

**THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, RESEARCH AND STUDENT LIFE
MINUTES OF MEETING
VOLUME AARSL 38**

November 11, 2021

A meeting of the Committee on Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life of the Board of Trustees was held at Penn State Innovation Hub, State College, PA, and via video conference, at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 11, 2021.

The following members, constituting a quorum, were present: Chair Oldsey, Vice Chair Wagman, Brown, Hoffman, Paterno, Pope, and Rowland. Also attending were President Barron (*Ex Officio*), Faculty Representative Blockett, Student Representative Rodriguez, Constituent Representative Sturges. Also present were Allen, Bieschke, Dunham, Gaudelius, Guadagnino, Harvey, Jones, Sims, and Weiss.

Chair Oldsey called for a motion for the Committee to approve the *Minutes* of the September 16, 2021 committee meeting. The motion to approve came from Trustee Rowland, and Trustee Wagman then seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Oldsey reminded committee members and other trustees in attendance that at its July Retreat, the Board established a list of long-range planning goals and priorities, a number of which are specifically focused on Student Success, Teaching and Learning Outcomes, and Graduation Rates. He made the point that today's topic, Advising, is a key component in driving student success, and that the AARSL Committee will stay focused on these kinds of discussion topics throughout the 2022 academic year. He also thanked participants for providing the White Paper materials well in advance of the meeting and hoped that this would lead to a richer discussion and more dialogue during the session.

Chair Oldsey then introduced Damon Sims, vice president for Student Affairs, and Yvonne Gaudelius, vice president and Dean for Undergraduate Education, to lead the topic discussion, "Advising at Penn State and Its Impact on Student Success". In advance of the meeting, Sims and Gaudelius prepared a white paper on advising that was made available to the committee through the Board portal Diligent. Sims stated advising is critically important to student success yet underappreciated because a lot of it goes relatively unseen except by the students directly affected by advising in any of its forms, all of whom recognize its value and impact. Gaudelius stated that advising at Penn State is a mosaic of services available to all students, helping them to make informed decisions. A panel representing many areas of student advising at Penn State as well as four students joined the conversation. The panel included students Hibah Akbar, vice president of Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG); Josh Bannon, co-president of LionPRIDE; Erin Boas, president of University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA); and Emily Griffin, president of the Lion's Pantry. The panel also included Anna Barone, director of Student Care and Advocacy at Penn State; Dawn Coder, senior director for Academic Advising and Student Disability Services, Penn State World Campus; Lorraine Craven, director of Student Services and Engagement, Penn State Greater Allegheny; Natalie Hernandez DePalma, co-interim senior director and clinical director at Counseling and Psychological Services, Penn State University Park; Chris Jefferson, director for the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Penn State; Terri Mando, director of academic advising and coordinator of New Student Orientation and the Division of Undergraduate Studies, Penn State Behrend; Brian Patchcoski, assistant vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion in Penn State Student Affairs; Denise Poole, director of Student Success Initiatives; Mark Rameker, senior director for Residence Life at Penn State; David R. Smith, associate dean for advising and executive director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies at Penn State; Carlos Wiley, director of the Paul Robeson Cultural Center at Penn State; and Yvette Willson, interim director of the Gender Equity Center at Penn State.

Discussion and conversation focused on the University's various advising resources, tools and systems to provide a "scaffolded" approach to help students and advisors make the best connections for each student's need for support and promote student success. Conversation also included the use of technology to reach all students and to bridge resources, as well as ways to engage students in positive conversation before help is needed, and resources available for those students transitioning from Commonwealth Campuses. Gaudelius noted a key element of One Penn State 2025 is ensuring a simple structure of services for students to access and use.

Vice Chair Wagman announced a Disability Access Initiative (DAI) that is underway with a small task force that includes Leah Zimmerman, executive director of Student Disability Services and Michael Berube, professor at the Harrisburg campus and former chair of the Faculty Senate. He stated this task force is working to gather current resources for existing or prospective students and employees, as well as visitors, who may have difficulty identifying and connecting with disability and accessibility resources either university-wide or specific to a campus.

The public session of the Committee on Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stevens
Administrative Support Coordinator
Office of the Board of Trustees