

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE
FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
2020-2021**

Prepared by the Office of the University Secretary

This is the forty-third annual report of the Steering Committee for 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." It should be noted that all Council meetings for the 2020-2021 academic year were held virtually due to COVID-19.

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 MEETING

With the advice of Steering and consent of Council, President Gutmann appointed Dr. Melissa Wilde as Moderator. President Gutmann appointed Lauren Steinfeld as Parliamentarian for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Faculty Senate Chair Kathleen Hall Jamieson called attention to the University Council Focus Issues and committee charges, which were previously distributed. Council reviewed the 2020-2021 committee charges and Professor Jamieson announced the two Open Forum sessions scheduled for the December 2, 2020 and February 17, 2021 meetings.

Associate Vice President and University Council Secretary Lizann Boyle Rode reported on the disposition of the ten Open Forum items from the February 19, 2020 meeting. These items were carried forward to the September 2020 meeting because the March and April 2020 Council meetings were cancelled due to COVID-19.

The final reports of the five University Council standing committees, which are typically delivered at the final Council meeting in April, were also carried forward to the September meeting. The final reports were delivered by:

- Professor Julie Fairman, Chair, Committee on Academic and Related Affairs
- Associate Professor Monica Calkins, Chair, Committee on Campus and Community Life
- Professor Benjamin Garcia, Chair, Committee on Diversity and Equity
- Associate Professor Michael McGarvey, Chair, Committee on Facilities
- Professor Tanja Kral, Chair, Committee on Personnel Benefits

OCTOBER 21, 2020 MEETING

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

President Gutmann began her presentation, *State of the University: COVID-19 & Financial Impact*, by explaining that a Recovery Planning Group (RPG) was established at the outset of the pandemic. At the President's request, Provost Pritchett and Executive Vice President (EVP) Craig Carnaroli were charged with reporting to University Council on the work of the RPG and the impact of COVID-19 on the University.

Provost Pritchett began by noting that he and EVP Carnaroli would be joined in the presentation by Chief Wellness Officer Benoit Dubé. Provost Pritchett described the guiding principles of the RPG: maintain the highest standards of public health and safety, develop/evaluate policies for safely re-opening the campus, continue essential operations of teaching and research, protect against negative events in both the short and long term, and communicate clearly in a dynamic situation. Provost Pritchett described the eight working committees reporting to the RPG: Public Health/Testing, Academic Engagement, Research Operations, Workforce Operations, Student Facilities Operations, International Student Issues, University Life, and Communications. He noted that all committees had been populated by faculty and staff and with continuous input from students. He then outlined the major planning considerations, which included the Student Campus Compact (the Compact), testing/contact tracing, a phased return to research, and students. He also described the ramping up of research operations at the University; key milestones were highlighted. Provost Pritchett then turned the discussion over to Chief Wellness Officer and Associate Provost Benoit Dubé.

Dr. Dubé began by describing the University's gateway testing efforts whereby individuals were tested for COVID-19 as they returned to campus. He conveyed that the Compact is the first line of defense because it outlines the behavioral expectations for all members of the Penn community regardless of on or off-campus residency. The Compact includes an agreement to use PennOpen Pass, practice face/hand hygiene, receive a flu shot, practice social distancing, and restrict travel. Students were also asked to follow guidelines for social gatherings and restrict interactions to specific pods. Dr. Dubé explained that there are consequences for non-compliance with the Compact, and a review panel was convened to address violations. He also described the Health Ambassadors program, which is a team made up of students, faculty, and staff who reinforce the Compact and support individuals as they engage in interactions on campus to remind them of the importance of wearing a mask, maintaining social distance, and hand washing. Dr. Dubé concluded by explaining the University's COVID-19 Dashboard and noted that the data indicated a continued viral spread within households.

