

**University Council Committee on Committees Report  
on the Functioning of Council Committees during Academic Year 2018-19**

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**Membership**

**Chair:** Steven Kimbrough

**Staff:** J. Patrick Walsh and Kathy Kruger

**Members:** Faculty: Mirjam Cvetic, Eric Feldman, Sharon Irving, Anna Kashina, Jennifer Pinto-Martin, Santosh Venkatesh; PPSA: Nadir Sharif; WPPSA: Loretta Hauber; Graduate Student: Haley Pilgrim; Undergraduate Student: Stephen Imburgia

**Executive Summary**

This report summarizes the general functioning and procedures of University Council (UC) Committees during the 2018 – 2019 academic year. These committees are: Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA), Committee on Campus and Community Life (CCL), Committee on Diversity and Equity (CDE), Committee on Facilities, and Committee on Personnel Benefits (CPB).

Suggestions for enhancing the functioning of these committees include:

(1) Consider feasibility of evening-hour meetings for committee members whose participation during business hours is consistently impossible; (2) create table name cards for use by committee members during meetings; (3) ensure that all representative perspectives (i.e., faculty, staff, and students) are heard from during committee discussions; (4) distribute meeting minutes or recaps to all committee members in a timely fashion; and (5) set aside some portion of each committee’s first meeting for an administrative update.

**Mechanism of evaluation**

Members of the Committee on Committees (UCCoC) collected information for this report. Information was collected via in-person, phone, and/or email interviews, using the list of questions below as a guide. UCCoC members interviewed committee members from their own constituency. For example, faculty members interviewed Committee Chairs, as well as faculty representatives as available; students sought to interview the corresponding student representatives; and staff members of the UCCoC interviewed their counterparts in the committees. This report provides an overview of the general findings from the data collected and comments on the functioning and procedures of each Committee. The UC Steering Committee is encouraged to refer to the individual committee reports for more information on the functioning of each committee.

**Questions posed to each Committee Chair**

1. What changes, if any, do you think need to be made in the committee's general charge? Do you feel the scope of the committee is appropriate?
2. What issues did the committee address this year? Will they be resolved by year’s end? Were the committee's specific charges for this year clear and appropriate?
3. What issues in the committee’s charges are unlikely to be addressed or resolved by the end of the academic year? What do you see as issues emerging for consideration next year?

4. How many times did the full committee meet? Were any subcommittees created? If so, how many were created, how often did they meet, what were their purposes, and did they achieve their goals?
5. Is the membership of the committee well suited to the committee's charge in terms of relevant expertise, representation of interests, etc.? Does the chair demonstrate sufficient leadership; if not, then who on the committee does? Which members would you recommend to serve on the committee next year?
6. What was the role of the administration's liaison in your committee? (The liaison is an administrative person who can provide relevant information for a committee charge or connect the committee with others on campus with relevant information.)
7. Did someone from the administration provide explicit feedback on last year's recommendations? Was the feedback satisfactory? Were there any aspects that were not been resolved or for which a path to resolving them has not been developed?
8. What problems did the committee encounter (e.g., limitations on access to necessary resources or information)?
9. Was the committee effectively structured to accomplish its charges? Were there appropriate opportunities for the committee to provide advice, to work with its administrative liaison to resolve specific issues, and/or to generate grander recommendations?<sup>1</sup> Were constituents outside of the membership roster consulted in the committee's work?
10. What recommendations about the committee's process and organization do you have? Is there any question that should have been asked about process that was not included?
11. For Staff and Students: Do you feel that your voice was heard as part of the committee?
12. For Students: Was there a primary and an alternate student representative on each committee?

### **General Comments across all Committees**

Each UC committee has two major roles:

1. Performing a broad review in its areas of interest and monitoring the issues to determine whether there are any that require deeper exploration. While it is occasionally the case that no recommendations emerge from this process, the University is well served by having a representative body tracking important institutional and community matters on a continuing basis.
2. Performing an in-depth consideration of a small number (typically three to five) issues that arise from the previous year's agenda and its recommendations, or new information relating to the work of the previous year's committee. These issues are developed in consultation with Committee members from the previous year, Faculty Senate leadership, and University leadership. The examination of an issue charged to the committee may be undertaken by the committee as a whole, or by subcommittees, and will typically involve

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<sup>1</sup> Each committee has been charged to operate keeping the following process in mind: 1) To perform general advisory review of their area of concern; 2) To try to resolve specific issues that the committee wishes to address (or has been charged to address) by working through the administrative liaison; 3) In cases where the intra-committee level effort is not able to resolve issues, to generate recommendations to be addressed outside of the committee as formal proposals to be forwarded to the administration or for the University Council to consider.

multiple meetings and conversations with people around the University engaged with the issue. While many issues can be resolved by working directly with administrators in the focus area to clarify issues and consider policy modifications, in the absence of a resolution of a given matter, the committee may request that Council Steering reexamine the issue. Committees and Council Steering should nevertheless bear in mind the importance of closure on matters addressed by the various committees.

