

University Council Committee on Committees Report on the Functioning of Council Committees during Academic Year 2017-18

Membership

Chair: Jennifer A. Pinto-Martin

Staff: J. Patrick Walsh and Lynne Sniffen

Members: Faculty: Kathleen Boesze-Battaglia, Cynthia Connolly, Ron Donagi, Antonio Garcia, Laura Perna, Santosh Venkatesh; PPSA: Stephanie Yee; WPPSA: Loretta Hauber; Graduate Student: Miles Owen; Undergraduate Student: Jackson Burke

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the general functioning and procedures of University Council (UC) Committees during the 2017 – 2018 academic year. These committees are: Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA), Committee on Campus and Community Life (CCL), Committee on Facilities, Committee on Personnel Benefits (CPB), and Committee on Diversity and Equity (CDE).

Suggestions for enhancing the functioning of these committees include:

(1) Finalize committee rosters no later than September 15 of each academic year; (2) Craft specific charges to be as narrow in scope as possible to encourage concrete recommendations to be crafted; and (3) encourage the formation of subcommittees whose tasks are to address action items generated during each meeting; and (4) allow for email based engagement by committee members when necessary and reasonable.

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?¹ 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 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

¹ 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.

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.

In light of feedback received, UCCoC makes the following specific recommendations for the 2018-2019 academic year:

1. Encourage committee work to begin earlier during each academic cycle. Because some constituencies – particularly student governance bodies – do not identify their representatives until after the academic year begins, some initial committee meetings do not occur until as late as mid-October. Since annual reports are due in early April, only five months per year are allowed for committee work in these cases. A full committee roster should be completed no later than September 15 on any year, and the first meeting should be scheduled no later than September 30.
2. Specific charges should be made as clear and precise as possible so as to encourage committees to generate concrete recommendations. Charges that are too broad in scope decrease the efficiency and productivity of the committee and devalue the time and effort contributed by committee members.
3. As much as possible, a committee's meeting should generate concrete action items for follow-up prior to the next scheduled meeting. The implementation of a subcommittee structure can provide a means for accomplishing these action items in an efficient manner.
4. In order to encourage participation in committee deliberations, members should be offered the occasional option of providing feedback or commentary on agenda items, including over email to the committee's staffer should in-person participation not be possible.

University Council Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA)

General comments

CARA's charges were broad and complex, and the committee spent most of their time on a "listening tour" of what University leaders are doing to address each issue. Subcommittees were formed, and light recommendations will be generated for each charge, however much work remains to be done on each. Committee members were divided into subcommittees, each of which formed a set of discussion questions to be asked of the guest speakers, though the entire committee listened to the presentations of each guest.

The University Council Committee on Committees recommends that CARA's charges be narrowed in future years to allow CARA the ability to accomplish its specific charges more fully so as to be maximally impactful. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of charging subcommittees to engage more fully in background research – such as listening to guest speakers – and then preparing brief summaries that can be used as springboards for discussion during full committee meeting times.

Membership

Chair: Joe Libonati

Liaison: Leo Charney

Staff: Jen Canose

Members: Faculty: Julie Fairman, Nicola Mason, Daniel Raff, Guobin Yang; PPSA: Yuhong He, Patty Lynn; WPPSA: Marcia Dotson, Marcus Wright; GAPSA: Cynthia Degros; UA: Yasmina Al Ghadban, David Gordon

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.

2017-18 Specific Charges

1. Continue the discussion on the general environment for research at the University and identify what changes or support can improve research productivity and creativity.
2. Examine the resources available to Penn students while they study abroad.
3. Review admissions and financial aid policies and processes in consult with Dean of Admissions Eric Furda.
4. Review the progress on the reorganization of the bookstore.
5. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2018-19.

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

General Comments

CCL met 8 times, spending the first part of the year attending to issues related to mental health and receiving updates from CAPS and related groups. The committee also heard from the university with regard to new policies and procedures related to sexual harassment. Another issue the committee addressed related to access to sports and recreation facilities at Penn for staff. Work this winter and Spring will focus on issues surrounding community engagement and plans for future development (e.g. plans for new buildings). Specifically, the committee invited community leaders from West Philadelphia to hear their perspective on this issue.

The University Council Committee on Committees commends CCL on its outreach to the University and the surrounding community. It affirms the committee's observation that the general and specific charges are broad and that consideration should be given to divide its work amongst two groups: one focused on campus life and another on external relations. Consideration should be given to whether those groups could form subcommittees of CCL for the sake of efficiency.

Membership

Co-Chairs: Emily Hannum and Monica Calkins

Liaison: Karu Kozuma

Staff: Destiny Martin

Members: Faculty: Delphine Dahan, Nancy Hodgson, Annette Lareau, Catherine McDonald, Americus Reed II; PPSA: Ashley Bush, Tessa Mansell; WPPSA: Maria Puciata, Maureen Goldsmith; GAPSA: Alex Warshauer; UA: Jihyeon Kim, Samara Wyant

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.

