

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE  
FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
2018- 2019**

*Prepared by the Office of the University Secretary*

This is the forty-first annual report of the Steering Committee of the University Council, prepared in accordance with Council Bylaws that the Steering Committee publish an annual report to the University community that reviews the previous year's Council deliberations and highlights "both significant discussions and the formal votes taken on matters of substance."

**SEPTEMBER 5, 2018 MEETING**

In the absence of President Gutmann, with the advice of Steering and consent of Council, Provost Pritchett appointed Dr. Caryn Lerman as moderator and Lauren Steinfeld as parliamentarian for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Faculty Senate Chair Jennifer Pinto-Martin advised that Steering had drawn on suggestions and discussions of the Steering Committee to finalize four focus issues for 2018-2019, as follows:

- New Directions in the Arts: Annenberg Live! and the Sachs Arts Innovation Program (December 5, 2018)
- Wellness at Penn (January 30, 2019)
- Penn First Plus (February 20, 2019)
- Planning and Goals of the *Power of Penn* Campaign (March 27, 2019)

Council reviewed the 2018-2019 committee charges and Professor Pinto-Martin announced two Open Forum sessions scheduled for the December 5<sup>th</sup> and February 20<sup>th</sup> meetings.

Provost Pritchett; David Fox, Director, New Student Orientation and Academic Initiatives; and Beth Winkelstein, Vice Provost for Education, led discussion of the 2018-2019 Academic Theme Year: *The Year of Why*, highlighting upcoming events that will include intellectual and cultural opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. Professor Fox outlined how members of the University community could obtain grant funding for planning and executing events related to the theme year.

**OCTOBER 24, 2018 MEETING**

In accordance with the Bylaws, President Gutmann and Provost Pritchett presented State of the University reports.

President Gutmann introduced Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations John Zeller to speak to Council about the *Power of Penn* campaign. Beyond raising necessary resources, Mr. Zeller explained the value of having a campaign as an institutional planning platform for identifying priorities, engaging volunteers, and providing a timeframe to accomplish goals. Mr. Zeller outlined the phases of the campaign through its conclusion in 2021 and their interface with

the goals of the Penn Compact 2020, as well as how this campaign bridges the work of the *Making History* campaign.

Provost Pritchett then introduced Vice Provost for Global Initiatives Zeke Emanuel to present on Penn's *Strategic Framework for Global Initiatives (2018-2023)*. Professor Emanuel explained Penn Global's evolution; what began with a strategic plan of three pillars (to prepare students for a globalized society; strengthen Penn as a global agenda setter; and promote healthy, inspiring, productive lives) has grown to include educating global citizens; catalyzing transformative ideas; and bringing Penn to the world and the world to Penn. Professor Emanuel outlined a full range of offerings, including semester and year-long study abroad opportunities, expanded Penn Global Seminars that are built into a regular on campus course, global internships, research opportunities at institutions abroad, and the development of May term and summer term programs.

During the New Business portion of the meeting, the student representative for the Muslim Students' Association (MSA) reported on a continuing issue of mold in residences of the Quad. President Gutmann responded that the matter would be addressed right away.

## **DECEMBER 5, 2018 MEETING**

Vice President and University Secretary Leslie Kruhly updated Council on concerns about mold in some living areas of the Quad that were raised on October 24, 2018 during New Business. The issue was addressed and resolved.

The first Focus Issue of the year was *New Directions in the Arts: Annenberg Live! and the Sachs Arts Innovation Program*. The discussion was led by Anita Allen, Vice Provost for Faculty and Chair of the Provost's Arts Advisory Council, the Henry R. Silverman Professor of Law, and Professor of Philosophy, who described the arts as vehicles for exploring culture and history, confronting conflicts of human life, and spurring social justice. She then introduced Chris Gruits, Executive and Artistic Director of the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, and John McInerney, Executive Director of the Sachs Arts Innovation and Hub.

Mr. Gruits explained that his goal has been to revitalize how the Annenberg Center supports students, faculty, staff, and the Philadelphia region, noting that the three-theater Center also includes a wide range of classroom and rehearsal space and is home to the English department's Theater Arts Program and the Sachs Arts Hub. Mr. Gruits noted that in addition to its world-class public programming, the Center offers curriculum support with the Music and Theater Arts departments, Cinema Media Studies, and programs such as Environmental Humanities. He noted that the Center's new strategic plan broadens its service orientation, including innovative student support.