EVP Craig Carnaroli began by focusing on workforce operations. He described the *COVID-19 Return to Campus Guide* that was distributed to all faculty and staff, along with a mask, and provided information about how to prepare and what to expect when resuming on-campus activities. He also reported that a childcare grant program was created targeting families of children aged ten and younger. With regard to University finances, EVP Carnaroli reported that a deficit of between \$90 and \$100 million was being forecast for the year. Mitigation actions included a hiring freeze, curtailed salary increase program, senior leadership salary freeze, deferral of capital projects, reduced discretionary spending, and travel restrictions. He also highlighted ways that the University had provided emergency support to the wider Philadelphia community, including a \$500,000 donation to the Philadelphia COVID Relief Fund; \$1.25 million in rent abatement to 66 retailers in the Penn portfolio; a \$250,000 contribution to the University City District's Small Business Emergency Fund; pay continuation for dining workers during the spring semester; and an emergency grant fund for members of the Penn community that provided up to \$1,500 to employees that earn less than \$70,000 and also third-party contract workers. EVP Carnaroli then provided a summary of some of the ways that the University had adapted to COVID-19, including entrepreneurial students selling pandemic themed merchandise to raise money for the Philadelphia COVID Relief Fund, hosting a virtual convocation, ongoing coronavirus research, and the work of VPUL to create online platforms that allow student groups to interact. He asked students and faculty to complete and spread

the word about the student and faculty surveys that were available for completion until the end of October 2020. He reported that the student survey disseminated during the spring semester had a 51 percent response rate. EVP Carnaroli explained that COVID-19 testing was one of the gateway issues that the University needed to address in order to invite students safely back to campus in the spring. To meet this challenge, the University created Project Quaker, a campus testing plan for the spring 2021 semester, in partnership with Penn Medicine. It was projected that a minimum of 40,000 saliva-based COVID-19 tests would be needed weekly.

Provost Pritchett then introduced his State of the University report on *Civic Engagement at Penn*. Civic engagement was chosen as the focus, in part because of the 2020 United States presidential election, but also to reaffirm that civil engagement is always at the heart of Penn. He stated that the presentation would highlight the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Paideia Program, Civic House, The Netter Center, and Penn Leads the Vote, and would demonstrate how each advances the values of civic engagement. He then introduced Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein.

Deputy Provost Winkelstein explained that the format of the presentation would be in two parts, a presentation on the Year of Civic Engagement followed by a panel discussion. She then introduced David Fox, Director of New Student Orientation and Academic Initiatives. She noted that the Year of Jazz was the original topic planned for the 2020-2021 academic year, however Mr. Fox, his team, and their partners across the University successfully pivoted to an online launch of the Penn Reading Project (PRP) and a fulsome year of activities focused on the Year of Civic Engagement. She then turned the discussion over to Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox explained some of the changes to the PRP. This year the PRP was hosted online and lasted for a week rather than a one-event central day as in years past. All materials were made available through Canvas, including a group of short essays and a 30-minute video. He noted that it was of major importance that students were able to easily access and download the materials from any context. This year, the entire Penn community—students, faculty and staff—were invited to take part as facilitators and had an opportunity to meet with students in small groups.

Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein transitioned into the panel portion of the presentation. She then introduced the panelists who went on to describe their programs:

- Michael X. Delli Carpini, Oscar H. Gandy Professor of Communication & Democracy and Faculty Director, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Paideia Program
- Herman Beavers, Professor of English and Africana Studies and Faculty Director, Civic House and Civic Scholars Program
- Ira Harkavy, Associate Vice President and Founding Director, Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships
- Harrison Feinman and Eva Gonzalez, student co-chairs, Penn Leads the Vote

During New Business, a Council member outlined challenges faced by international students related to remote learning and winter housing.

DECEMBER 2, 2020 MEETING

Associate Vice President and University Council Secretary Lizann Boyle Rode provided an update on the issues affecting international students that were raised during New Business on October 21, 2020.

