so because they cut back on care indiscriminately, there’s a view that perhaps in the long run these plans (HDHPs) merely delay the costs…until the problem becomes more severe.”7

If Gupta is correct that people enrolled in HDHPs put off medical services, which may happen with high deductibles, HDHPs are actually making their enrollees sicker in the long-run. This also means that in the long-run, self-insured employers, like Penn State, who offer HDHPs may actually experience higher medical expenses. On that note, also in the Knowledge@Wharton article, Robert Field, Lecturer in Health Care Management, explains that even if businesses recognize that high-deductible plans cause employees to avoid routine care and potentially increase long-run expenditures on health care, the individual employer still figures to save money by offering these plans. By the time the employee experiences the more serious illness, that could have been avoided with routine care, that person is working for another employer or retired and on Medicare. It is not the current employer’s problem. How accurate this statement is for an institution like Penn State is not clear. Many faculty are tenured and spend their entire career (starting at the point they are hired by Penn State) at Penn State. It is quite possible that turnover is lower at Penn State then the typical employer. If so, Penn State’s decision to offer an HDHP may cause Penn State’s expenditures on health care to rise more rapidly in the long-run.

---

7 Http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/high-deductible-health-plans-pros-and-cons/
Along the same line, a Kaiser Family Foundation study found that 43 percent of insured patients said they delayed or skipped physician-recommended tests or treatments because of the high associated costs. Further, about 80 percent of emergency physicians said they are treating insured patients who have sacrificed or delayed medical care due to unaffordable out-of-pocket costs, coinsurance, or high deductibles.

Michael Chernew, Professor of Health Policy at Harvard University, was once a big advocate of high-deductible health plans until he studied them. In his study, he found that employers who switched from offering a traditional health plan to a HDHP did experience a “remarkable” 12% decline in their employees’ health care spending. However, he was quite disturbed by what he discovered. “He found no evidence that workers were comparing prices or making wise choices on where to cut, even after two years in the new plan. They visited the same doctors and hospitals they always had. They reduced low-value medical services and medically important ones at about the same rate, raising questions about their long-term health.”

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), certain services are deemed as preventive and are delivered at no cost to the member. This is the case for both the PPO and PPO Savings plan. For example, those employees and their dependents enrolled in one of Penn State’s health plans, an annual routine physical exam is covered at 100%. Starting in 2020, there is a list of many prescription drugs that are now part of a preventive drug list with lower coinsurance under the PPO plan and that bypass the deductible under the PPO Savings plan. Coinsurance still applies under the PPO Savings plan.

Willis Towers Watson, at the request of Penn State, found that in 2018, 38% of the adult members (aged 18 or higher) enrolled in the PPO plan had a preventive visit while 41% of the adult members enrolled in the PPO Savings plan had a preventive visit. It is encouraging that there is no sign that those in the HDHP plan were any less likely to forgo primary care in this instance. However, as previously mentioned, the annual physical is at no cost to the member in either plan.

To determine if those enrolled in the PPO Savings plan are forgoing care, the analysis needs to go deeper. In many cases, disease prevention requires prescriptions, lab work, and follow up doctors’ visits. It is quite possible that some in the HDHP/HSA plan had a preventative doctor visit, such as an annual physical, were diagnosed with some chronic condition, prescribed medicine and lab tests, and follow-up doctor visits, but did not act on the doctor’s recommendation because of the cost.

The main benefit of an HDHP is that it will incentivize consumers to be better shoppers. Data provided by Penn State’s Center for Health Care and Policy Research found that those in the PPO

---

9 According to a poll by the American College of Emergency Physicians. Cited in ibid.
10 “remarkable” was Dr. Chandra’s choice of word.
Savings plan were more likely to use the IBM Watson Health Care Benefits Mentor tool. In 2019, the year it was introduced, only 16.3% of the people enrolled in the PPO Plan used the tool, while 28.7% of those in the PPO Savings plan used it. It is not clear if this is a good indication that those in the PPO Savings plan are being better shoppers or if they are second guessing their decision to enroll in the PPO Savings plan. There are pricing tools provided by Aetna and CVS/Caremark but respondents to the Survey on Satisfaction with Aetna and CVS/Caremark indicated utilization of those tools to be around 20% of the members. Unfortunately, no cross-tabulation was performed on the survey results so we do not know if those on the PPO Savings plan were more likely to use those pricing tools or not.

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least two future recommendations, which include, but are not limited to:

1. Penn State consider conducting further research to determine if those enrolled in the PPO Savings plan are less likely to follow up on certain diagnoses. For example, if someone enrolled in the PPO Savings Plan is diagnosed with high cholesterol, are they less likely to take their prescriptions and have follow-up doctor appointments and lab work?
2. Penn State consider investigating if those enrolled in the HDHP are more likely to be utilizing the pricing tools available from Aetna and CVS/Caremark. In relation, perhaps regardless of the outcome, the university may wish to promote the use of these pricing tools for all members of Penn State health insurance.

Plan design issues at Penn State: Another issue is that the disincentives to consume health care services under an HDHP plan are limited. Once a patient has met the deductible, the remainder of that year’s health care claims are reimbursed to the same degree as those in the PPO plan. If the plan has lower out-of-pocket maximums, like Penn State’s HDHP/HSA plan, the incentive to forgo care is even less. If the HDHP plan does not result in reducing its members’ health care spending, the only thing that offering the HDHP has accomplished is collecting fewer premiums, increasing the premiums for those in the PPO plan and/or deductibles, coinsurance, and/or copays of those enrolled in both plans.

Further, Penn State’s HDHP/HSA plan actually has the lower out of pocket maximums in totality, although the medical portion of the out of pocket maximums in the PPO plan are lower. The PPO plan has what is called an embedded deductible and once one member meets the individual deductible, their medical claims move to coinsurance. There is a separate out of pocket maximum for the prescription drug portion of the PPO plan. Under the PPO Savings plan, which has a non-embedded deductible, the entirety of the deductible needs to be met before claims move to coinsurance, regardless of the number of members covered by the plan. The consumer is supposed to face greater risk by enrolling in the HSA which serves as motivation to be more selective in which health care services they choose to consume. However, once they have exhausted their deductible, the incentive to forgo health care consumption may be mitigated by having lower out-of-pocket maximums. Of the 25 peer institution health plans used for benchmarking, only two other schools had designed their health plans such that the PPO plan had the higher out-of-pocket
maximums, although it is unknown if the deductibles are embedded or non-embedded.

The table below shows the maximum expense an employee enrolled in one of the Penn State health plans must pay out of their pocket for the two plans at different levels of salary based on the 2020 design of the plan. The total costs in this table includes the premium, deductibles, medical claims maximum out-of-pocket, prescription maximum out-of-pocket, and accounting for the HSA contribution in the PPO Savings plan. In all cases, the person enrolled in the PPO Savings plan has the lower risk; i.e., faces the lower maximum out-of-pocket expenses in case of high medical expenses. This outcome suggests that not only do employees with few medical claims benefit from enrolling in the HDHP/HSA plan but so would the very high medical claims employee. The separate out-of-pocket maximum for prescription drugs under the PPO plan significantly impacts these totals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INDIVIDUAL PLAN</th>
<th>FAMILY PLAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PPO</td>
<td>PPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SAVINGS</td>
<td>SAVINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALARY</td>
<td>PPO</td>
<td>PPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>4,104</td>
<td>3,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>4,531</td>
<td>3,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>4,958</td>
<td>3,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>5,385</td>
<td>4,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000 AND UP</td>
<td>5,989</td>
<td>4,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: FIGURES ARE OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES PLUS PREMIUMS
NOTE: RX OUT-OF-POCKET MAXIMUMS BASED ON 2020 PLAN DESIGNS

One possible mitigating factor to the conclusion that those with very high medical claims are better off enrolling in the PPO Savings plan is the Value Based Benefits available only in the PPO plan. Value Based Benefits offer employees enrolled in the PPO plan zero copays and zero coinsurance on doctor visits, lab tests, and medical devices related to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes (both Type 1 and Type 2). If an employee enrolled in Penn State’s health insurance experiences potentially high claims related to those three conditions, they may be better off in the PPO plan since many of the costs of treating those conditions are covered at 100%.

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least one future recommendation, namely, that Penn State consider analyzing whether the structure of the PPO Savings Plan (with lower OOP maximums) continues to align with other priorities for health, equity, and cost savings, based on which employees are choosing to enroll.

The Matter of Adverse Selection: Adverse selection is the concept that when a choice of insurance plans is offered, those who need it the least will choose the lower cost plan while those who most need it most will be forced to purchase the more expensive plan. Depending on the plan design,
the introduction of an HDHP can lead to a situation where those with higher medical and pharmaceutical expenses end up paying more of their total cost than they were before the HDHP was introduced.

Early on in the history of HDHP plans, it is clear that adverse selection was rampant based on numerous studies that came out in the early 2000’s and before. Over time, the design of HDHP’s have been tweaked so as to result in less adverse selection. However, recent studies do show that if an employer switches from a traditional PPO or choice of PPO and an HDHP to offering only an HDHP, the high medical claims members do end up paying more out-of-pocket.

The big concern over Adverse Selection also stems from the fact that, originally, HDHP’s were developed, according to available evidence, explicitly for the purpose of creating Adverse Selection. John C. Goodman, one of the co-founders of HDHPs, discussed that the idea of creating these high-deductible plans was to force high claims individuals to remain in the traditional PPO plan by creating a HDHP designed for lower-cost individuals. He points out that in previous times, insurance companies were allowed to price (charge premiums) policies based on the likely usage of health care services. Under that system, those who had higher health care claims, even if through no fault of their own, paid more in premiums than lower claims individuals. When it became illegal to do that, insurance companies found themselves forced to sell insurance policies, even to those they knew they would lose money on. Creating HDHPs solved that problem.  

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least two future recommendations, which include, but are not limited to:

1. Penn State should consider continuing to offer a choice in medical plans with at least one traditional PPO and one HDHP type plan and not phase out the traditional PPO plan and offer only the HDHP plan.
2. Penn State should consider conducting empirical research based on the data available in its Data Warehouse to ensure that adverse selection is not occurring at Penn State. People with chronic illnesses and/or higher medical claims should not have to pay proportionally higher premiums plus out-of-pocket expenses as a result of adverse selection.

Who is Choosing the PPO Savings Plan vs. the PPO plan? Based on the design of HDHP plans, if employees are offered a choice, we would expect those employees with higher health claims to choose the plan with higher premiums but lower out-of-pocket expenses while those with fewer health claims are more willing to take the chance on a health plan with lower premiums but potentially higher out-of-pocket expenses. Given the correlation of age with the quantity of health claims, we should expect to find the PPO Savings plan to attract a greater percentage of younger employees.

---

12 Goodman (2018), op cit.
The above table shows the number of members enrolled in the PPO and PPO Savings Plan in 2018. As expected, the percentage of members enrolled in the PPO Savings plan declines with age. This data was provided by Willis Towers Watson.

There is also some positive correlation between age and income, so we might expect a higher percentage of higher salaried employees to choose the PPO Savings plan. Also, higher income people, in general, are less risk averse. With the possibility of having higher out-of-pocket costs, people may consider the PPO Savings plan to be of greater risk. Thus, again this suggests that we should find the percentage of employees enrolled in the PPO Savings plan to increase with income.