While several factors can contribute to whether a committee functions effectively, there are a few governing principles which can help a UC committee function well: a clear explanation of the purpose of the committee by the chair; a careful delineation of the roles of the various members of the committee; the formation of appropriate subcommittees; scheduling meetings to fit the schedules of the members of the committee; and beginning meetings as soon as feasible in the fall semester to get an early start on the charges. Accordingly, as has been the practice in past years, the University Council Committee on Committees urges committee chairs to provide committee members with detailed orientation materials along with a thorough explanation of their roles and the committee's role in the University as a whole in order to facilitate substantive and efficient discussions on the committee's charges.

Two of the five committees received feedback indicating that more could be done to ensure that student voices are heard, and the Committee on Committees has followed up with the Chairs of these committees to raise awareness of the importance of ensuring that student perspectives be solicited and considered, particularly on topics where students will be those most strongly impacted.

In light of feedback received, UCCoC makes the following specific recommendations for consideration during the 2019-2020 academic year:

1. We encourage the convening of occasional evening-hour meetings (when student representatives would be more likely to participate), especially when discussing issues that would distinctly benefit from student perspectives.
2. Committee chairs should ensure that perspectives from all constituency representatives (faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students) are heard during committee discussions. This can be accomplished by softly encouraging active input from all constituents: faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students.
3. Committees should use table name cards during committee meetings so as to encourage familiarity and camaraderie amongst all committee members. The cards should list the member's name, constituency, and position title or degree candidacy status as appropriate.
4. Meeting minutes or recaps should be promptly distributed to all committee members so as to encourage feedback from those who were unable to participate during the appointed meeting hour.
5. We strongly encourage that some portion of each committee's first meeting be set aside for an administrative update on the prior year's recommendations; these updates can be arranged through the Office of the Secretary.

## University Council Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA)

### General comments

CARA's charges were again broad and complex, and the committee continued a "listening tour" of what University leaders are doing to address each issue. CARA focused on two targeted efforts: affordability of a Penn education and preparation provided to classroom instructors.

*The University Council Committee on Committees notes the complexity of issues presented in CARA's general charge and its specific charges. Given this complexity, we recommend the sharing of internal, online-based discussion documents (using document sharing services such as Penn Box, Google Drive, or others) so as to continue productive discussions beyond the scheduled meeting hours. We further encourage CARA's engagement with classroom instructors on future charges that pertain to them, despite their absence from the committee's formal roster.*

### Membership

**Chair:** Joe Libonati

**Liaison:** Leo Charney

**Staff:** Diane Fassett

**Members:** Faculty: Julie Fairman, Daniel Raff, Marc Schmidt, Lisa Servon, Alan Strudler, Guobin Yang; PPSA: Yuhong He, Patty Lynn; WPPSA: Rhonda Kirlew; GAPSA: Gregory Callahan, Rina Madhani; UA: Dhruv Iyer, William Yoo

### General Committee Charge

The Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA):

- (i) shall have cognizance over matters of recruitment, admissions, and financial aid that concern the University as a whole and that are not the specific responsibility of individual faculties, including the authority to carry out studies on existing recruitment and admissions procedures and their relationships with existing policies on admissions and financial aid and to recommend changes in policy to the Council;
- (ii) shall consider the purposes of a University bookstore and advise the Council and the management of the University bookstore on policies, development, and operations;
- (iii) shall review and monitor issues related to the international programs and other international activities of the University, including advice and policy recommendations in such areas as services for international students and scholars, foreign fellowships and studies abroad, faculty, staff and student exchange programs, and cooperative undertakings with foreign universities;
- (iv) shall advise the vice provost and director of libraries on the policies, development, and operation of the University libraries;
- (v) shall have cognizance over recreation and intramural and intercollegiate athletics and their integration with the educational program of the University, including the planning and provision of adequate facilities for various sports and recreational activities; and
- (vi) shall have cognizance of all matters of policy relating to research and the general environment for research at the University, including the assignment and distribution of indirect costs and the assignment of those research funds distributed by the University, and shall advise the Administration on those proposals for sponsored research referred to it because of potential conflict with University policy.