The first Focus Issue presentation of the year—*Update on Research Activities and Academic Instruction at Penn*—was led by Senior Vice Provost for Research Dawn Bonnell and Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein. Dr. Bonnell began by highlighting the resilience of Penn’s research community in the face of COVID-19. She explained that, in the spring, there was a campus-wide pivot to support healthcare providers and essential personnel on campus, which included a rapid ramp down of research activities. Any activities that could be accomplished remotely were moved off-campus, but much research activity was maintained, including essential research and COVID-19-related research that continued on-campus. She explained that \$16 million in federal support had been awarded to Penn researchers to pursue COVID-related projects. She then described the three-phase process of ramping up research activities on campus that began in the middle of June 2020. She further explained that, despite the increase in research activities on campus, some fields had been severely impacted and some research activities had completely ceased. To assist the research community during this time, the Penn Research Recovery Program was developed. The program is a series of policies and funding mechanisms to support the research community. Highlights of the program include suspension of the five-year limit on post-doctoral terms; extension of the tenure clock; opening of the Provost’s Diversity Post-Doctoral program to Penn graduates; underwriting of a \$1.3 million budget deficit related to animal care; provision of PPE and disinfecting supplies; submission of a FEMA application for funds to cover research-related emergency expenses; advocacy for spending flexibility on federal grants and for federal allocations to fund supplements and COVID-19 related research; and childcare grants for eligible faculty, staff, and post-docs. Dr. Bonnell also reported on four new funding mechanisms that were established to help mitigate some of the impacts of COVID-19 on the research community, these include the Social Inequality in Healthcare and Health Status research grant program; Research Transition Fund; Research Disruption Mitigation Fund; and Bridge Grants that are designed to provide gap funding between external grants. Dr. Bonnell concluded by highlighting that several of the emerging COVID-19 vaccines were based on research from the laboratory of Penn Medicine Professor Drew Weissman whose research began 15 years ago.

Moderator Wilde then introduced Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein to provide an update on teaching and learning and the impact of the pandemic. Deputy Provost Winkelstein shared a data snapshot of a single week of online learning indicating that there were nearly 35,000 meetings held via Zoom with almost 300,000 participants and 16 million participant minutes. In addition to offering courses remotely, student support services were also moved online, and the college houses moved all but five of their houses completely online with programming largely being provided virtually. Nearly 10,000 course sections were being offered online during the fall semester. Deputy Provost Winkelstein then highlighted the importance of student voices in informing practices and supports related to online learning. She noted that student input and feedback had helped to drive course changes and the supports that had been put into place. She noted that the University continued to solicit student input, including through a survey of all enrolled students. The data from that survey was used to inform and refine the practices of instructors and centers to ensure that the University

was being responsive to student needs. Deputy Provost Winkelstein also drew attention to the Course Concern Report form that is hosted by her office; the form provides a way for course issues to be reported for investigation. She noted that financial supports had also been provided for students. Since March 2020, over 975 technology grants had been distributed to graduate and professional students, totaling over \$300,000. Emergency funds had also been distributed to graduate (\$250,000) and undergraduate (\$500,000) students. These funds provided support to students who had to leave campus in March and needed to have flights purchased, emergency provision of laptops, and support to pay rent in two places if students needed to move to a safer location. Deputy Provost Winkelstein acknowledged the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA), the Undergraduate Assembly (UA), and UMOJA for contributing funds to support these efforts. She also acknowledged President Gutmann's Ph.D. initiative that provided a COVID-19 stipend to all Ph.D. students in recognition of the immediate and unique challenges facing these students. The University also created programs to support learning and community building outside the classroom. These initiatives included the creation of the New Student Orientation (NSO) 2020 Preceptorials and the Penn Parents @ Home program. Deputy Provost Winkelstein also acknowledged Penn Clubs for mounting a Penn Lab to help build the Penn Clubs' website, which had been particularly useful for undergraduate students to locate interest groups and meet as they would on campus. Deputy Provost Winkelstein concluded by providing information on three online initiatives: the yearlong preceptorial on Racism and Anti-Racism in Contemporary America; the NSO Year of Civic Engagement website; and a resource called Hub@Penn that provides students with a way to establish and continue to find community outside of the classroom.