The table above provides evidence that higher-salaried employees are more likely to choose the PPO Savings plan. The table also shows that those in the PPO Savings plan tend to have fewer medical claims. Another interesting observation from the data presented above, the average allowed claims seems to increase with income among those enrolled in the PPO Savings plan. The pattern is not quite the same among those enrolled in the PPO plan. Some of the reason spending may correlate with income is due to the correlation between age and deteriorating health, but some of it may also be evidence that higher-salaried individuals are less likely to forgo medical expenses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>ENROLLED IN PPO PLAN</th>
<th>ENROLLED IN PPO SAVINGS</th>
<th>% IN PPO SAVINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 29</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 34</td>
<td>1,224</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 39</td>
<td>1,396</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 44</td>
<td>1,392</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 49</td>
<td>1,583</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 54</td>
<td>1,717</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 - 59</td>
<td>1,888</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALARY</th>
<th>PPO SAVINGS</th>
<th>PPO SAVINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $45,000</td>
<td>6,350 $</td>
<td>3,480 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45,000 - $60,000</td>
<td>6,310 $</td>
<td>3,850 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 - $90,000</td>
<td>6,100 $</td>
<td>4,200 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $90,000</td>
<td>6,700 $</td>
<td>4,260 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>6,320 $</td>
<td>4,090 $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* THE PPO SAVINGS CLAIMS PER MEMBER AS A PERCENTAGE OF AVERAGE PPO MEMBER CLAIMS.
because of their cost.

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least one future recommendation, namely, Penn State should consider conducting an empirical analysis to determine if the increase in spending on health care’s correlation with salary in the PPO Savings is the result of lower-salaried employees having a greater tendency to forgo health care because of its cost.

Again, respondents to the Survey on the Satisfaction with Aetna and CVS Caremark indicated that they perceived the PPO Savings plan to be of greater risk. As expected, lower salaried employees are more risk averse than higher salaried employee. The comments on the open-ended question as to why you chose which health plan to enroll in asked in the Survey of Employee Satisfaction with Aetna and CVS Caremark conducted during 2019 found that, indeed, employees were sorting themselves into the various plans based on age and overall health. The results revealed that those migrating to the lower cost HDHP/HSA plan were more likely to be young and less likely to have a chronic medical condition. Conversely, those choosing the traditional PPO plan tended to be older or have a chronic medical condition.

**Principle 2: The 75/25 Cost Sharing Principle**

In other words, the premiums, copays, coinsurance, and deductibles paid by the employee would represent 25% of the total cost of the health plan. Both the PPO and the HDHP/HSA plans are designed this way. It should be understood that there is a fair amount of variation as to what percentage of total claims each member of the Penn State Health Plan actually pays based on their usage and design of the health plan. With insurance, there is always a large variation in the percentage of claims paid out-of-pocket among the members of the insurance plan.

Part of the discussion on the 75/25 cost sharing principle is contained in the next section because the implications of the 75/25 cost sharing principle are far ranging when combined with the principle that the plan have a lower cost for lower salaried employees. It is important for employees to understand that the design of the plan is intended to produce, ON AVERAGE, a 75% university share of health care expenditures and 25% employee share, but that there is considerable variation in the actual cost sharing percentage among employees enrolled in Penn State health insurance plans.

As it is the case with hazard insurance policies, policies that protect people from losses to their car or homes, those who avoid or have minimal losses will pay the highest share of the costs out of their own pocket. For example, if you have auto insurance and you have minor damage, the cost of repair may be less than your deductible, so you pay 100% of the repair cost. Similarly, with health insurance, those who have few expenses will pay most of the cost out of their own pocket because of the plan’s deductible.

Similar to hazard insurance, health insurance is designed with the same concept. Those with large medical expenses will generally pay the lowest percentage of their total cost. The dollar amount paid by those high-claims employees may be considerable, but as a percentage of the total cost, the share is lower than the average 25%. The out-of-pocket plus premium expenses are limited by
annual out-of-pocket maximums, coinsurance of 90% for in-network providers, and copays that are a fixed dollar amount.

How Penn State’s cost share target of 75/25 compares to peer institutions is difficult to gauge. The cost sharing principle is not typically made public. Greg Stoner, Senior Director of Compensation and Benefits, using a listserv, asked HR administrators at the other Big Ten universities what their cost sharing targets are. Six universities responded. Only one of the respondents had a more favorable (for the employee) cost sharing percentage than Penn State’s 75/25. That institution reported they had a 76/24 cost sharing target. One university also reported a 75/25 cost sharing target, while the other four had lower cost sharing targets, i.e. the university paying a smaller percentage of the total costs of allowable claims. Given the small number of responses we cannot conclude, either way, whether Penn State’s 75/25 target is competitive or not against its Big Ten peers. An important variable as well is the overall cost of the plans at each institution. Even though a cost sharing principle may be close to Penn State’s, the total dollar cost incurred by the employee could be significantly different.

It should also be noted that 75/25 means that the plan is to be designed such that forecasted health care claims results in the university paying 75% of the expenses and the employee 25%. The actual cost sharing may differ from the intended target for cost sharing. Below is the actual cost sharing percentage of the university since 2013, which as noted, is retrospective and based on paid claims and premium contributions collected, which differ from those assumed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least one future recommendation, namely, given that the university achieved its target once in the last six years, Penn State should consider adjusting its design of the health plans such that in the worst-case scenario the cost sharing percentage is only 75%. In other words, design the plan such that the university is more likely to err (miss its target) on the side of exceeding that cost sharing target.

**Principle 3: Principle of Affordability and Equity**

Penn State has designed its health care plans to be affordable and equitable by charging premiums based on employee salary and different levels of deductibles in the PPO plan and HSA contributions in the PPO Savings plan also based on salary. The result of this design has been:

a. Lower-salaried employees would be charged lower premiums and have lower deductibles in some plans. They are also entitled to higher amounts of seed money in their HSA.

b. Higher-salaried employees would face higher premiums and deductibles in some plans.
and lower HSA seed money. Their overall contribution should not exceed levels comparable to peer and industry trends. Penn State has limited the premiums of the highest salary employees by imposing a ‘salary cap’, i.e. establishing a premium that will not exceed a fixed percentage of a maximum salary. The current ‘salary cap’ is $140,000.

There are several issues to address in this section. These issues relate to one of two main themes, mainly, the concept of premiums, deductibles, and HSA seed money based on employee salary as well as the interaction of this principle with the 75/25 cost sharing target.

**Premiums, deductibles, and HSA seed money based on Employee salary:** The University implemented the design, where premiums are based on employee salary, back in 2012. The reasoning was that with rising health care costs, the traditional premium structure would result in premiums and overall out-of-pocket costs that would likely require some low-salaried employees to spend a significant portion of their income on health insurance and claims. The university saw the need to keep premiums and deductibles lower for these workers. However, the university felt that it could not keep premiums low for all employees. The solution Penn State chose was to base premiums and deductibles on salary. Starting in 2017, Penn State also varied its contribution to the HSA based on income where lower-salaried employees get a larger university contribution to their HSA.

One drawback to this plan design is that some low-salaried employees may be in a household with a high-income earner to the point where the household could be considered a high-income household. In this case, the household could obtain its health insurance from Penn State at a subsidized rate, creating a situation where a high-income household was being subsidized by other Penn State employees. Further, the standard of living of the household depends on factors other than income. One of those factors is the size of the household. Two households with the same income may have very different standards of living. A household earning a median income with only 2 members will, all else equal, have a better standard of living then the same household with 7 members. Thus, the current system used by Penn State does not account for the difference in household size.

The Ohio State University has taken a different approach from Penn State in trying to make health care more affordable to its lower income workers. They offer a Prime Care Connect plan which has lower deductibles, lower out-of-pocket maximums, higher coinsurance, and lower copays. The premiums are the same, however. For 2020, the deductibles in their Prime Care Connect plan are only $150 individual/$300 family and out of pocket maximums are $1,500/$3,000. Only those employees below an income threshold qualify for this plan but the income threshold is based on size of household. To qualify for the lower cost plan, individuals have to submit a copy of their Income Tax forms. For 2020, the income threshold is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$21,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$29,593</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benchmarking peer institutions, we found only 5 of the 24 institutions offered some type of tiered premiums based on income. All others had the same premiums for all members in the same plan regardless of income. No school among the list of our peers had differing deductibles or HSA seed money from what we could ascertain. Penn State was unique, also, in the sense that the premium was a percentage of salary. For the five institutions which did base premiums on income, the premiums were fixed dollar amounts depending on salary range.

The current Penn State premium structure is that the premium is a specified percentage of income, where the percentage depends on which plan is chosen. The income is capped at $140,000, i.e. those with salaries above $140,000 pay a premium equal to the percentage of income up to $140,000 and zero on income above $140,000.

Indiana University had 7 salary ranges. The highest income bracket was for $250,000 and above. Thus, their income cap is $250,000 almost double Penn State’s income cap. Purdue University had two sets of premiums, one for salary over $44,000, and one for under. Rutgers University premiums are also based on salary. The maximum premium paid is 35% of the full monthly premium on the state’s health insurance plan. For those on an Individual plan, only those with a salary of $95,000 and above pay the full 35%. Those with an income below $20,000 pay only 4.5% of the total premium. A person with a salary of $66,000 would pay 29% of the premium compared to the maximum 35%. For a 2-person plan, the maximum premium is paid by those with a salary of $100,000 or higher, and for the Family plan, the maximum kicks in at a salary of $110,000 or higher. It should be noted that each institution may have different total compensation packages and philosophies which may also impact health insurance plan design.

All of the University of California schools have a plan with four salary bands where premiums are higher for the higher income salary bands. The maximum premium occurs at a salary of $171,001 for 2020. The University of Michigan has three salary bands where the maximum premium occurs at a salary of $64,900.

Subsidizing Lower-Salary Employees: One issue that has arisen in conversations with faculty is how much and who is subsidizing the lower salaried employees. To examine this issue, Willis Tower Watson (theoretically) redesigned the health care plans such that everyone in the plan faced the same premiums, deductibles, and HSA seed money while generating the same 75/25 cost share. The table below compares the premiums in the current structure with flat dollar premiums if everyone in each plan were charged the same premiums.
Using the Flat Dollar Alternative compared with the current structure would result in the changes shown in the tables below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan and Coverage Tier</th>
<th>2020 Current State</th>
<th>2020 Flat Dollar Alternative (Monthly)</th>
<th>2020 Flat Dollar Alternative (Annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PPO Plan</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1.51% of salary</td>
<td>$90.30</td>
<td>$1,083.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Person</td>
<td>3.68% of salary</td>
<td>$220.07</td>
<td>$2,640.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Child(ren)</td>
<td>3.41% of salary</td>
<td>$203.92</td>
<td>$2,447.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>4.69% of salary</td>
<td>$280.47</td>
<td>$3,365.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PPO Savings Plan</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>0.78% of salary</td>
<td>$59.01</td>
<td>$708.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Person</td>
<td>1.89% of salary</td>
<td>$143.82</td>
<td>$1,725.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Child(ren)</td>
<td>1.75% of salary</td>
<td>$133.26</td>
<td>$1,599.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>2.41% of salary</td>
<td>$183.29</td>
<td>$2,199.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tables above show that under the current structure those earning $75,000 a year or more pay premiums greater than their premiums would be if we eliminated the subsidization of lower salaried employees. Those earning below $75,000 would see an increase in their premiums. Those earning $30,000 and enrolled in the PPO plan single coverage, for example, would have their premiums increase by $631 a year, an increase of 2.1% of their salary. That same employee enrolled in the PPO family coverage would have a premium increase of $1,959 annually, an increase equal to 6.5% of their salary.

Under the current structure, an employee earning $140,000 enrolled in the PPO single coverage, for example, is paying $1,030 a year in extra premiums to subsidize the lower salaried employees. This amounts to an increased premium that is less than 1% of their salary. If this employee is enrolled the PPO for family coverage, they are paying an extra $3,200 a year or extra 2.3% of their salary.

The table below repeats this exercise but using the premiums for the PPO Savings plan. Since the premiums are less, the degree to which a high salaried employee will pay in excess of the flat premium plan is smaller. For example, the person earning $140,000 enrolled in the PPO Savings plan for family coverage would pay an extra $1,175 a year compared with the $3,200 difference if
they chose the PPO plan with family coverage.

