

**THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, RESEARCH AND STUDENT LIFE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
VOLUME AARSL 36**

**May 6, 2021**

A hybrid meeting of the Committee on Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life was held in Dean's Hall of The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, State College, PA, and via video conference, at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 6, 2021.

The following members were present: Chair David Han, Vice Chair Bill Oldsey, President Eric Barron (Ex Officio), Mark Belkowski (Constituent Representative), Kathy Bieschke (Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs), Ted Brown, Bryan Culler, Valerie Detwiler, Steve Dunham (Vice President and General Counsel), Yvonne Gaudelius (Interim Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education), Frank Guadagnino (Vice President for Administration), Shannon Harvey (Director of Office of Board of Trustees), Chris Hoffman, Nicholas Jones (Provost), Lawrence Lokman (Vice President of Strategic Communications), Jay Paterno, Alice Pope, Anne Riley (Emerita Trustee), Matt Schuyler (Ex Officio), Damon Sims (Vice President of Student Affairs), Laurie Stanell, Sara Thorndike (Senior Vice President for Finance and Business/Treasurer), Steve Wagman, Lora Weiss (Senior Vice President for Research), Marcus Whitehurst (Vice Provost for Educational Equity), and Mary Beth Williams (Faculty Representative).

A quorum was present.

Chair Han recognized the following, due to terms ending, as their last AARSL committee meeting: Trustee Wagman, Immediate Past President of the Penn State Alumni Association; Student Trustee Culler; Emeriti Trustee Riley; Mark Belkowski, Immediate Past Chair of University Staff Advisory Council; and Mary Beth Williams, Faculty Representative. He thanked each for their hard work, and he acknowledged that due to terms ending, this would be his last as Chair.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Han at 3:00 p.m. Chair Han called for a motion for the Committee to approve the *Minutes* of the February 18, 2021 committee meeting. The motion to approve came from Trustee Hoffman, and Trustee Culler then seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Han called on Vice Chair Oldsey to present recommended revisions to the AARSL Committee Operating Guidelines. Oldsey stated that he chaired the subcommittee charged with revising the Operating Guidelines, a group consisting of Trustees Brown, Culler, Pope, Stanell and Wagman, and Student Government Representative Sean Walsh. Oldsey stated the subcommittee reviewed and revised the Committee's Operating Guidelines with meaningful updates and changes, noting a few key recommendations: integrating the University's research enterprise into the Committee's oversight responsibilities; increasing the Committee's focus and emphasis on student engagement and student success including metrics to continually measure teaching and learning outcomes; increasing dialogue with students and student groups; having more regular contact with faculty and faculty groups; eliminating the annual meeting with Administrative Fellows Program participants; reviewing Committee goals twice annually; and ensuring Committee meetings include interactive dialogue with presenters. Chair Han called for a motion to approve the recommendations of the subcommittee to update the Committee's Operating Guidelines. The motion to approved came from Trustee Stanell, and Trustee Schuyler then seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Han then introduced Leah Zimmerman, executive director of Student Disability Resources, to provide an update from the Office of Student Disability Resources since her last presentation in February 2020, in its efforts to provide accommodations and resources for students with disabilities. Zimmerman stated that the Office is trying to evolve its mission to support students both academically and socially, and to make sure

disability is part of the diversity conversation at Penn State. Zimmerman noted that on average in 2021, 20% of undergraduate and 11% of graduate students nationally have a disability; however, only about one-fourth of these students seek assistance. Zimmerman reported that Student Disability Resources currently serves 5.1% of students at University Park and 5.6% of students at the Commonwealth Campuses, which is on target. Zimmerman said that the Office's processes and procedures were modified and even improved as a result of the pandemic and the remote environment. Zimmerman's priorities moving forward include generating broader community engagement with Student Disability Resources, improving current career and internship opportunities, continuing resource stability across the commonwealth, and promoting dialogue surrounding disabilities in higher education.

Chair Han then introduced panelists from the University Task Force on Food and Housing Security for a progress report on university-wide initiatives and programs. Task Force co-chairs Andrea Dowhower, associate vice president for Student Affairs and John Papazoglou, associate vice president for Auxiliary and Business Services, were joined by Tim Balliett, director of the Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose in Student Affairs; Stephanie Lanza, professor of Biobehavioral Health and director of the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center in the College of Health and Human Development; Leah Bodinger, sophomore majoring in food science, co-leader of the Campus Hunger Project Cohort, the vice president of the Penn State Food Science Club, the vice president of Penn State Challah for Hunger; and Spencer Wallace, senior majoring in security and risk analysis and outgoing president of the Lion's Pantry. The Task Force members stated that while food insecurity across the University varies widely by campus location, roughly 35% of Penn State students have reported some level of food insecurity. They shared updates on new and ongoing efforts across the task force's five overarching recommendations, which they first shared with the Penn State community in February 2021.

Generative conversation focused on the coordination of services such as public assistance and university resources, strategies to overcome the stigma of housing and food insecurity among students so they take advantage of available resources, and the creative use of technology for certain programs.

The public session of the Committee on Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life was adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stevens  
Administrative Support Coordinator  
Office of the Board of Trustees