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

- The University's Election Day policy
- Subsidized childcare and tenure and promotion
- Universal one-year extension of graduate student funding
- The status of transfer students: removing institutional barriers and providing support
- Free speech on campus and social bias in the University's framing of recent social issues
- The Penn Police patrol zone and the Penn Police presence in West Philadelphia

During New Business, several Council members raised the issue of extending the pass/fail option for the spring semester.

JANUARY 27, 2021 MEETING

Associate Vice President and University Council Secretary Lizann Boyle Rode provided an update on extending the University's pass/fail option for the spring semester, which was raised during New Business on December 2, 2020. She also provided an update on the six Open Forum topics presented at that meeting.

Associate Vice Provost for Global Initiatives Amy Gadsden and Professor Michael Horowitz, Director, Perry World House, presented the second Focus Issue of the year: *Global Support and Engagement in the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

Dr. Gadsden began by describing some of the pandemic-related challenges to travel and immigration that international students faced during the 2020-2021 academic year, as well as some of the supports

provided by the University. She noted that travel bans were particularly challenging, and these policies made it difficult for students to plan travel to and from their home countries and to anticipate how they could get back and forth to campus. Changes to United States (U.S.) government guidelines, known as the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) guidance, also created challenges. U.S. embassies and consulates shut down in March 2020, and students experienced significant visa processing delays and suspensions. Prior to March 2020, an international student was only able to take one online class and still be in compliance with their visa status. The U.S. government made accommodations to allow students to take all classes online if they were currently in the U.S. The U.S. government also suspended what is known as the “Five-Month Rule,” which states that, in order to maintain visa status, international students must return to the U.S. within five months. In August 2020, the SEVP issued guidelines that would have sent many international students home unexpectedly. President Gutmann was a forceful advocate for rescinding those changes, and Penn joined with other schools to advocate both privately and publicly. Ultimately, the changes were withdrawn. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Penn’s international student enrollment was significant. In fall 2020, there was a 22 percent decrease in active F1/J1 international students at Penn. More than 1,000 students deferred their immigration to spring 2021 or later.

Dr. Gadsden then described a number of integration initiatives launched by PennGlobal to celebrate and support international students. These included a virtual graduation celebration held in May 2020 for graduating international students; the Forerunner Global program, an undergraduate pre-departure orientation program that was moved to a virtual format; and a Welcome & Inclusion campaign. Dr. Gadsden reported that PennGlobal was piloting a new engagement platform called Your World@Penn, a social media platform developed by International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) that will allow students to connect with each other through small groups, small initiatives, and shared interests. PennGlobal is also launching several intercultural communication and integration initiatives. ICommunicate is an intercultural communications training program that is being deployed through Human Resources to provide learning and development opportunities for managers and staff across the University, as well as for departments and centers that request specialized training on intercultural communications and sensitivity. Another new initiative is called Coding International Student Integration. This program recognizes ten categories of integration that are key to international student success. The ISSS is the only office at Penn that has a full spectrum of engagement with students from pre-orientation to post-graduation, and it is examining the ways in which these ten categories of integration can be assessed to help students thrive and succeed at Penn.

Dr. Gadsden reported that when it became clear that members of the Asian and Asian-American communities were being targeted with bias, discrimination, and violence because of COVID-19, with the guidance of Provost Pritchett, the Task Force on Support to Asian and Asian-American Students and Scholars (TAASS) was created. TAASS is jointly managed by the Office of the Provost and the Division of Public Safety. One of the task force’s initiatives is an awareness campaign around ‘flattening the hate’ that aims to make people aware that Asians and Asian-Americans are being discriminated against and suffering greatly because of the vitriol around COVID-19.