### Contribution Differences by Salary – PPO Savings Plan

- The chart below compares the current/annual contribution by salary with the flat dollar amount
- The employees with the lowest salaries would see the largest negative impact
- All employees with a salary over $95,000 would see savings from their current contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Current Annual Contribution</th>
<th>Flat Annual Contribution</th>
<th>Contribution Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$195</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$195</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>$234</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>$273</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$312</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>$351</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>$390</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>$429</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>$468</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$65,000</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>$507</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$546</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>$585</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>$624</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$85,000</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>$663</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>$702</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>$741</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>$780</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$105,000</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>$819</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>$859</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$115,000</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>$897</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>$936</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>$975</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$130,000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$1,014</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$135,000</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>$1,053</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$1,092</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>$384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000+</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$1,092</td>
<td>$708</td>
<td>($384)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of the distribution of employees enrolled in the PPO Savings plan vs. PPO plan, a person needs to earn more than $90,000 to see an increase in their premium vs. flat premium structure. The median income of those enrolled in the PPO Savings plan is higher. This enrollment pattern is consistent with the national trend. Part of the reason for this difference is that the tax savings feature of the HSA may be of more value to someone in a higher tax bracket.

A matter of considerable discussion in the review of this guiding principle has been focused on the ‘salary cap’, i.e. the income above which the premium no longer increases. In the Penn State plan, that is at $140,000. The salary cap was changed to $140,000 when the PPO Savings plan was introduced in 2014.
As the table above illustrates, setting the salary cap at $140,000 results in a major reduction in premiums for employees earning above $140,000. For example, an employee earning $400,000 and enrolled in the most expensive plan, the PPO Plan Family Coverage will pay an annual premium of only $6,566. If there were no salary cap, that same employee would need to pay a premium of $18,760, assuming no change in the premium structure. This employee has saved $12,194 as a result of the salary cap. From one perspective, the people earning above $75,000 but less than $140,000 are subsidizing employees with salaries under $75,000, but also subsidizing employees with salaries above $140,000. The employee earning $400,000 but paying $6,556 annually for their insurance is paying only 1.6% of their income on premiums while the person earning $20,000 to $140,000 is paying 4.69% of their salary for the same coverage.

Before this report goes into further depth about this dual subsidization issue, it should be noted that there are valid arguments for a salary cap, which will be presented in this report. It is suggested that discussion of this topic focus primarily on a) whether the university continues the current policy of having higher salaried employees subsidize lower salaried employees and b) if the subsidy does continue, what is the appropriate salary cap?

The next table shows the premium subsidy, using the PPO Plan Family Coverage, at various salary levels as a percentage of income.
Since the increased premium caps off at $6,556 for this plan, the subsidy paid by higher salaried workers as a percentage of income decreases with income for incomes above the salary cap. The peak subsidizers are those earning between $120,000 to $140,000. Those earning above $140,000 pay a subsidy which represents a smaller share of their income. From the faculty perspective, it is easy to understand why many might note that the ‘burden’ of the subsidy for both lower salaried employees, and many of their superiors, rests mostly on their shoulders, and find this situation unfair.

At the request of the Faculty Benefits Committee and Human Resources, Willis Towers Watson postulated what the Penn State health plans could look like if the ‘salary cap’ was raised to $285,000 (the IRS pay limit for 2020) and remain cost neutral, i.e. the same amount of total premiums collected.
The table above shows the changes to the formula for determining premiums as a result of increasing the salary cap but remaining cost neutral. This change would lower the current premiums for everyone at or below $140,000 salary.

The table shows the difference in premiums paid for the PPO Plan if the salary cap was increased to $285,000 compared to the current status. Employees earning $140,000 or less would see a decrease in their premium, while those earning above $140,000 would see their premium increase. For example, an employee earning $285,000 or more enrolled in the PPO Family Plan would see their premium increase from $6,566 to $12,611. The premium increase of $6,045 represents 2.1% of their income. This same employee on the PPO Individual Plan would see their premium increase from $2,114 to $4,090 which represents an increase of just a 0.7% of their income. Further, the lower salaried employees would see their premiums decrease even further, e.g., a person with a $40,000 salary in the PPO Family Plan would experience a decrease in their premium from $1,876 to $1,770. In this scenario, the heavy lifting, i.e., biggest burden of the subsidy, is shifted to those earning roughly $175,000 - $400,000. This shifts much of the onus of subsidizing lower salaried employees onto those in upper leadership positions.
Similarly, the new premium structure for the PPO Savings Plan would be below. The below analysis certainly makes raising the salary cap seem more equitable, if one supports the principle of having higher salaried employees helping to subsidize the cost for lower salaried employees. However, it is important to recognize some of the negative consequences of charging significantly higher premiums for top salaried employees.

**Downside of Having Too High of a Salary Cap:** There are three main concerns about having a salary cap too high. One is that it could impact the university’s ability to attract and retain faculty and administrators. If they must pay premiums that are significantly higher than premiums that would have to pay at other similar institutions, the university may have to offer a higher salary or risk losing out on hiring this person. Two, at some point, the expected out of pocket costs + premiums could represent such a large portion of their expected health care claims that it is hard to justify calling it insurance. Three, if the Penn State plan is too expensive for high-salaried employees and they have alternative health insurance from another member of their household, they will choose the other health insurance. The more higher salary employees that ‘flee’ the Penn State health plan, the fewer the number of employees that must provide the subsidy for the lower salaried employees, potentially raising the cost for the above median salary workers who remain insured by Penn State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALARY</th>
<th>PREMIUM</th>
<th>FLAT</th>
<th>PREMIUM SUBSIDY</th>
<th>% OF INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$884</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$2,482</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$1,768</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$1,598</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$2,652</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$714</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$3,536</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(170)</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$4,420</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(1,054)</td>
<td>-1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>$5,304</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(1,938)</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>$6,188</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(2,822)</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$8,840</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(5,474)</td>
<td>-2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$11,050</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(7,684)</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$285,000</td>
<td>$12,597</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(9,231)</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$12,597</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(9,231)</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td>$12,597</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(9,231)</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$12,597</td>
<td>$3,366</td>
<td>$(9,231)</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next set of tables shows the potential cost share of employees at various salaries who have exactly average out-of-pocket health expenses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Current Annual Contribution</th>
<th>Proposed Annual Contributions</th>
<th>Contribution Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$2,114</td>
<td>$4,714</td>
<td>($2,593)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$3,115</td>
<td>$6,715</td>
<td>($3,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$4,116</td>
<td>$8,716</td>
<td>($4,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$5,117</td>
<td>$11,717</td>
<td>($6,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$6,118</td>
<td>$14,718</td>
<td>($8,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>$7,119</td>
<td>$17,719</td>
<td>($10,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$8,120</td>
<td>$20,720</td>
<td>($12,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>$9,121</td>
<td>$23,721</td>
<td>($14,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$10,122</td>
<td>$26,722</td>
<td>($16,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>$11,123</td>
<td>$29,723</td>
<td>($18,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>$12,124</td>
<td>$32,724</td>
<td>($20,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$130,000</td>
<td>$13,125</td>
<td>$35,725</td>
<td>($22,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>$14,126</td>
<td>$38,726</td>
<td>($24,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$15,127</td>
<td>$41,727</td>
<td>($26,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$16,128</td>
<td>$44,728</td>
<td>($28,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$170,000</td>
<td>$17,129</td>
<td>$47,729</td>
<td>($30,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>$18,130</td>
<td>$50,730</td>
<td>($32,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$190,000</td>
<td>$19,131</td>
<td>$53,731</td>
<td>($34,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$20,132</td>
<td>$56,732</td>
<td>($36,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$210,000</td>
<td>$21,133</td>
<td>$59,733</td>
<td>($38,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$220,000</td>
<td>$22,134</td>
<td>$62,734</td>
<td>($40,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$230,000</td>
<td>$23,135</td>
<td>$65,735</td>
<td>($42,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td>$24,136</td>
<td>$68,736</td>
<td>($44,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$25,137</td>
<td>$71,737</td>
<td>($46,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$260,000</td>
<td>$26,138</td>
<td>$74,738</td>
<td>($48,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$27,139</td>
<td>$77,739</td>
<td>($50,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$280,000</td>
<td>$28,140</td>
<td>$80,740</td>
<td>($52,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$290,000</td>
<td>$29,141</td>
<td>$83,741</td>
<td>($54,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$30,142</td>
<td>$86,742</td>
<td>($56,600)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart below compares the current annual contribution by salary with the new salary cap. The employees with salaries below the current cap would see a slight decrease. All employees with a salary over $150,000 would have an increase from their current contributions.
The column marked PERCENT in the tables above is the premium + average out-of-pocket expenses as a percentage of the average total allowed claims for a person in that plan. For example, if a person in the PPO Individual plan had a salary of $200,000 and there was no salary cap, they would pay a premium of $3,020. The average out-of-pocket expenses per member for people in the PPO Plan and salary above $90,000 is $890 ($850 for those in PPO Savings plan and salary of $90,000 or greater). The average medical claims per member in the PPO Plan with salary over $90,000 is $6,700 (or $4,260 for those in the PPO Savings Plan with salary over $90,000). Thus, the premium plus average out-of-pocket expenses for those in the highest salary band in the PPO Plan is $3,910. The average claims for that same group is $6,700, so their premiums + out-of-pocket represent ($3,910) represents 58.4% of the average total claims ($6,700). In the bottom rows of the table is the salary cap figure that would yield premiums + average out-of-pocket expenses are equal to the percentage of average claims specified. For example, under the PPO Savings Individual plan if we decided that the salary cap should be where premiums plus average out-of-pocket expenses are 50% of average claims, the salary cap should be at $164,000. If we think 60% is fair, the salary cap would be $218,500.

The calculations for the PPO Family Plan and the PPO Savings Family Plan assumes that the average family had claims equal to 2.90 times the average claims per member. This figure also comes from data provided by Willis Towers Watson. The “salary cap” figure used to determine premiums should be based on transparent criteria and based on either some systematic formula or on IRS guidelines. If the number chosen to cap salaries for the sake of calculating premiums seems arbitrary, there will likely continue to be suspicion over the existence of a salary cap. It would also seem logical that the ‘salary cap’ figure be reviewed annually to account for medical costs inflation, salary increases, changes to median salary, etc.
Revisiting the 75/25 principle in light of salary-based premiums: As mentioned in a previous section of this report, the 75/25 cost sharing principle refers to the design of the health plan such that, ON AVERAGE, the employee pays 25% of their total health care claims costs and the university 75%. The actual percentage a particular employee pays of their health care claims varies considerably. In this section of the report, we examine how the cost sharing ratio varies by age, salary band, plan, etc. using data from 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>PPO PLAN</th>
<th>PPO SAVINGS**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 AND OLDER</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentage of total claims paid by employee. ** PPO Savings figures include HSA seed money

As expected, younger people tend to have fewer claims and therefore, pay a higher percentage of their claims out-of-pocket because the deductible represents a significant portion of their total claims. Member is defined as each person insured. If an employee has insured his or her spouse and 3 children, that would constitute 5 members. On average, older employees are paying a smaller share of their total claims out of pocket.

As designed, higher salaried workers typically paid a higher percentage of their total claims out-of-pocket, especially those with salaries above $90,000. The following table breaks down the out-of-pocket, premium, and total claims by salary range and plan.
There are several interesting figures in the above table (data from 2018) to discuss. First, for the PPO plan, the average member paid 25.8% of their total medical claims cost and the target is 25%. However, for the PPO Savings Plan, the average member paid 30.3% instead of the targeted 25%. It should be noted, however, that the average member in the PPO Savings plan spent $390 less on health care out-of-pocket than the average member on the PPO Plan.

For the PPO Plan, the average cost share was 25.8% but for the lowest salaried employees that average was only 19.2% and for the highest salaried, it was 36.9%. For the PPO Savings plan, the average cost share was 30.3% but for the lowest salaried employees it was only 17.8% and for the highest salaried, it was 38.5%.

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least one potential forensic question and one future recommendation, which include, but are not limited to: the potential forensic question “Should Penn State university continue its practice of basing premiums, deductibles, and HSA seed money on employee salary?” and potential future recommendation, namely, Penn State should consider, if the system of basing premiums on salaries is continued, the “salary cap” should be raised and periodically reviewed.