Mr. McInerney explained that the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation has a vision to offer everyone at Penn multiple opportunities to engage with and participate in the arts. He noted that the program provides funding and strategic support to students, faculty, staff, artists, and cultural centers, and that its three core areas of funding are: teaching, making, and presenting art. Mr. McInerney highlighted several types of available grants and noted that the program can also advise students as they navigate the complex systems of art support, resources, and opportunities.

Council held its first Open Forum and the following issues were presented:

- The University's impact on climate change and human rights through its investments in coal and tar sands companies
- Improving the incentive to do academic research at Penn by making research an academic elective
- Proposal to increase the accessibility of menstrual health products on campus
- Request to speak about the Second-Year Experience program
- Request to address the disproportionate underfunding of the Economics department and of graduate students in general
- Request to speak about the one-month eviction notice received by residents of the West Philadelphia Arvilla Affordable Housing Complex

### **JANUARY 30, 2019 MEETING**

President Gutmann indicated that this would be Moderator Caryn Lerman's last meeting of Council.

Vice President and University Secretary Leslie Kruhly provided a follow-up on the Open Forum items from the Council meeting of December 5, 2018.

Valarie Swain-Cade McCoullum, Vice Provost for University Life, opened discussion of the second Focus Issue of the year: *Prioritizing Wellness at Penn*. She highlighted key recent developments in this area, including the appointment of Penn's first Chief Wellness Officer, Dr. Benoit Dubé; the creation of a new, integrated Student Wellness Services Unit; and new collaborations that create engagement and affirm wellness as a central priority of life on campus. She then introduced Chief Wellness Officer, Dr. Benoit Dubé.

Dr. Dubé summarized the 2018 reorganization of Health and Wellness Services to better coordinate the services and activities of: Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Student Health Service, Campus Health (under Student Health), Penn Violence Prevention, and the Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Program Initiatives.

Dr. Dubé outlined eight dimensions that constitute wellness and presented a holistic view that includes community building and peer support, which are both engrained in Thriving at Penn programming aimed at helping students flourish and thrive as they achieve their academic goals. He noted that 24/7 access to a clinician through CAPS is now available, and the speed with which initial appointments can be scheduled has increased dramatically.

Dr. Dubé reported that the ICARE active listening program, which has trained 3,000 students, staff, and faculty, had been recognized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a Model of Excellence. In addition, Penn will be the first Ivy League campus to receive the distinction of Healthier Campus by the Partnership for a Healthier America. Dr. Dubé highlighted a number of efforts across campus.

In discussing new initiatives, Dr. Dubé announced the creation of the Student Wellness Advisory Group to ensure that a diversity of voices is heard. He then spoke about the Your Big Idea

Wellness Challenge, a crowdsourcing initiative within the Penn community to solicit new ideas or enhancements to existing programs.

Dr. Dubé then introduced UA Assembly President Michael Krone and GAPSA President Haley Pilgrim.

Mr. Krone spoke about the UA's focus this year on creative approaches to wellness in all aspects of campus life. He indicated that the UA was working to centralize and simplify access to resources through a Resource tab on the UA website. Mr. Krone talked about the need to humanize wellness through sharing stories. He added that inclusivity and community-building, ensuring financial security, and more equitable club recruitment are areas that can be improved to support the student experience.

GAPSA President Haley Pilgrim noted that one of the findings of a Penn graduate student mental wellness survey demonstrated how strongly financial insecurity was linked with the likelihood of being anxious and depressed. She outlined initiatives such as increasing available funding for academic and professional travel, partnering with on-campus centers to develop a graduate First-Generation Low-Income (FGLI) community, establishing anti-harassment standards for events, and creating small-scale events that students can feel comfortable attending alone. In addition, Ms. Pilgrim mentioned the GAPSA Gives Back Program, which encourages outreach and community service.

## **FEBRUARY 20, 2019 MEETING**

The February 20, 2019 meeting of University Council was cancelled due to inclement weather. In response, the scheduled Open Forum session and Focus Issue presentation (*The Penn First Plus Program*) were moved to the March 27, 2019 meeting. The Focus Issue presentation originally scheduled for March 27, 2019 (*Planning and Goals of the Power of Penn Campaign*) was carried forward to the 2019-2020 academic year.

## **MARCH 27, 2019 MEETING**

In the absence of President Gutmann, with the advice of Steering and consent of Council, Provost Pritchett appointed Dr. Emily Steiner as moderator for the remainder of the 2018-2019 academic year.

In accordance with the bylaws, Vice President for Budget and Management Analysis Trevor Lewis reviewed the FY19 budget and FY20 undergraduate total charges and financial aid.