Professor Michael Horowitz, Director, Perry World House, began by explaining that Perry World House is a globally focused institution that helps to connect Penn to the global policy world. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Perry World House shifted its orientation, both in programs and

in content, to adapt to the changes that were happening in the world. Perry World House expanded its activities and is now able to reach new parts of the Penn community. More than 11,000 people had attended Perry World House events since shifting to remote learning in March 2020; this figure includes students, a vast new alumni audience, as well as new audiences in Europe, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. Professor Horowitz went on to describe a variety of Perry World House initiatives, such as a weekly event series called The World Today, Global Career Week (now Global Career Month), the Student Fellows and Graduate Associates programs, the Penn Pandemic Diary Series, and a newly created virtual internship series.

During New Business, a representative of the Assembly of International Students (AIS), thanked the University administration, specifically Dr. Amy Gadsden; Dr. Rodolfo “Rudie” Altamirano, Director, ISSS and Director, Immigration and Integration Services; and the staff at PennGlobal and ISSS for their support and attentiveness toward international students and scholars. It was reported that AIS, along with other international student groups such as the International Student Advisory Board (ISAB), have been working to complement the University’s efforts in supporting international students. It was noted that AIS looks forward to collaborating with the aforementioned University offices and student groups to continue working on other pertinent issues for the spring, such as increasing international student enrollment and also integrating international freshmen virtually.

Dr. Gutmann thanked the University’s international students for making Penn proud to be a university that brings the world to Penn, and Penn to the world. She also expressed that all of Penn’s students, faculty, and staff, who are international, can rest assured that the University “will never cease advocating for how important it is that the University of Pennsylvania is able to be graced by your presence, be able to have your contributions, and therefore make us the best university we can be.” She noted that the University has more work to do, and it will continue to do the work that is needed to move closer to realizing the goal of being a truly proud American university with effective and great global members of the Penn family.

FEBRUARY 17, 2021 MEETING

Campaign for Community and Penn Projects for Progress was the third Focus Issue of the year, and the discussion was led by Associate Vice Provost for Equity and Access Reverend William Gipson and University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity and Community Charles Howard.

Reverend Gipson began by reporting that the Campaign for Community (C4C) began in 2015 under then-Provost Vincent Price, the Faculty Senate, and other administrators as a response to a number of painful and difficult national events. C4C began as a means to realize Penn's commitment to being a model of constructive conversation around these difficult issues. C4C held its first event in April 2015 and has now funded more than 200 projects. The C4C has three goals: To promote understanding of and respect for multiple points of view on important topics related to the University community; to encourage dialogue and discussion among members of the community about issues with the potential for difference and disagreement; and to create opportunities for all members of the University community to participate in conversations about important topics. Reverend Gipson then described the process to apply for up to \$1,500 from the C4C for events or projects. Students, faculty, and staff are eligible to apply, and applications can be from groups, organizations, or individuals.

University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity and Community Charles Howard began by explaining that Dr. Gutmann recently formed the Office of Social Equity and Community and invited Chaplain Howard to serve as its first vice president. The formation of this new office and the Projects for Progress program arose, in part, from the killing of George Floyd, the killing of Breonna Taylor, and the ongoing conversations in the country and around the world about what can be done to make meaningful progress in addressing social inequities, prejudice, and the forces of oppression affecting society. Projects for Progress is a grant program with the goal of encouraging members of the Penn community to develop projects that will create a more inclusive university and community. Projects for Progress joins the President's Engagement Prize (PEP) and the President's Innovation Prize (PIP) in providing funding of up to \$100,000 for projects proposed by the Penn community. Faculty, staff, and students of the University are eligible to apply. Projects for Progress seeks proposals that address the eradication or reduction of systemic racism; achieving educational equity; and reducing health disparities based on race, gender, sexual orientation and/or other social determinants of health. Proposals must demonstrate intended impact in Philadelphia and a budget not to exceed \$100,000. The proposal application deadline was March 1, 2021. The Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF) is hosting the application page (www.curf.upenn.edu/prizes/projectsforprogress).