**Principle 4: Principle of Informed Utilization**

This principle has two distinct features:

a. Analytic capabilities for conducting secure and anonymous studies of university employee health care utilization and provider costs. The University has established a subcommittee of the Health Care Advisory Committee, which includes faculty researchers, data analysts, clinicians, and Human Resources. The University has establishing a data warehouse so that analytical studies can be performed to improve health care utilization and improve the design of future health care plans.
b. Cost transparency and analysis tools to aid employees in better understanding the costs and quality of the care received. Under the current plans, both Aetna and CVS/Caremark have pricing tools that employees can use to compare prices of services or prescriptions from different providers, to a limited extent. Further, during Open Enrollment for 2020, the university introduced the IBM Watson Health Benefits Mentor, which illustrates the employee’s total out of pocket costs plus premiums using their actual claims history for the 18 months prior to July 31, 2019. The tool compares what the out-of-pocket costs would have been for both the PPO Plan and for the PPO Savings plan, so that employees can see which plan would have offered the lowest cost to them during that period. Part of the goal of this principle is to create or provide access to tools to aid members in better understanding the costs and quality of care received. One of the keys to reducing health care costs is to help make the members of Penn State health insurance plans better shoppers for health care services.

Establishing Data Warehouse and Conducting Research: Penn State has contracted with IBM Watson Health to maintain a data warehouse of medical and prescription drug claims. Access to this data is restricted and the records are de-identified and confidential. The university also has a vendor relationship with Willis Towers Watson, a health-care benefits consultant, and much of the analyses provided in this report are a result of this relationship, which was established in 2013. Further, the Health Care Advisory Committee has created a subcommittee referenced above. The work of this subcommittee is intended to provide the university with data-driven, informed decision-making capabilities around utilization, pricing, optimizing sites of care, etc.

Some examples of the work done by the subcommittee includes gathering pricing information for specific procedures as provided by various health care providers across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. They have discovered considerable variation in prices of certain services. With this information, they may be able to steer employees needing to have these medical procedures to certain providers that charge a lower price but are of high quality. In another study, they subcommittee has found that utilization of Quest Laboratories by members of Penn State health insurance is low despite the significantly lower prices. They estimate that if all employees used Quest Laboratories for their blood work, it would save the university and employees approximately $6 million.

**Principle 5: Principle of Cost Transparency**

The intent of this principle is that Penn State employees should have tools available to them that will make it easier to decide which providers and which health plan would be better for them financially. There are various tools available to Penn State employees that have been recently added towards fulfilling this principle.

Just introduced during Open Enrollment for 2020, the new IBM Watson Health Benefits Mentor tool allows employees to compare their out-of-pocket expenses for the plan in which they were
enrolled vs. what their out-of-pocket expenses would have been if they had enrolled in the other plan. Users also have the ability to construct “what if” scenarios and change their health care usage expectations to estimate which plan may financially more cost-effective for them in the upcoming year. The out-of-pocket expenses are based on the member’s actual health care claims within the previous 18 months (through July 31 of the current year).

While Benefits Mentor has been well received by those who used it, there have been suggestions for improvements. Suggestions include giving the member a more detailed printout of claims that indicates how they were paid, and how they would have been paid in the other plan. This would help members figure out how one plan differs from the other, so they can see if their expected changes in their consumption of health care services might tip the scales towards the other plan. For example, it may be the case that Member X had lower out-of-pocket costs because their child underwent a tonsillectomy during the past 18 months. Since that child will not have that surgery again, Member X can see which plan would have been better if the expenses of the tonsillectomy are removed. Another suggestion includes being able to adjust how far back in claims history to go. The IBM Watson Mentor tool was used by only 22% of employees in 2019.

The Penn State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) includes a “Healthcare Help” service. This helps employees find providers, negotiate fees, and do cost comparisons. Access to this is available on the Benefits website.

Other tools that enable Penn State employees to have more control over their spending include pricing tools available on the CVS/Caremark and Aetna websites. To access Aetna’s pricing tool, a member in Penn State’s health insurance plan must log into their Aetna account. After they log in they will see a link for “Find Care and Pricing” near the top of the page. Only 17% of the employees who responded to the Survey on Satisfaction with Aetna and CVS/Caremark indicated that they have used this tool. In fact, 40% of the respondents indicated that they did not even know Aetna had a pricing tool. Another 43% said they did not use the tool and it is not entirely clear if some of those who said they did not use the tool may have not even known about the pricing tool either.

CVS Caremark also has a pricing tool. Only 19% of the survey respondents had indicated that they have used the pricing tool. To access this pricing tool, the member needs to log into their Caremark account at caremark.com. Near the top of the page on the right side after they have logged in there is a link for “Check Drug Cost and Coverage.” Click on that link. You then enter the drug and hit search. You can specify mail order or pharmacy pick-up. It will give you the price of the drug only for the pharmacy you indicated as your pharmacy when you set up your account. You can edit the pharmacy and then see the price at that pharmacy. Some may consider this clunky and it would be easier if it simply listed the price at all pharmacies within a specified distance of the user’s home address (or other address as specified).
In summary, there are some existing tools to make it easier for employees to manage their health care costs to some extent such as the IBM Watson Health Benefits Mentor, Aetna’s pricing tool, and Caremark’s pricing tool. Aetna and CVS Caremark also have phone apps to give members easier access to their website and important information. However, these tools are being underutilized. It is clear that there needs to be some improvements as to how information about these pricing resources are disseminated and improvements made to these tools to make them easier to use and more useful.

Another part of this principle is transparency. Each year, the Joint Committee on Insurance and Benefits (JCIB) produces the Annual Report on the Status of Benefit Changes that is presented to the University Faculty Senate. That report outlines the changes to health insurance plans’ design and compiles data on out-of-pocket expenses, premiums, cost sharing, and total claims.

While the JCIB Annual Report contains a lot of useful information, a more detailed analysis like that presented in this report will further improve transparency. How often a detailed report such as this is created is an issue up for discussion.

Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least two potential forensic questions, which include, but are not limited to: “How can Penn State better disseminate information about the existing pricing tools and the Benefits Mentor to increase member utilization of these tools?” and “What other tools would make it easier for Penn State employees to become better health care shoppers?”

**Principle 6: Principle of Fostering and Promoting a Culture of Health**

The university is focusing its attention to employee health and well-being and is committed to exploring means to engage employees in healthy lifestyle behaviors. Consideration of incentivizing these behaviors through plan design and cost-sharing will be tied to data-driven decisions to maximize the return on investment for employees and the university. Past programs such as Take Care of Your Health and the tobacco surcharge did not have the intended impact to curtail health care costs.

There are a few features of the Penn State health insurance plan design that do promote wellness. Free flu shots for members on the Penn State health plan at Penn State campuses decrease the likelihood of Penn State employees contracting influenza. Also, Value Based Benefits, available only in the PPO plan, can sharply reduce long-run costs of health care for many employees. As described earlier in this report, Value Based Benefits provide those with high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes to receive physician services, get certain lab tests, and acquire certain diabetes supplies at no cost to the member of the health insurance plan.
Based on the discussion thus far, there are implications for at least one potential forensic question, namely, “To what extent are Penn State employees aware of programs or plan design at other institutions that help to promote better health and wellness that have proven to provide a good return on investment?”

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY BENEFITS

- Ingrid Blood
- Denise Costanzo, Vice Chair
- Rita Foley
- Lorraine Goffe
- Raymond Najjar
- Xuwen Peng
- Linda Rhen
- Mohammad Rasouli
- Ira Saltz, Chair
- Geoff Scott
- Greg Stoner
SENATE COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Developing a Better Understanding of Challenges
Presented by Widespread Legalized Sports Betting

(Informational)

Background

In the fall of the 2019-20 Academic Year, Faculty Senate President Nicholas Rowland charged this Committee with developing a better understanding of the possible range of impacts related to the legalization of wide-spread, legalized sports betting in both Pennsylvania and nationally on Penn State as an institution. A subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Intercollegiate Athletics Committee led by Robert Boland, Athletics Integrity Officer- Author, Alexis Burke, Student Senator, Lynn Holleran, Deputy Athletics Director, Professor Stein Stogursson, Senator, Matt Stolberg, Athletics Compliance Officer took the lead to prepare the report.

The U.S. Supreme Court on May 14, 2018, in the case of Murphy v. NCAA, struck down a 1992 law, the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, (PASPA), 28 U.S.C. Secs. 3701-3704, which prohibited state-sanctioned sports gambling. Included in PASPA were exceptions for state-sponsored sports wagering in Nevada which had been in place for many years, sports lotteries in Oregon and Delaware that were also in existence, and it offered a window of opportunity for New Jersey to enact legalized sports betting by 1993. New Jersey did not enact such an authorization. In 2012, New Jersey finally passed an authorization to allow legalized sports betting under state authority and then Governor Chris Christie sued seeking to overturn PASPA. This was opposed by the major professional sports leagues and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

In the 20 years after PASPA’s original passage, views on the morality of sports betting had dramatically changed, in part aided by the prevalence of fantasy sports and the proliferation of casinos around the country. Many states, including Pennsylvania, passed authorizing legislation that permitted legalized sports betting in the state automatically upon PASPA ever being amended or stuck down.

Penn State prior to PASPA’s being struck down by the Murphy v. NCAA decision, a 6-3 decision of the Supreme Court, had formed a working group. This working group included representatives from Senior Administration, Government Relations, Office of General Counsel, Ethics & Compliance, Strategic Communications, and Intercollegiate Athletics. These meetings focused on helping shape what the operating regulations would look like in Pennsylvania.

Penn State joined Temple University and the University of Pittsburgh, the three in-state institutions that play college football at the Football Bowl Series (FBS) level- the highest level of collegiate sports- to jointly urge state authorities to consider several options that would have been protective of Penn State. The first of these was a suggestion that mirrored the Nevada and New Jersey rules that prohibited in-state betting on in-state institutions of higher learning. Nevada where sports books have been legal for decades betting on the University of Nevada and University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) contests had been long
prohibited as an integrity mechanism. New Jersey opted to follow this with their in-state institutions as well, although that has been since changed.

The second of these suggestions to regulators proposed a one-year moratorium on college sports betting to allow the institutions and the state authorities to examine trends in newly legalized professional sports betting. The rationale was that professional leagues had already developed expertise in integrity and monitoring of betting lines and professional athletes who were prohibited from betting under both league and collectively bargained rules, would not risk their livelihoods to bet. Therefore, universities could have the benefit of a year of study to prepare for what would ultimately be legalized betting on collegiate contests.

Both proposals were rejected by Pennsylvania regulators, who made it clear that if neighboring states would take bets on Nittany Lion contests Pennsylvania would also do so.

The Pennsylvania regulators did agree with the universities on one final issue, which was to preclude proposition bets (also called prop betting) which involved bets made or taken on issues that were largely in control of participants. These bets, while usually smaller are often considered the most subject to manipulation or fixing, because these could be the source of quick and less traceable small wins by amateur college athletes and their friends prop bets are often the most concerning to betting integrity monitors.

Pennsylvania regulators did however take some time in allowing sports books and casinos to be licensed and open. New Jersey casino sports books took bets in the later months of 2018, Pennsylvania permitted its first legal bets in August of 2019 in time for the collegiate and NFL seasons. New Jersey’s experience in terms of the state’s “handle,” the amount of total revenue bet in state and the amount retained exceeded all prior projections. New Jersey generated in excess of $300 million dollars total revenue bet each in the months of November and December and a total of $1.28 billion dollars in just the fall of 2018 alone. Pennsylvania would have similar success in 2019 emerging as the number three state in sports betting activity behind only New Jersey and Nevada. New Jersey and Pennsylvania both allowed in-state online betting which typically accounted for about 75% of all bets made, meaning that sports betting was not limited to casino sports books or race tracks but anywhere physically in the state.