## **2018-19 Specific Charges**

1. Review and comment on the affordability of a Penn education for all undergraduate and graduate students by considering expenses related to tuition, fees, and costs-of-living and to socioeconomic and cultural concerns of both first generation and low income students and of middle income and other students.
2. In collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty, and school-based representatives, review and comment on existing preparation provided to classroom instructors (e.g., teaching assistants and full-time/part-time/adjunct faculty).

## **The University Council Committee on Campus and Community Life (CCL)**

### **General Comments**

CCL met 7 times, first addressing held-over issues from the previous year and then meeting with partners from University City, specifically the Powelton Village neighborhood. The first six meetings included discussions with invited guests and the seventh was used to break into subgroups who crafted sections of the annual report based on CCL's specific charges. Committee members noted that CCL's general charge is quite broad in scope, leaving it time to give attention to only a portion of its general charge in a given year. However, CCL has successfully navigated a well-defined set of specific charges in each of recent years. Scheduling of meetings to allow for full attendance continues to prove challenging, especially with respect to students' schedules. Though the idea of evening meetings as entertained, doing so might adversely affect faculty and staff participation.

*The University Council Committee on Committees commends CCL on its well-defined annual process by addressing a specific issue in turn and then dividing into subgroups to create its report and recommendations. We note that this model should be considered for use by all committees as they plan their annual schedules. We encourage the committee to review the feasibility of its general charge and provide recommendations on how or whether amendments are necessary in order that the charge can be addressed more completely and regularly.*

### **Membership**

**Chair:** Monica Calkins

**Liaison:** Monica Yant Kinney

**Staff:** Emily Hobbs

**Members:** Faculty: Maja Bucan, Brenda Casper, Delphine Dahan, Nancy Hodgson, Catherine McDonald, Mark Trodden; PPSA: Tracy Chupik, Tessa Mansell; WPPSA: Mariel Featherstone, Maureen Goldsmith; GAPSA: Jennifer Phuong, Amubha Tyagi; UA: Jess Andrews, Oluwafeyikemi Makinde

### **General Committee Charge**

- (i) shall have cognizance over the University's communications and public relations activities in their various formats and media including electronic, audio (the telephone system), video and printed copy, and it shall monitor the University's internal communications, the operations of the University Communications Office, communications to alumni, and the interpretation of the University to its many constituencies;
- (ii) shall advise the Council on the relationship of the University to the surrounding community and the relevant University policies, work to ensure that the University develops and maintains a constructive relationship with the community, and monitor pending real estate activities of concern to the community;
- (iii) shall have cognizance of the conditions and rules of undergraduate and graduate student life on campus, including 1) gathering and analyzing information concerning student life and student affairs and making recommendations to the Council; and 2) responding as appropriate to requests from and reporting information and recommendations concerning student life and student affairs to the vice provost for university life and other appropriate administrative officers; and

(iv) shall advise the president, the director of public safety, and the administrators or directors of specific buildings, offices, or projects on all matters concerning safety and security in the conduct of their operations, including consideration and assessment of means to improve safety and security on the campus.

### **2018-19 Specific Charges**

1. Continue to monitor the pathway of mental health care for students.
2. Continue to monitor the University's relationship to the surrounding community, with particular emphasis on community's experiencing increasing residency by Penn affiliates.
3. Continue to monitor pending real estate activities of concern to the community.
4. Review and comment on Penn's current internal communications activities, especially those pertinent to mental health care and University relations.

## **The University Council Committee on Diversity and Equity (CDE)**

### **General Comments**

CDE continued to focus on a narrow set of specific charges. Challenges were cited as to how to collect data on microaggressions and bias. Several committee members expressed appreciation for the helpful role the administrative liaison played in informing the committee of previous years' work.

*The University Council Committee on Committees recommends that, when possible, links to subject matter be provided in advance so that meeting time can be used to discuss the content provided in the briefings.*

### **Membership**

**Chair:** Ben Garcia

**Liaison:** Sam Starks

**Staff:** Kuan Evans

**Members:** Faculty: DaCarla Albright, Gerald Campano, Antonio Garcia, Irina Marinov, Timothy Rommen, Eric Schelter, Ebony Thomas; PPSA: Cynthia Kwan, Kathy Tang; WPPSA: Tiffany Perkins, Angela Rivers; GAPSAs: Francisco Saldaña, Laronda Thompson; UA: Luke Kertcher, Oluwafeyikemi Makinde