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

- The University's Election Day policy
- Spring semester adjustments requested by the Underrepresented Student Advisory Board in Engineering
- Differences between schools with regard to undergraduate advising
- A universal one-year funding extension for all current doctoral students
- Mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income and undocumented Philadelphians
- Parallels between COVID-19 and climate change and how Penn can address these issues
- Policies to support Penn's international students through climate action
- Divesting from fossil fuels and reinvesting in other solutions
- Climate injustice and how Penn can be a leader in climate mitigation
- How Penn can be a leader in climate change
- How Penn can show support for issues of race and the environment
- How Penn can implement ambitious climate mitigation strategies
- Public health policy and prioritizing climate change action
- Undergraduate veterans at Penn
- Updates from the Interfraternity Council (IFC) fraternities on campus
- Policing on Penn's campus and beyond
- The University's response to COVID
- Fertility preservation and adding elective egg freezing coverage to the University student healthcare plan

MARCH 24, 2021 MEETING

Associate Vice President and University Council Secretary Lizann Boyle Rode provided an update on the eighteen topics raised during Open Forum at the February 17, 2021 meeting.

In accordance with the bylaws, Vice President for Budget and Management Analysis Trevor Lewis reviewed the FY21 budget, the financial effects of COVID-19, and student charges and financial aid. Vice President Lewis noted that the outlook for FY21 includes matters both positive and challenging. Notable positives include the stability of enrollment, the pace of recovery for the University's research enterprise, and the fundraising momentum as the end of the *Power of Penn* campaign approaches. The challenges are primarily related to the pandemic and how it will shape the future of education and work.

Looking forward to plans for the next academic year, Provost Pritchett reported on *Innovating Online Resources for Students and Faculty*. The first speaker was Dr. Barbara Hewitt, Executive Director, Penn Career Services, who described how Career Services enhanced its virtual offerings to assist students during the pandemic. Deputy Provost Beth Winkelstein then introduced two presenters from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL): Dr. Bruce Lenthall, Executive Director, and Dr. Jamiella Brooks, Associate Director. Drs. Brooks and Lenthall described the ongoing efforts of the CTL to assist faculty and instructors with topics such as online course design, creating well-organized Canvas sites, and how to use and deploy technology tools. CTL also focuses on creating community and a sense of belonging, enhancing the student-faculty relationship, and helping to develop inclusive and equitable teaching.

Deputy Provost Winkelstein then highlighted some additional initiatives focused on providing an even more inclusive education for all students. She described the Faculty Council on Access and Academic Support (FCAA) and noted that the University continues to work on program assessments and understanding the student experience, both academic and co-curricular. She also reported on the continued expansion of a partnership with the Vice Provost for Faculty to examine and implement methods for continuing to support faculty as they are onboarding to the Penn community, provide them with training and resources, and to also provide these same resources to chairs and programs as they are formulating their curricula. She then shared that the undergraduate deans in SEAS and SAS, together with CTL and Deputy Provost Winkelstein, had been awarded an opportunity to be part of a learning community that will explore how to better evaluate and enhance the University's teaching in inclusive practices. A component of those partnerships was scheduled to launch in spring 2021, whereby Penn participants would learn from peers at other institutions and embark on an effort to evaluate how inclusion, equity, and belonging are conceptualized in the classroom.

The Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 3.0 and an Update on the Environmental Innovations Initiative (EII) was the fourth and final Focus Issue of the year. The discussion was led by Vice President for Facilities and Real Estate Services Anne Papageorge and Dr. Melissa Brown Goodall, Senior Director, EII. Vice President Papageorge began by stating that the Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 3.0 (CSAP) has a goal of carbon neutrality goal by 2042. The areas of focus within the CSAP include expanding the scope of sustainability research in Penn's academic centers; continuing to reduce carbon emissions and exploring expanded use of renewable energy; embracing the circular economy principles to reduce waste and single-use products; to make the campus more sustainable

in the areas of transportation, purchasing, and business operations; and to inform, educate, and empower the Penn community to participate in the plan and in achieving its goals. Vice President Papageorge explained that the CSAP is organized around seven categories (academics, utilities and operations, physical environment, waste minimization and recycling, purchasing, transportation, and outreach and engagement). The CSAP was originally designed, and each update has been created and informed by, the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC), which is comprised of subcommittees that correspond to the CSAP categories listed above. ESAC is comprised of approximately 50% staff, 25% faculty, and 25% students. She then described the programs and progress made in the seven categories that comprise the CSAP. Vice President Papageorge concluded by noting that details of all programs, as well as a more detailed report, are available on the Sustainability website: <https://sustainability.upenn.edu/>.