First Preventative Steps

In the fall of 2018, the Big Ten Conference proposed updating the Conference Operating Standards to include several new provisions related to sports betting and its impacts. These suggestions included:

a. Provide preventative vetting at the point of hire for coaches, medical personnel, and any other staff who (i) will be privy to competition-related information known only by those in and around a sport program, which could be valuable in a sports-wagering context, and/or (ii) could be in a position by virtue of function to affect the integrity of a competition.

b. Provide comprehensive education to students and staff regarding not only NCAA rules regarding sports wagering, but also with respect to managing risks associated
with possessing competition-related information known only by those in and around a sport program, which could be valuable in a sports-wagering context.

c. Establish a process for monitoring sports wagering information (e.g., movement of betting lines) as well as other sources of information that either relates to or could affect sports wagering (e.g., social media activity).

d. Provide clarity regarding engaging appropriate authorities (e.g., law enforcement) as needed in the event an individual becomes aware or has reasonable suspicion that the integrity of a competition may be or may have been compromised.

The Big Ten’s proposals were ultimately tabled in the Conference’s Joint Group but these proposals provided the starting point for members of this committee- Lynn Holleran, Matt Stolberg and the author- in establishing initial focal points for Penn State’s oversight response regarding: maintaining the integrity of its games from match fixing; protecting confidential information from being distributed to betters; providing enhanced training and education not only to student-athletes and staff but also support staff members whose work brings them in close proximity to coaches and athletes, as well as the families of athletes, who all might have access to confidential information that would be valuable to bettors.

The provision for establishing a process for monitoring the movement of betting lines and the passing of information through social media activity seemed problematic for most conference institutions. However, during the 2019-20 Penn State was able to work with an outside firm, U.S. Integrity, to assist in both these dimensions as well.

The Present Landscape

The success of New Jersey’s experience created a significant range of states beginning to authorize sports wagering, by the beginning of the 2019-20 Academic Year, anyone in Pennsylvania, or in neighboring New Jersey and West Virginia with a smart phone could legally place a bet on any Penn State athletic contest. Delaware which had a sports lottery before PASPA was struck down allowed collegiate sports betting both as part of its lottery and in several casinos in the state. New York permitted only in-person sports betting in four upstate casinos and prohibited online betting. Neighboring Ohio and Maryland are the only states contiguous to Pennsylvania not to offer legalized in-state sports betting, but both have authorizing legislation pending.

As of the date of this memoranda, 17 states have gone live with legalized sports betting- that number was 10 at the beginning of the 2019-20 Academic Year. Most have allowed online sports betting- making anyone’s smart phone a portal to place a bet. The District of Columbia and three other states have passed bills authorizing sports wagering- meaning 20 states now offer legalized sports betting. There are only seven states now without legislation proposed to allow legalized sports betting.
Challenges to Specific Collegiate Sports

While the fast growth of sports betting nationally have been a financial success story for states seeking a quick influx of revenue, it has also blurred both the moral and ethical lines between what is a legal bet which can be monitored and what is an illegal bet, which is unmonitored and puts the bettor at risk. It has also put pressure on sports books and illegal bookmakers alike to offer an expanding variety of exotic and proposition bets to attract interest of bettors. This means that bets that can be taken on in-game events in the sole control of the athletes, often while the game is going on, that don’t necessarily affect the outcome of the game, all of which expands the possibility of point shaving, fixing or integrity violations to occur.

Professional sports leagues as compared to collegiate sport, have several advantages in surveilling their own betting integrity in this betting expansive environment. The first is players, coaches, and staffs are highly compensated and would risk losing their jobs meaning that small, less detectable bets are usually not worth the risk. None of the professional leagues play more than 16 games on any given day and each league is armed with multiple attorneys and investigators to examine sudden changes in betting lines or surprising betting outcomes that were unexplained and they can do this on a global level through surveillance firms agreements with sports books and casinos.

Despite the NCAA already having rules that prevent players, coaches, and athletic department employees from betting on any sport the NCAA offers a championship in, the environment around an college athletics program, like Penn State, is much larger and more open than any professional franchise. Student-athletes who are not paid, beyond a scholarship and certain permissible stipends, are integrated into the larger student body and the collegiate environment is governed by a number of privacy policies that keeps certain insider information which is vital to bettors and match fixers largely private. These include injury, discipline, and availability information which are publicly shared in professional sports are not in collegiate sports. The collegiate environment poses unique integrity and monitoring problems not seen in professional sports.

Challenges to the Collegiate Environment

In working through the 2019-20 Academic Year, one of the crucial issues isn’t just the integrity of games but also the range of challenges widespread legalize sports betting poses to the University as a whole. This was a part of President Rowland’s charge. It is also part of President Barron’s charge on an institutional level as well.

Given the adjustments that took place during the Academic Year because of Covid-19, this is an area where many planned steps remain incomplete or having been just been begun.

In February 2020, Lynn Holleran, and the author, met with Vice President for Student Affairs Damon Sims to explore collaboration between ICA, Ethics & Compliance and Student Affairs in promoting greater awareness of the challenges of presented by widespread legalized sports betting.

It is clear that legalized sports betting poses a significant risk to the Penn State student body as a whole. This risk particularly connects with men in the 18-24 age range, where addiction and risk-taking behaviors are a conjoined concern. Sports betting both legal and illegal become a gathering point for
students in social groups, especially fraternities, and the blurred line between what had been exclusively illegal and underground betting and now legalized, and heavily-promoted, sports betting supports a range of possible poor to dangerous choices including addiction, financial concerns and legality.

Several other universities, including Purdue, Villanova and St. Joseph’s have looked at the notion of sports betting bans for faculty and staff. Penn State has not advocated taking this step for all betting, in part based on concerns regarding practical enforcement. But whether sports betting, particularly directly on Penn State contests, which do pose a range of conflicts of interest with the role of educator makes this is a topic for discussion for the next Faculty Senate to consider, either as an advisory step based on ethical concerns or as a mandated one. A similar prohibition has been discussed as a goal for the Board of Trustees, to limit betting

**Penn State’s Response to Date**

- Penn State’s Athletics Compliance Office and Athletic Integrity Office have undertaken 31 specific educational and training steps taken both in 2018-19 and now in 2019-20- it is quite comprehensive- attached
- The Athletics Integrity Council has amended the Intercollegiate Code of Conduct that requires signing parties, which includes all student-athletes, coaches, managers, athletic trainers, trustees, and the President, to specifically disclose contact from gamblers or requests for or regarding betting information- attached
- Our monitoring trial U.S. Integrity surveillance relationship and the Big Ten's surveillance relationship with Don Best reviewing betting lines and gaming integrity have been helpful in a variety of ways in helping understand the ranging of bets being place- which included not only Football, Men’s Basketball but also included bets being place on Men’s and Women’s Ice Hockey, Softball, Men’s and Women’s Lacrosse and Men’s Soccer and Women’s Volleyball.
- Our efforts to list student-athletes and coaches on a non-betting list kept by the state.
- Continued examination of proposals like the Purdue University proposal- that bans students and faculty from betting on Purdue University- and ask as to whether it is something our Faculty Senate would want to consider- Villanova and St. Joseph's in state have also considered such a ban- we discussed this at the Big Ten Institution Control meeting yesterday- [https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/21/sports/sports-betting-purdue-villanova.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/21/sports/sports-betting-purdue-villanova.html)
- The Big Ten Benchmarking regarding each institution and steps taken regarding sports betting
- Discuss next steps in educating our student body and the President's charge regarding sharing information on University property and network resources being used in sports betting.

**Penn State Athletics Sports Wagering Education 2018-19 Initiatives**

- Compliance staff meets with all 31 teams at the start of the fall semester.
- Compliance staff regularly meets with all coaches and staff.
- Compliance staff will have additional meetings with teams to discuss sports wagering awareness and other Compliance related matters during the academic year.
- Letter from Sandy Barbour sent to all student-athletes during first week of fall semester classes.
- Letter from Sandy Barbour sent to all Athletics staff members during first week of fall semester classes.
In addition to reminders that betting on any sport played at the collegiate level is prohibited, letters from Sandy Barbour emphasized paying particular attention to the sharing of information and closer attention to unknown individuals around the student-athletes.

Letters also included emphasis on protecting the integrity of college athletics, Penn State and the well-being of student-athletes.

Intercollegiate Athletics maintains close contact with Penn State central administration and Government Relations on developments related to sports wagering in Pennsylvania and attended two meetings related to gambling law and policy.

Two written reminders of gambling risks and rules issued to all staff and coaches each year.

Gambling educational posters are being made available to teams to post in locker rooms.

Gambling educational messaging is scrolled on television message boards in the Morgan Academic Center.

The educational messaging around the topic have gambling has been enhanced for the 2018-19 year during educational meetings with functional areas within Athletics, such as Sports Medicine, Performance Enhancement, Ticketing, etc.

A new resource on gambling was created for inclusion in new staff orientation meetings.

Compliance social media account provided educational messaging on gambling over the course of the 2018-19 year.

Gambling / protection of confidential information was added as a discussion topic for a meeting between the Compliance staff and football parents.

Penn State Athletics Sports Wagering Education 2019-20 Initiatives

- New messaging for parents of S/A’s in Fall of the 2019-20 academic year distributed through e-mail and customized to whether the parent’s son or daughter participates in a sport that can be wagered upon.

- Enhanced guidance and language in educational memo to all athletics staff outlining topics and rules around gambling.

- Gambling was broken out as a primary separate topic in S/A rules education sessions and more information was included about state laws, concerns related to information sharing, resources available to help S/A’s struggling with gambling related mental illness issues and managing the campus environment in the legalized gambling era.

- Athletics Director has increased messaging reinforcing the application of NCAA gambling rules in her weekly messages and in the August 2019 all-staff meeting.

- All rules education sessions include a focused discussion of gambling rules and concerns (Sports Medicine, Coaches, Managers, etc.).

- Men’s Basketball conducted an all-staff discussion on sports wagering issues moderated by the Athletics Compliance Office staff.

- New wagering education graphics targeted at student-athletes displayed at Morgan Academic Center.

- Engaged with US Integrity in a trial of the company’s integrity monitoring services covering the month of September. Services were focused on analysis of PSU football contests from a wagering integrity perspective and included elements such as analysis of wagering activity, prop
bet review and analysis, tracking of line movement and correlation of line movement to wagering activity and information releases.

PSU Athletics Code of Conduct:  [https://universityethics.psu.edu/athletics-integrity-resources#code](https://universityethics.psu.edu/athletics-integrity-resources#code)

Submitted by the membership of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS**

- Sandy Barbour, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
- Terry Blakney Vice Chair
- Philip Bosha, MED
- Dwight Davis, MED
- Kenya Faulkner, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer
- Charmelle Green, Senior Administration of ICA
- Frank Guadagnino, VP Administration
- Meg Handley, ENGR
- Andrew Hardyk, HHD
- Lynn Holleran, Deputy Director of Athletics
- Lauren Kramer, HHD
- Daniel Larson, SCI
- Russell Mushinsky, Director of Mascsa
- Timothy Palmer, MED
- Rob Pangborn, VP/Dean UG Education
- Daniel Perkins, AG
- Dennis Scanlon, Faculty Athletics Representative
- Steinn Sigurdsson, SCI
- Mark Stephens, MED, Chair
- Jim Strauss, SCI
- Matthew Stolberg, Associate Athletic Director of Compliance
- Jennifer Weld, AG
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES, INFORMATION SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY

O365

(Informational)

Background

This informational report was requested by the Faculty Senate to provide information on the Office 365 suite of offerings available to Penn State faculty, students, and staff. Office 365 has more than fifteen applications including the Microsoft Office Suite products: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook. Office 365 is the official email and calendaring application for Penn State. In addition to the suite, Office 365 includes:

- Teams: a chat-based team workspace that includes Zoom-like live meeting functionality, live captioning, collaborative workspaces, and more
- Power Platform (3 items):
  - Power Automate - create automated workflows between your favorite apps and services to synchronize files, get notifications, collect data and more.
  - Power Apps - provide a rapid application development environment to build custom apps
  - Power BI - turn your unrelated sources of data into coherent, visually immersive, and interactive insights and dashboards (similar to Tableau)
- Planner: create plans, assign tasks, share files, and get progress updates
- Class Notebook: organize class plans in digital notebooks and create a shared or individual workspace for students
- OneDrive: cloud storage for files that allows for sharing and collaborating with users both internal and external to the University
- Whiteboard: a freeform online canvas that allows for pen and keyboard input from multiple users.