### **General Committee Charge:**

The Committee on Diversity and Equity aids Penn in fostering and taking full advantage of its diversity as well as in strengthening ties across all boundaries to enrich and enliven the campus community. The Committee shall advise the offices of the president, provost, and the executive vice presidents on ways to develop and maintain a supportive atmosphere on campus for the inclusion and appreciation of diversity among all members of the University community. The Committee will review and provide advice regarding the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and policies. The areas in which the Committee shall report to the Council include diversity within the educational and work settings, integration of staff and faculty into the larger campus community, and ways to foster a campus environment that is inclusive and supportive of difference. The Committee also will advise the Administration on specific diversity issues that may arise on campus.

### **2018-19 Specific Charges**

1. Review and comment on student experiences of microaggressions and bias and school mechanisms and practices for reporting and addressing.
2. Examine current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination, particularly pertaining to topics and resources on diversity and equity.

## **The University Council Committee on Facilities**

### **General Comments**

The committee addressed the prevalence of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, the use of tobacco in campus outdoor spaces, and the bicycle, commuter, and parking programs. Some time was devoted to the use of e-cigarettes, especially by students.

*Given turnover of committee membership in recent years, the University Council Committee on Committees encourages the Committee on Facilities to provide a full briefing of recent efforts undertaken by the committee, perhaps by devoting the first session of the next academic year to a full committee orientation and by encouraging all committee members to review its reports from the previous three years and be advised of the administrative responses to the previous year's recommendations.*

### **Membership**

**Chair:** Michael McGarvey

**Liaison:** Mark Kocent

**Staff:** Taylor Berkowitz

**Members:** Faculty: William Braham, Erick Guerra, Jinyoung Kim, Allison Lassiter, Kathryn Michel, Claire Mitchell; PPSA: Patrick Dolan, Tom Wilson; WPPSA: Laura Naden, Lara Fields; GAPSA: Mark Bookman, Alex Chen; UA: Amani Bey, Maria Curry

### **General Committee Charge**

The Committee on Facilities shall be responsible for keeping under review the planning and operation by the University of its physical plant and all services associated therewith, including transportation and parking.

### **2018-19 Specific Charges**

1. Continue to monitor progress of all-gender restrooms on campus.
2. Continue to monitor tobacco-free initiatives on campus.
3. Continue to monitor the bicycle, commuting, and parking program, and explore traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle safety on campus.
4. Review and comment on Penn Connects and Climate Action Plan initiatives.

## **The University Council Committee on Personnel Benefits**

### **General comments**

The Committee on Personnel Benefits continued to address a number of topics following briefings provided by Executive Director of Benefits Susan Sproat, including the status of lactation rooms on campus (which may require coordination with the Committee on Facilities and with individual schools and centers) and the use of tuition benefits for dependent children with disabilities.

*The University Council Committee on Committees is grateful to the committee's administrative liaisons, Susan Sproat and Jack Heuer, whom several committee members complimented for their exceptional presentation and facilitation of existing benefits plans and policies and for identifying potential future issues for the committee to address. We recommend that future years' specific charges be limited so as to be achievable within the timeframe of an academic year or acknowledge that the committee's effort make take multiple years to complete.*

### **Membership**

**Chair:** Jonathan Moreno

**Liaisons:** Jack Heuer, Susan Sproat

**Staff:** Melissa Brown

**Members:** Faculty: Anita Allen (ex-officio), David Balamuth, Markus Blatz, Scott Harrington, Tanja Kral, Olivia Mitchell, Andrew Postlewaite, Pamela Sankar; PPSA: Ashley Bush, Desiree Fleck, Adam Roth-Saks; WPPSA: Darlene Jackson, Rhonda Kirlaw, Rosa Vargas

### **General Committee Charge**

The Committee on Personnel Benefits shall have cognizance over the benefits programs for all University personnel. The Committee shall consist of eight faculty members (of whom one shall be a member of the Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (SCESF)), three representatives of the Penn Professional Staff Assembly, and three representatives of the Weekly-Paid Professional Staff Assembly. The Vice President for Human Resources, Associate Provost, and Director of Benefits shall serve as non-voting *ex officio* members.

### **2018-19 Specific Charges**

1. Review and comment, as necessary with the Facilities Committee, on the availability of day care and lactation rooms for new parents and mothers.
2. Review and comment on the University health insurance plans and the potential impact of "Be In The Know" and related wellness programs.
3. Review and comment on expanded education and information to employees and retirees on financial planning for and throughout retirement.