Dr. Melissa Brown Goodall, Senior Director, EII, began by explaining that the EII currently has a staff of three. In addition to Dr. Goodall, the faculty directors of the EII are Dr. Kathleen Morrison, Sally and Alvin V. Shoemaker Professor and Chair of Anthropology; and Dr. Joseph Francisco, President's Distinguished Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences. Dr. Goodall also provided some background information on the 20 years she spent at Yale University, with 11 of those years being in its Office of Sustainability. Dr. Goodall explained the strengths of higher education institutions in addressing global environmental challenges and how the work of the EII and Penn fit into the larger global context. She reported that the EII is currently creating its strategic plan. Internal and external landscape reviews are being conducted as part of this process. One goal is to examine what peers are doing in order to define a unique niche for Penn. In examining the global framework, the EII also seeks to ensure that the work it is supporting and contributing to is consistent with the needs that have been identified at global and local levels. The EII will be conducting interviews with key leaders on campus, with faculty members, and with students. The EII is also planning a call for proposals for trans-disciplinary research communities. The EII will be soliciting applications from faculty for one to three years on the three big topics of nature-based solutions, science-based targets, and disruption preparedness. The funding program will also have categories that are open to one year of funding for staff, faculty, and students. Ideally, winners would be prepared to present during Climate Week in September 2021.

During New Business, three individuals raised issues concerning divestment from fossil fuels, the introduction of a universal climate course, enhancing the climate curriculum, buildings on Locust Walk for cultural centers, and faculty training on gender and use of gender pronouns.

APRIL 21, 2021 MEETING

Associate Vice President and University Council Secretary Lizann Boyle Rode provided an update on the topics raised during New Business at the March 24, 2021 meeting. She also described the three mechanisms by which topics can be brought to the attention of University Council and shared the practice and expectation that remarks made during Open Forum and New Business be limited to three minutes.

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

- Assistant Professor Sara Jacoby, Chair, Committee on Campus and Community Life
- Professor Ben Garcia, Chair, Committee on Diversity and Equity
- Associate Professor Michael McGarvey, Chair, Committee on Facilities
- Professor Tanja Kral, Chair, Committee on Personnel Benefits
- Assistant Professor Krzysztof Laudanski, Chair, Committee on Academic and Related Affairs

Faculty Senate Chair-Elect William Braham reported on the work of the University Council Committee on Committees in evaluating the functioning of the five standing committees. The Committee conducted interviews with student, staff, and faculty members on each of the five standing committees. Based on its findings, the Committee made the following recommendations:

1. Avoid mid-year changes of committee chairpersons whenever possible.
2. Encourage the use of the committee chair-elect model optioned in the bylaws.
3. Schedule meetings with student-focused content to maximize student participation.
4. Promptly circulate meeting minutes and materials and encourage post-meeting feedback from absentees.

Faculty Senate Chair Kathleen Hall Jamieson 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 were 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 2021 meeting. Council members were also invited to make suggestions during the meeting. No suggestions were made.

President Gutmann commended the members of University Council and noted that the Council's efforts and advice are invaluable. She expressed her gratitude to Moderator Melissa Wilde and Parliamentarian Lauren Steinfeld; to the Faculty Senate Tri-Chairs, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, William Braham, and Steven Kimbrough; graduating UA President, Mercedes Owens; and to PPSA Chair Kris Forrest, who is concluding her term. She thanked everyone for another productive and enjoyable year of Council.