After an extensive study of Penn State users (faculty, staff, and students) and our peer institutions, a decision was made in 2018 to move from Webmail/UCS to Office 365 for email and calendar and the additional software tools available. While we had access to the Office suite of tools (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), those were only available as locally installed versions and typically only on Penn State owned machines. Office 365 allows for cloud access to the tools, enabling access from any device, anytime, anywhere, collaboration with other users, and cloud storage of documents.

We began the transition to Office 365 in February 2018. We completed most of the email/calendar transitions by December of 2018, with Athletics completed in Spring of 2019, and Retirees/Emeriti in December of 2019. We were able to decommission UCS/Webmail in January of 2020 and a number of units have decommissioned their local email systems as well.
Prior to the Covid19 shift to remote learning, Penn State was the largest user of Teams in the United States. Since the shift to remote learning, many K-12 school districts are leveraging Teams (in place of or in conjunction with Zoom) and their usage has surpassed Penn State’s. This is an indicator that for some portion of our incoming students, these tools are being heavily utilized throughout this event.

Our Office 365 also offers a number of security features including Advanced Threat Protection that safeguard the university against malicious threats in email, links, and the Office collaborative suite of tools.

(continues next page)
## Statistics and Interesting Facts

Users Performing Activities by Month (Table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Sep 2019</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jan 2020</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OneDrive</td>
<td>49,929</td>
<td>48,305</td>
<td>43,289</td>
<td>44,673</td>
<td>44,931</td>
<td>48,211</td>
<td>50,223</td>
<td>47,944</td>
<td>37,095</td>
<td>28,869</td>
<td>31,080</td>
<td>11,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SharePoint</td>
<td>23,307</td>
<td>26,222</td>
<td>24,436</td>
<td>24,120</td>
<td>25,258</td>
<td>28,060</td>
<td>29,008</td>
<td>30,761</td>
<td>23,476</td>
<td>52,165</td>
<td>56,105</td>
<td>10,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>6,559</td>
<td>7,378</td>
<td>7,735</td>
<td>6,879</td>
<td>7,785</td>
<td>8,784</td>
<td>12,379</td>
<td>13,046</td>
<td>12,029</td>
<td>12,234</td>
<td>12,636</td>
<td>6,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yammer</td>
<td>2,304</td>
<td>2,174</td>
<td>2,182</td>
<td>1,785</td>
<td>2,177</td>
<td>2,230</td>
<td>2,732</td>
<td>2,748</td>
<td>2,173</td>
<td>2,054</td>
<td>1,984</td>
<td>646</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaboration in One Drive and Share Point

Usage as of July 2020

- OneDrive Total Files - 91.1M
- SharePoint Total Files 14.2M

File Usage Details: OneDrive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Files Shared Externally</th>
<th>Shared Internally</th>
<th>Synced</th>
<th>Viewed/Modified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>10,572</td>
<td>6,584</td>
<td>30,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>10,216</td>
<td>6,327</td>
<td>28,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>13,215</td>
<td>6,769</td>
<td>36,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>22,120</td>
<td>7,005</td>
<td>46,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>18,730</td>
<td>7,402</td>
<td>49,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>16,560</td>
<td>7,407</td>
<td>47,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12,808</td>
<td>6,575</td>
<td>44,278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

File Usage Details: SharePoint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Files Shared Externally</th>
<th>Shared Internally</th>
<th>Synced</th>
<th>Viewed/Modified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10,210</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>70,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7,404</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>64,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6,655</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>32,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7,702</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>41,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6,582</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>39,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8,643</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>38,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6,924</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>34,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Storage in Exchange, SharePoint and One Drive (Sept 2019 - July 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>July 2020 Storage Used (GB)</th>
<th>Sep 2019 Utilization</th>
<th>August 2020 Utilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>236.4K</td>
<td>0.18M</td>
<td>0.2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SharePoint</td>
<td>44.7K</td>
<td>10K</td>
<td>48K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OneDrive</td>
<td>316.7K</td>
<td>0.1M</td>
<td>0.36K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tips and Tricks
Did you know that Office 365 provides useful tools such as:

- My Analytics: which provides insights into meetings, email, focus hours, and defensive calendaring
- To Do: an online to do list
- Bookings: an appointment scheduler that faculty have been using for office hours and other self-service scheduling
- Sway: a tool to enhance presentations and digital storytelling
Canvas Integration
There is a Canvas integration for Office 365 that allows you and your students to leverage Office 365 tools, such as Teams, within the Canvas Learning Management System.

Getting Help & Training Opportunities
There are a number of training opportunities: live, on-demand, and through LinkedIn Learning. Please visit: https://office365.psu.edu/training/

More Information
https://office365.psu.edu

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES, INFORMATION SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY
Ann Clements, Chair
Chandra Alexander
Barbara Dewey
Timothy Eden
Galen Grimes
John Messner
Julio Palma
Jacqueline Reid-Walsh
Francesca Ruggerio, Vice Chair
Jennifer Sparrow
Don Welch
Office 365 Website Refresh coming Fall 2020
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES

Revisions to Bylaws: Article IV, Committees, Section 1 and 2

(Legislative)

Implementation: Upon approval by the Senate

Rationale
Since the University Faculty Senate Constitution Article 1 Section IV authorizes Senate committees to act for and in the name of the Senate, voting on these committees should express the views of Senators. CC&R therefore recommends amending the Bylaws Article IV Section 1 to add consistency and clarity to the voting membership so that the same voting rules apply for standing and special committees as they do for plenary sessions. This further clarifies the rule in Section 2, which becomes redundant. This change will allow us to remove the confusing asterisks after some appointed members in the Standing Committees rules by clarifying that any senator, whether elected or appointed, has equal voting rights in any standing, special or plenary meeting.

Recommendations
Please note that the following contains bold text for additions and strikeouts indicating deleted text. Deleted text is notated with [Delete] [End Delete]. Added text is notated with [Add] [End Add].

Recommended changes to Bylaws; Article IV, Section 1, Committees are as follows:

Bylaws Article IV – Committees

Section 1

The Senate shall determine its committee structure and composition with only the following stipulations:

(a) Any University personnel or any student of the University may be appointed to a committee.

(b) Chairs of Standing Committees must be elected faculty senators.

(c) [Add] The voting membership of Senate standing committees, special committees, and subcommittees consists of elected faculty, ex-officio, student, or appointed senators. [End Add]

[Delete] (e) [End Delete] [Add] (d) [End Add] A majority of the voting membership of a Senate standing or special committee must be elected faculty senators.

[Delete] Section 2
Persons who are appointed to committees and standing subcommittees who are also members of the University Faculty Senate have full voting privileges on the committee or subcommittee on which they serve whether elected faculty, ex-officio, student, or appointed senators.

Section [Delete] 3 End Delete] [Add] 2 [End Add]*

All members of Standing Committees who are not members of the Senate shall have nonvoting privileges of the floor when the subject of discussion pertains specifically to the work of their respective committees.

*Sections 4, 5, and 6 become Sections 3, 4, and 5.

Revised Policy/Policies (Clean Copy)

Bylaws Article IV – Committees

Section 1

The Senate shall determine its committee structure and composition with only the following stipulations:

(a) Any University personnel or any student of the University may be appointed to a committee.

(b) Chairs of Standing Committees must be elected faculty senators.

(c) The voting membership of Senate standing committees, special committees, and subcommittees consists of elected faculty, ex-officio, student, or appointed senators.

(d) A majority of the voting membership of a Senate standing or special committee must be elected faculty senators.

Section 2

All members of Standing Committees who are not members of the Senate shall have nonvoting privileges of the floor when the subject of discussion pertains specifically to the work of their respective committees.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES (2019-2020)

- Johnathan Abel
- Michael Berube
- Renee Borromeo
- Victor Brunsden, Chair
- Beth King
• Jeffrey Laman
• Binh Le
• Judith Ozment
• Nicholas Rowland
• Elizabeth Seymour
• Keith Shapiro
• Anne Taylor, Vice Chair
• Rodney Troester
• Kent Vrana
Minutes of Senate Council (June 23, 2020)

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 – 1:30 p.m.
Remote via Zoom


CALL TO ORDER

Chair Seymour called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2020.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF APRIL 7, 2020

The Minutes of the April 7, 2020 Senate Council meeting were approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMARKS

The Faculty Advisory Committee met with the President and Provost on June 23, 2020 and discussed the following topics:

- Racism, Bias and Safety Select Commission and related issues
- Admissions
- Searches
- Two-factor authentication for Students
- Coronavirus
- Racial Justice
- Issues around returning to campus

The next FAC meeting is scheduled for September 1, 2020. Please submit any topics for FAC consideration to any of the Senate Officers or the elected FAC members, Renee Bishop-Pierce, Carey Eckhardt, and Judy Ozment.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

We are living through extraordinary events: a global pandemic (which concerns and stresses each one of us on many different levels), decisions about how and if we can resume in-person work and classes, and concerns about the health of the institution over the next few years as we weather the broader repercussions that the pandemic will have on the economy, our health, and society.
Faculty and staff worked together in the spring to make the shift to remote learning successful, working long hours doing extraordinary things. We are being asked again to work together in order to provide in-person experiences for our students that are meaningful in the fall. This won’t be easy, and the expertise and hard work of faculty and staff is crucial for us to be able to succeed in this task across all of our campuses.

At the same time, we are going through a necessary and long-overdue societal conversation and hopefully real change about systemic racism and injustice in all aspects of American society. We have all either been born into or live in a society with a long and ugly history of systemic racism and violence. Our institutions have been created in this framework and so are deeply marked by inequality that for some of us, we have trouble seeing it. But this is the first time in my life where I have felt that there might be a real opportunity for us to fundamentally alter the situation, if we act and act with purpose. There is much work that we have to do but I am eager to take up that work.

We were already having deep conversations in the Senate about some aspects of institutional racism over the last year, particularly as it related to faculty. Because the Senate took the concerns of MRTC report seriously and took the Black faculty concerns seriously, we were already attuned to the challenges that this community faces. We have senators recommending that we make significant change in the MRTC task force’s report (this task force was formed by immediate past chair Rowland last spring to produce recommendations to the Senate). The need to support our fellow faculty and the challenges that a large university would need to consider to address the changes necessary are broad and deep.

Senate Council will be asked by MRTC Task Force chair Josh Kirby at our September meeting to consider a forensic report from for the September plenary.

I wanted to give you a brief overview of the other work that I have started doing with the chairs of several of the standing committees. I have asked them to read the MRTC task force report and to think deeply about the ways that we can reorient our priority items to focus on racial justice at our institution. This work will include taking a deep look at assessment of teaching with a focus on racial bias, recommending quality diversity training and support for faculty and staff, reviewing the impact that COVID-19 is having on our faculty and students, exploring adding or redefining current curricular requirements focusing on racial justice, reviewing Senate policies with an eye to identifying biases related to social and racial justice and re-looking at the Student Code of Conduct.

Most of these items will need the Senate partnering with the administration, and I have already started conversations with Dr. Whitehurst, Dr. Jones and Dr. Barron to explore ways that we, as a University, can make significant change. The Select Penn State Presidential Commission on Racism, Bias and Community Safety will be part of this work as will the work of the Senate. We are at a long overdue moment, we have to make significant changes, and together I think we truly can.
I called today’s meeting to provide space for us to discuss these important items. The agenda is organized so that we can have deep discussions on racial justice and return to work, campuses and communities.

**Vice Presidents’ and Vice Provosts’ Comments**

**Provost Jones** discussed the on-going planning for return to campuses in the fall semester. Information is being released to faculty and staff on-line in Penn State communications and in a series of on-line town hall meetings. Questions can be submitted before the events.

Right now, the preference is for education to be face-to-face as much as possible. However large classes over 250 will be entirely on-line because of social distancing requirements. Smaller classes may operate in hybrid fashion with some materials available electronically and smaller groups meeting less frequently in classrooms.