2017-18 Specific Charges

1. Continue to monitor access to mental health services.
2. Review Penn's efforts around local engagement and plans for future development
3. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2018-19.

The University Council Committee on Diversity and Equity (CDE)

General Comments

CDE's charges were narrowed this year, and the committee was again divided into subcommittees for its work. Another "Listening to Diversity" forum was hosted in March, and the findings will aid in developing charges for the committee in future cycles. The dynamic nature of the social and political climate as well as reliance on issues brought forth at an annual listening forum makes it unlikely that any single issue can be completely resolved during a single academic cycle. It was noted that staff participation was lacking during the recent academic cycle.

The University Council Committee on Committees recommends that future committee leadership work with PPSA and WPPSA to ensure that staff are fully engaged in CDE's work. It recommends that subcommittees should self-appoint chairpersons who are responsible for coordinating their efforts with those of the CDE chair. It also commends Prof. Dixon-Román for his leadership and guidance of CDE over the past three years and his five consecutive years of service to the committee, which have allowed it to maintain its continuity.

Membership

Chair: Ezekiel Dixon-Román

Liaison: Sam Starks

Staff: Kuan Evans

Members: Faculty: Margo Brooks Carthon; H. Gerald Campano, Kim Gallagher, John Keene, Ebony Thomas, Tobias Wolff; PPSA: Shaina Adams-El Guabli; WPPSA: Laura Naden; GAPSA: Mark Bookman, Ben Sprung; UA: Curie Shim, Johany Dubon

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.

2017-18 Specific Charges

1. Review the campus climate and experiences of LGBTQ students, staff, and faculty.
2. Examine the experiences and climate for international students, faculty, and staff.
3. Review policies and resources available for students, staff, and faculty with children.
4. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2018-19.

The University Council Committee on Facilities

General Comments

The committee met five times, including one joint meeting with the Committee on Personnel Benefits. No subcommittees were formed, though the charges are designed in such a way that substantive recommendations can be generated quickly and efficiently. The committee encountered some difficulties with obtaining information needed to inform certain charges and will continue to seek this information in the next academic cycle.

The University Council Committee on Committees commends the Committee on Facilities on its diligent efforts. It recommends that efforts be made during meetings to ensure that all voices are heard in a structured and fair manner. It further recommends that subcommittees be created in order to accommodate full participation by all committee members.

Membership

Chair: Masao Sako

Liaison: David Hollenberg

Staff: Taylor Berkowitz

Members: Faculty: Erick Guerra, Brent Helliker, Kathryn Michel, Claire Mitchell, Paul Schmidt; PPSA: Patrick Dolan, Tom Wilson; WPPSA: Leon Malloy, Maria Puciata; GAPSA: Mark Bookman, Alex Chen; UA: Adam Mansell, Kyle O’Neil

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.

2017-18 Specific Charges

1. Continue to monitor the bicycle, commuting, and parking programs.
2. Continue to follow up on issues related to Active Learning classrooms.
3. Continue to monitor tobacco-free initiatives on campus.
4. Receive updates on Penn Connects initiatives and Climate Action Plan 2.0.
5. Study and investigate the history and progress of gender-neutral restrooms on campus.
6. Review and discuss this Committee’s general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee’s work in academic year 2018-19.

The University Council Committee on Personnel Benefits

General comments

The Personnel Benefits Committee addressed a number of complex issues in its work this year, including childcare benefits and benefits for new parents. It spent a significant amount of time this year addressing effects of Federal changes to the tax code. The committee suggests that though many benefits appear attractive in writing, some practical difficulties lead to inadequacies in them. The Committee considers practical applications of those benefits.

The University Council Committee on Committees endorses the recommendation of the Personnel Benefits Committee that its general charge should be amended to emphasize the importance of the practical aspects of receiving benefits as opposed to their theoretical availability. Committee meetings should be scheduled such that administrative representation can participate at each meeting in order to be able to respond in a timely manner to technical questions.

Membership

Chair: Russell Localio

Liaisons: Jack Heuer, Susan Sproat

Staff: Melissa Brown

Members: Faculty: Anita Allen (ex-officio), David Balamuth, Tanja Kral, Iourii Manovskii (Fall Term), Olivia Mitchell, Andrew Postlewaite, Robert Stine (Spring Term); PPSA: Desiree Fleck, Cynthia Kwan Dukes, Adam Roth-Saks; WPPSA: Darlene Jackson, Rhonda Kirlew, 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.

2017-18 Specific Charges

1. Continue to discuss and review the requirements of Health Care Reform and consider needed changes in University benefits.
2. Continue to review Penn's provision of benefits for new parents.
3. Continue discussion of services provided by Penn Behavioral Health.
4. Continue to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of Penn's wellness initiatives, including Penn's program with Health Advocate.
5. Continue to monitor retirement benefits in coordination with the Faculty Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty.
6. Continue to discuss and investigate how information on benefits is disseminated and possible improvements thereto.

7. Continue discussion of same-sex partner benefits and the transition to parity.
8. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2018-19.