Looking forward to plans for the next academic year, Provost Pritchett reported on the Penn First Plus program. The Provost indicated that one of Penn's highest priorities is supporting FGLI students and developing the Penn First Plus program to offer support and resources that ensure students from all backgrounds can thrive. He then introduced Beth Winkelstein, Vice Provost for Education; Rob Ghrist, Faculty Co-Director; and Marc Lo, inaugural Executive Director. The Provost added that Camille Charles, Faculty Co-Director, and Vice Provost for University Life Valarie Swain-Cade McCoullum regretted that they were unable to attend today's presentation.

Professor Winkelstein provided an overview of the many Penn First Plus partners, including Student Financial Services and the University Libraries. She particularly noted the much-valued advice received from the students engaged with Penn First Plus.

Professor Ghrist explained that the charge of the Faculty Co-Directors is primarily to engage and inspire both faculty and students. He noted that many faculty members had reached out to say they had also been first-generation students and to offer their support. He outlined existing and new programs, including online modules and videos offering information on available resources, as well as a number of summer programs aimed at student preparation, such as the Summer Institute, the Wharton STEP program, and the Pre-Freshman Program.

Dr. Lo noted that the Penn First Plus website, scheduled to launch in the summer of 2019, aims to centralize and make accessible information on available resources. He added that guidance and resources that exemplify best practices for addressing a diverse student body will also be directed to those working with and advising students. Dr. Lo reported that collaborative efforts to better understand the hidden costs of a Penn education, to support effective mentorship, and to address inclusivity and a culture of achievement that does not lead to a culture of competition are also planned.

Council held its second Open Forum and the following issues were presented:

- Penn's admission policies for undocumented students
- Keep Veterans in the Classroom at Penn
- Lack of space and insufficient staff in the cultural center, La Casa Latina
- Limited cultural house resources
- Lack of staff and financial resources in cultural houses
- Insufficient resources for FGLI graduate and professional students
- Proposed sexual harassment policies and procedures
- Student perspective on the topic of climate change on behalf of Fossil Free Penn
- Technology transfer at Penn, specifically related to medicines developed at Penn

During the New Business portion of the meeting, several Council members indicated their support for requests to increase space and funding for cultural groups as raised during Open Forum.

The representative for the MSA raised issues concerning the timing of the month of Ramadan and how it coincides with final exams and commencement. It was reported that MSA was working with the Provost's Office on potential solutions and expressed MSA's appreciation for its cooperation.

A final comment was made in support of increasing the number of plant-based meal options through Penn Dining and the positive impact that could have on campus sustainability.

#### **APRIL 24, 2019 MEETING**

Vice President and University Secretary Leslie Kruhly noted that Katherine Kruger, Project Administrator, Office of the University Secretary, would act as Parliamentarian for this meeting.

Vice President and University Secretary Leslie Kruhly provided a follow-up on the Open Forum and New Business items from the Council meeting of March 27, 2019.

The Chairs of four of the five standing Council committees provided overviews of their final reports:

- Associate Professor Michael McGarvey, Chair of the Committee on Facilities
- Professor Joe Libonati, Chair of the Committee on Academic and Related Affairs
- Professor Monica Calkins, Chair of the Committee on Campus and Community Life
- Professor Ben Garcia, Chair of the Committee on Diversity and Equity

Jonathan Moreno, Chair of the Committee on Personnel Benefits, was unable to attend. A copy of his report was distributed in hard copy at the meeting.

Faculty Senate Chair-Elect Steven Kimbrough reported on the work of the University Council Committee on Committees in evaluating the functioning of the five standing committees and the support they need moving forward. Several recommendations were made, including: consideration of evening meeting hours to maximize attendance, the use of name placards at meetings, the prompt distribution of minutes, and a supportive atmosphere to ensure that all perspectives are heard. He noted that, at an early meeting of each committee in the fall, the Office of the Secretary would provide an update on disposition of the committee's recommendations. Committees should reserve time in an early agenda for this update.

Faculty Senate Chair Jennifer Pinto-Martin noted that suggestions for Focus Issues for the upcoming academic year had been circulated to Council in advance of the meeting. She added that Council members are welcome to make additional suggestions that are of general interest to the University community, and that Steering will finalize the list of Focus Issues at its September 2019 meeting.

The Provost thanked all members of University Council for their service and participation, and specifically acknowledged the contributions of Faculty Senate Chair Jennifer Pinto-Martin, Chair-Elect Steven Kimbrough, and Past-Chair Santosh Venkatesh.

Finally, Provost Pritchett expressed his gratitude to Leslie Kruhly for her 19 years of service and strong support of the work of University Council and the University.