A question was asked about whether the raw data for the faculty and staff survey on feelings about returning to work will be available. Provost Jones is checking into it.

Lisa Mangel, Senate Secretary asked if there was enough room for social distancing at the commonwealth campuses that tend to have smaller rooms. Provost Jones explained that an analysis of classroom capacity is completed and will be available in the units soon. Mary Beth Williams distributed it by email to council.

**Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Kathy Bieschke**

1. We are working on more robust communication with faculty members. My office has been putting out a weekly “digest” for the past several months that compiled all the stories written about COVID-19. We will be adding to this communication by providing answers to some specific questions (i.e., PPE for classrooms, classroom management strategies in light of masking requirement, testing/contact tracing). That communication will be sent out to administrators and faculty members. We will also have a mechanism for faculty to pose questions they would like answered.

2. PPE for instructional purposes was charged to provide guidance on what type(s) of masks would be best for instruction in a range of instructional settings within the next two weeks. The co-chairs for this group are Keefe Manning, Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Jim Crandall, director of EHS. Many thanks to the two faculty senators serve on this committee, Lisa Kitko (Nursing, Senator) and Art Moore (Business, Senator).

3. I continue to be advised by the Faculty Issues sub-committee chaired by Anthony Atchley, Senior Associate Dean of Engineering and Rick Brazier, Associate Dean for the Commonwealth campuses. They advise me on a range of issues, including, for example, how to charge promotion and/or tenure committees in light of COVID-19. Many thanks to Beth Seymour and Nicholas Rowland for their service on this committee.

4. Assessing Teaching Effectiveness in Spring 2020—because we did not share the SRTE results with administrators in spring and suspended mandatory peer teaching reviews, we are left with the task of providing guidance to committee, administrators, and candidates about how to establish effectiveness of teaching for those wish to include some evidence in their dossiers. I charged a committee to provide me with some recommendations; this committee was led by Angela Linse, and members include faculty and administrators.
Two faculty senators serve on this committee-Julie Gallagher (Brandywine) and Melina Czymoniewicz-Klippel (HHD). This group is doing outstanding work and I expect to receive their final report by the end of the week.

5. Two dean searches are underway.
   a. Dean, Eberly College of Science—the chair of is search is Lee Kump. Virtual
campus visits for finalists scheduled and will be concluded in early July. We will
invite to campus a smaller subset of the finalists for an in-person on-campus visit
in August.
   b. Library—the chair of the search is Peggy Johnson. We are in the process of
scheduling virtual campus visits for finalists and like with the Eberly search, we
will invite to a smaller subset of the finalists for an in-person on-campus visit in
August.

There was a discussion focusing on communicating with faculty. Councilor Strickland reported
that communications on the campus tends to be perceived by campus administrators as lines in
the sand. She suggested, ‘We Believe’ stories could be used to communicate with all faculty not
just administrators. Councilor Kirby asked whose responsibility it is to get accurate information
to faculty. Councilor Eckhardt requested that communications to faculty be dated and archived
so that people can locate changes over time. Councilor Posey discussed the importance of having
a reliable tool to ensure academic integrity for on-line assessment.

**Vice President for Commonwealth Campuses, Madlyn Hanes**

Searches are underway for Chancellors at two locations, Abington and Berks. Preliminary on-
line interviews have been conducted. Finalists will be interviewed in August.

The final report on the task force on promotion to full at the commonwealth campuses has been
delivered. A debriefing will occur and then it might be helpful to bring the recommendations to
the Commonwealth Caucus for discussion.

**Vice President and Dean of Undergraduate Education, Robert Pangborn**

Summer/Fall 2020 Admissions update as of 6/22: University Park paid accepts are 9,600 (with a
small melt of 65 since June 3 ). Commonwealth Campus paid accepts are 7,222 (showing
a gain of 151 since June 3 ). The total is 16,822, or +0.9% compared to last year.

The New Student Orientation is being conducted virtually university-wide. 97% of summer
paid accepts at UP are registered and 86% of fall paid accepts are registered (89% overall). For
the Commonwealth Campuses, 94% of summer paid accepts are registered for NSO, and 64% of
fall paid accepts are registered (66% overall).

Enrollments for both the first six-week and second six-week summer sessions are up compared
to last year for both University Park and the Commonwealth Campuses.

A process for establishing whether students intend to enroll in person or remotely for the fall has
been identified using their responses via LionPATH.
The search for a new Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Education and Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions is proceeding through the preliminary interviews virtually.

**Vice Provost for Educational Equity, Marcus Whitehurst**

Dr. Whitehurst announced the formation of a new Select Presidential Commission on Racism, Bias and Community Safety. The Co-chairs are Dean of Dickinson Law Danielle Conway, Dean of the College of the Liberal Arts Clarence Lang, and Chair of the University Faculty Senate Elizabeth Seymour. Dr. Whitehurst thanked Senate Chair Beth Seymour for serving on this important group. The commission chairs and President Barron led an on-line townhall meeting on June 29th. There will also be a University Diversity Roundtable series starting June 30th. Sessions will be recorded for later viewing.

**Vice Provost of Online Education, Renata Engel** announced that the numbers of students in online summer courses has shown a downward trend, but graduate students are up 14%. World Campus students take a survey to show how prepared they are for online education, and this has now been opened to students planning to attend in-person.

**Senate Officers: None**

**Executive Director, None**

**ACTION ITEM**

**Editorial Changes.** Editorial changes requested by CC&R to our governing documents to change the names of The Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) is now the Big Ten Academic Alliance and The Office of Planning and Assessment is now the Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research.

**UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION ON RETURN TO WORK**

Chair Seymour: This item has been brought to us by the current chairs and vice-chairs of the fifteen standing committees of the Senate, with Renee Bishop-Pierce and Maureen Jones as the leads. Given that the next regularly scheduled plenary meeting will not happen until mid-September and this Positional Resolution is of strong concern and interest to the Senate I feel it is critical that the Senate acts on it in a timely manner. I am instead asking Senate Council to vote on this resolution on behalf of the Senate as a whole. This is a positional resolution, which simply expresses the opinion of the Senate regarding Return to Work issues of great concern to the faculty. Many of the concerns in the resolution are now beginning to be addressed.

We will follow the procedures we previously used in our Tuesday April 7th, 2020 meeting, and invoke Senate Bylaws, Article 2, Section 1, item (h), which reads, “In the event that the Chair of the Senate declares existence of a situation of special Senate concern, the Senate Council shall be empowered to act for the Senate in all matters until this authority is terminated by actions of the Senate.” The Ozment/Vrana motion to support the resolution on behalf of the Senate was approved.
DISCUSSION ITEMS

Racial Justice. There is a great deal of discussion on these issues. It is important to keep moving forward.

Faculty COVID Issues. If there are other issues that have not been covered in the resolution, please communicate with one of the officers. On senator asked what the next steps are and the Chair Seymour replied that a communication would be sent out to the full senate in a special communication. Immediate Past chair Rowland replied that this was only the beginning of the Senate’s work.

GRADUATE COUNCIL

Graduate Council representative, Kent Vrana, reported that Ken Davis was elected Chair of the Graduate Council for the 2020-2021. Election for the Vice-Chair is on going. There has been discussion of why the Graduate Council meetings are closed. They suggested that the meetings should be open.

SENATE AGENDA ITEMS FOR September 15, 2020

FORENSIC BUSINESS: NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs. “General Education Requirements for Associate Degree Programs”. The report was placed on the agenda by an Ozment/Eckhardt motion.

Senate Committee on Education, “Including Election Day Absences in Policy 42-27 Class attendance”.

ADVISORY/CONSULTATIVE REPORT

Senate Committee on University Planning, “Climate Action Taskforce Recommendation.” This report was placed on the agenda on a Szczygiel/Kirby motion.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs. “Interim Report Curricular Policy and Process Reform.” The report was placed on the agenda by an Ozment/Szczygiel motion. 15 minutes was allocated for the report.

Senate Council. “Report on Senate Officers Campus Visits Fall 2019.” The report was placed on the agenda by a Rowland/Szczygiel motion. Five minutes was allocated for the report.
APPROVAL

The approval for the complete September 15, 2020 agenda will be approved at the September 1st Senate Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 pm.

Dawn G. Blasko, Executive Director
MINUTES OF SENATE COUNCIL  
Tuesday, September 1, 2020 1:30 p.m.  
Remote via Zoom


Absent:

Chair Seymour called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 1, 2020.

The Minutes of the June 23, 2020 Senate Council meeting were approved following an Eckhardt/Rowland Motion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMARKS

The Faculty Advisory Committee met with the President and Provost on June 23, 2020 and discussed the following topics:
- Decision-making around any possible budget items related to COVID-19
- Communication consistency related to general salary announcements
- University protection of members of the University community on social media
- Update on civility and upcoming elections
- Bias in SRTE
- UP Day Care Centers
- ScholarStrike
- Classroom Experience
- Strategies Moving Forward
- Strategic Plan
- Admissions
- Searches
- COVID-19

The next FAC meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2020. Please submit any topics for FAC consideration to any of the Senate Officers or the elected FAC members, Renee Bishop-Pierce, Carey Eckhardt, and Judy Ozment.
COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR: I want to thank the administration, faculty and staff for all of the planning involved in getting us back on our campuses, while also working remotely. The efforts and work of the summer, that so many of us across the University devoted immense time and energy to, has resulted in our being able to create a broad array of learning opportunities for our students. I realize the efforts that many of you have put into this, and also into the work of the Senate. I want to thank everyone for their efforts.

I also want to thank our students for working hard to help us create safe communities this fall. While I am hopeful that there will be new developments in both vaccines and therapeutics, we need to work together to maintain safe communities via good hygiene, masking and physical distancing. Our students are strong partners in our efforts.

Part of building safe communities depends on us addressing bias, racism and toxic environments within our society, and closer to home, within our campus communities. As many of you know, I am one of the co-chairs of the Select Commission on Racism, Bias and Community Safety. While we are still in the early stages of the work, we are currently moving forward to start forming subcommittees to build out the work of the Commission. You should see an announcement fairly soon calling for volunteers to work on these subcommittees.

We have a full agenda today, so I will keep my remarks brief. I am also happy to announce that Board of Trustee Chair Dambly and Vice Chair Schuyler are confirmed to give us an update on the Board activities at the September Plenary meeting. We also expect to have Academic Trustee David Han join them.

Vice Presidents’ and Vice Provosts’ Comments

Provost Jones discussed progress on student arrival. Students and faculty coming from counties with high number of cases were sent kits for prearrival testing. Those who testing negative were allowed to move in and those who were positive were asked to shelter at home until the quarantine period was over. Surveillance testing will consist of 1% of students, faculty and staff each week. The Penn State Covid-19 Dashboard will be updated twice a week with number of positive and negative cases and number of students in isolation and quarantine. So far cases are about what was expected, but social gatherings and parties can increase numbers quickly. There is a need for compliance with social distancing and masking. The event outside East Halls required a Fraternity to be tested. Contract tracing is working and contacts from those exposure are being instructed how to be tested.

Tuition payments are close to what they were last year and this is very good news. Although there was a hiring freeze many key positions were able to be filled after approval by the VPFA.

Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Kathy Bieschke

Searches
Dean, Eberly College of Science: Tracey Langkile, Head, Department of Biology, has been selected as the next dean. She will begin in her new role on October 1, 2020.
Dean, University Libraries and Scholarly Communications: We have identified the finalists in the search and we hope to be making a decision about who our next dean will be at the next Senate Council meeting.

Policies
For a comprehensive list of guidance documents and policy changes that pertain to faculty can be found on the vpfa.psu.edu webpage.

Please note that AD40 (Recording of Classroom Activities and Note-Taking Services) was modified. The following sentence was added in acknowledgement of COVID-19: Classroom recordings (as defined by University Policy AD40), created by faculty and staff during the Spring 2020 semester and 2020-2021 Academic Year will not be reused by the University beyond the semester in which they were created without the prior written authorization of the recorded faculty or staff.

Confirmation of extension of the probationary period
All faculty who were in their probationary period in spring of 2020 have until April 1 of their penultimate year to confirm extension of the probationary period. To date, 252 faculty confirmations have been accepted and adjusted in workday.

Work adjustments
Faculty who wish to adjust their mode of course delivery must speak with their academic unit head to adjust their mode of course delivery. While of course it is possible for an instructor or faculty member to switch due to changing circumstances, it should not be done without due consideration. If the faculty member has concerns about health and safety, they should raise these concerns with their unit head and they should be addressed by working in collaboration with the unit head. Please also determine whether the course can effectively be taught remotely; you make want to determine whether, within the context of the program, it makes sense to offer the course remotely or if you should attempt to identify another instructor. Faculty members at a minimum must present a plan for how the learning objectives for the course will be met if they wish to change modes.

Vice President for Commonwealth Campuses and Executive Chancellor, Madlyn Hanes

Kudos to everyone working so hard for the common good on the provost taskforces. Beth does an amazing job. Campus teams are meeting every day. Across the campuses 150 faculty lines have been approved for hiring. Units are being very careful not to overextend themselves.

Searches are underway for Chancellors at two locations, Abington and Berks are almost complete. Offers went out next week. Overall, there was not much movement of students from campus to campus.
Admissions and Enrollment Update
The following are August 31, post Add/Drop numbers for the entering baccalaureate class and the total undergraduate enrollment (new and continuing students who have completed their registration for fall). The total entering class including University Park, the Commonwealth Campuses and the World Campus is about 16,700, down just 2.1%, and the overall undergraduate enrollment is about 74,000, down just 1.8%. The application for the class of 2025 went live on August 1st, and this will be the first year in which the admission evaluation process will be test optional.

Student Aid
The first disbursement of student aid occurred on August 26 and totaled $387M, which is about $10M more than last year’s first disbursement.

Appointment of new Assistant VP for Undergraduate Education and Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions
Rob Springall has been appointed to head Undergraduate Admissions, replacing Clark Brigger who departed for the University of Colorado last August. Rob has most recently served as vice president for enrollment management at Muhlenberg College. He has close to 30 years’ experience in recruitment and admissions, including stints at Rochester Institute of Technology, the University of Vermont, Cornell University, Central Florida, and Bucknell. His appointment is effective October 1st.

Penn State First Program
Global Programs, in partnership with the CIEE non-profit study abroad provider, has developed opportunities for some of our new incoming international students who were not able to travel to the US to begin their studies. 415 Penn State first-year students are being hosted by East China Normal University in Shanghai, taking Penn State first-year courses taught by on location or remotely from here. 38 students are being hosted by Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea. Additional student engagement programming will be offered virtually for the students at both locations.

BTAA Online Course Sharing Program
The Big Ten Academic Alliance initiated a new course sharing program for the fall semester. Seven of the Big Ten institutions, including Penn State, accepted the invitation to offer selected courses that will be available to any Big Ten student, free of charge. Penn State is offering 6 courses with 140 available seats and enrolled the largest total number of students coming from other schools, accounting to 98 of 384 participating students. 58 Penn State students have enrolled in courses offered by the other institutions.

Vice Provost for Educational Equity, Marcus Whitehurst
Penn State leadership participated in a locally organized 2020 Virtual March on Washington Aug. 28, on the 57th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.’s historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963.
Organized by the State College Borough’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza planning committee, the event featured pre-recorded remarks from both Penn State President Eric J. Barron and Vice Provost for Educational Equity Marcus Whitehurst. The local virtual march was an independent event, but was held in tandem with a national 2020 Virtual March on Washington organized by Rev. Al Sharpton.

On September 8th Whitehurst also noted that Penn State will continue to advance this conversation within the University community on Sept. 8 with the second installment of the ongoing Toward Racial Equity roundtable series. The conversation will feature a diverse representation of Penn State leaders and students discussing their experiences within a predominately white University community, with the aim of fostering greater understanding of the experiences of people of color at Penn State.

Next week the findings of the Penn State Community Survey will begin to be released.

**Vice Provost of On-line Education, Renata Engel** announced that the numbers of students enrolled in on-line courses at World Campus has shown a sharp increase with the Covid-19 pandemic. World campus now has 8% brand new students. Graduate students have shown an even higher rate with a 29% increase over last year. World campus enrollment overall has increased 9%.

When disasters hit in different parts of the world remote learners are impacted. World campus reaches out to students in that region. For example, Hurricanes in the south, and fires in California

**Senate Officers: None**

**Executive Director: None**

**ACTION ITEM**

Our action item today is a request from the Provost to Change the Department of Film-Video and Media Studies to the Department of Film Production and Media Studies. The change was reviewed by the Senate Committees on Curricular Affairs and Faculty Affairs and the committees had no objections. In accordance with our duties as prescribed in Bylaws, Article 11, Section I(d), it was the advice of Senate Council that the (proposed action) be implemented as described in the documents we have received.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Chair Seymour led a discussion on how to improve the format of the Senate meetings since each of the last three Senate meetings have been in a different format, as we have adapted to restrictions to in-person meetings due to COVID-19. Several senators were concerned that we were losing some of the interactivity of the in person meetings. As the Senate is a deliberative body, this is of special concern for our ability to maintain good discussion and debate.
A special session of CC&R discussed ways to increase participation and hopefully improve discussion in our plenary meetings. The committee wrote their suggestions for best practices for remote or mostly remote Plenary Sessions which is included in today’s agenda.

This upcoming meeting will be a modified in-person meeting, and due to the governor’s order, can only have at maximum, 25 people in the room, CC&R created two recommendations to increase participation:

The first was to invite a representative for reports on the agenda (most likely the chair or the person delivering the report), and the second was to create a mechanism to gather questions for the standing committees prior to their morning meeting on September 15.

Discussion topics:
Qualtrics survey to determine questions in advance
More than one person needed to monitor chat
Need a moderator to consolidate questions
Screen share is too small to read.
Live stream directly to Youtube
Use special syntax for questions and comments
Can’t we just speak out
Chat features take too long to figure out-focus on speakers and questions.

GRADUATE COUNCIL
Graduate Council representative, Kent Vrana, reported that Graduate Council was beginning its second year with a faculty member serving as chair. Ken Davis will be available at the next meeting. Topic this week was whether Graduate Council should be open to the public.

SENATE AGENDA ITEMS FOR September 15, 2020

FORENSIC BUSINESS: NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Revision to Bylaws, Article IV, Committees, Sections 1 and 2 (Introduced at the April 28, 2020 Senate meeting)

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Senate Committee on Committees and Rules. “Revisions to Standing Rules, Article II, Section 6m.” The report was placed on the agenda by a Strickland/Rowland motion.

Committee on Committees and Rules. “Revisions to Senate Standing Rules Article III – Other Functions of the Senate.” The report was placed on the agenda by a Szczygiel/Rowland motion.

ADVISORY/CONSULTATIVE REPORT
Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, Revisions to AC-76 “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.” This report was placed on the agenda on a Szczygiel/Bishop-Pierce motion.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Senate Council. “Report from the More Rivers to Cross Task Force”. The report was placed on the agenda by a Rowland/King motion. 20 minutes was allocated for the report.

Senate Council. “Report on Spring 2020 College Visits.” The report was placed on the agenda by a Rowland/Szczygiel motion. Five minutes was allocated for the report.

Senate Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, “Developing a Better Understanding of Challenges Presented by Widespread Legalized Sports Betting”. The report was placed on the agenda by a Synder/Rowland motion. It will be presented on the web.

Senate Committee on Libraries, Technology, and Information Systems, “Microsoft O365 Report” The report was placed on the agenda by a Clements/King motion. Ten minutes was allocated for the report.

(Note that we have additional reports that were either presented at the April meeting for vote in September or approved for the agenda in the June meeting).

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA OF THE SEPTEMBER 15TH SENATE MEETING

The agenda was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Dawn G. Blasko, Executive Director
Date: September 9, 2020

To: All Senators and Committee Members

From: Dawn Blasko, Executive Director

Following is the call in and meeting number of all Senate meetings September 14 and 15, 2020. Please notify the University Faculty Senate office and committee chair if you are unable to participate.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

3:00 p.m.

New Senators Workshop – https://psu.zoom.us/j/99221850885
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 99221850885#

3:00 p.m.

Joint Committee on Insurance and Benefits - https://psu.zoom.us/j/96438100551
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 9643810055#

6:30 p.m.

Officers and Chairs Meeting – https://psu.zoom.us/j/96784558180
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 96784558180#

8:15 p.m.

Commonwealth Caucus Meeting – https://psu.zoom.us/j/92989520449
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 92989520449#
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

8:00 a.m.

Intercollegiate Athletics – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/97320281120](https://psu.zoom.us/j/97320281120)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting Number: 97320281120#

8:30 a.m.

Committees and Rules – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/96854353870](https://psu.zoom.us/j/96854353870)
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 96854353870#

Curricular Affairs – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/92700686386](https://psu.zoom.us/j/92700686386)
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 92700686386#

Educational Equity and Campus Environment - [https://psu.zoom.us/j/97030643990](https://psu.zoom.us/j/97030643990)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 97030643990#

Faculty Affairs – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/92293660248](https://psu.zoom.us/j/92293660248)
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 92293660248#

Faculty Benefits – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/99766910396](https://psu.zoom.us/j/99766910396)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 99766910396#

Intra-University Relations – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/97243955700](https://psu.zoom.us/j/97243955700)
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 97243955700#

Libraries, Information Systems, and Technology - [https://psu.zoom.us/j/91089505508](https://psu.zoom.us/j/91089505508)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 91089505508#

Outreach – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/95932131718](https://psu.zoom.us/j/95932131718)
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 95932131718#

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/95621437765](https://psu.zoom.us/j/95621437765)
OR Number to call:646-876-9923 or 301-7158592
Meeting number: 95621437765#
9:00 a.m.

University Planning – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/93271034261](https://psu.zoom.us/j/93271034261)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 9321034261#

9:00 a.m.

Admissions, Records, Scheduling, and Student Aid – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/97165166171](https://psu.zoom.us/j/97165166171)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 97165166171#

9:00 a.m.

Education – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/96404060701](https://psu.zoom.us/j/96404060701)
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 96404060701#

9:00 a.m.

Global Programs – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/96402183128](https://psu.zoom.us/j/96402183128)
OR Number to call: 312-626-6799 or 646-876-9923
Meeting number: 96402183128#

11:00 a.m.

Student Life – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/98063789580](https://psu.zoom.us/j/98063789580)
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 98063789580#

11:00 a.m.

Student Senator Caucus – [https://psu.zoom.us/j/97995137268](https://psu.zoom.us/j/97995137268)
OR Number to call: 301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799
Meeting number: 97995137268#

11:30 a.m.

Past Chairs Meeting - [https://psu.zoom.us/j/93053280136](https://psu.zoom.us/j/93053280136)
OR Number to call: 646-876-9923 or 301-715-8592
Meeting number: 93053280136#

1:00 p.m.

University Faculty Senate Plenary Meeting – TBD
Date: September 14, 2020
To: Commonwealth Caucus Senators (includes all elected Campus Senators)
From: Frantisek Marko and Michael Bartolacci, Caucus Co-Chairs

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 – 8:15 PM
ZOOM LINK BELOW

Guest Speaker:

Cindy Decker Raynak
Senior Instructional Consultant and Instructional Designer,
Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

Angela R. Linse
Associate Dean, and Executive Director
Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

Jennifer Keagy
Director,
Center for Teaching Excellence
Penn State Harrisburg

Topic:
Effective Remote Teaching: Key Strategies and Resources

Zoom Connectivity Information:

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://psu.zoom.us/j/92989520449

Or iPhone one-tap (US Toll): +16468769923,92989520449#  or +13017158592,92989520449#
Meeting ID: 929 8952 0449

******************************************************************************************

SEPTEMBER 15 COMMONWEALTH CAUCUS MEETING IS CANCELLED