

**THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT LIFE
MINUTES OF MEETING
VOLUME AASL 8**

January 15, 2015

A meeting of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Student Life was held in Room 203 of The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel at 1:30 p.m. on January 15, 2015.

The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were present: Abe Harpster, Bill Oldsey, Allie Goldstein, Ryan McCombie, and Alice Pope.

Representatives Anand Ganjam, and Mohamad Ansari were present, along with staff members Nick Jones, Rob Pangborn, Damon Sims, Craig Weidemann and Ann Zirkle. Also invited to attend were faculty members Janet Schulenberg, Maggie Slattery, and Mary Beth Williams; and student Carlos Rodriguez.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harpster at 1:30 p.m. Minutes of the November 13, 2014 meeting of the Committee were approved.

Chairman Harpster called on Executive Vice President/Provost, Nick Jones; Vice President for Student Affairs Damon Sims; Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education, Rob Pangborn; and Anand Ganjam, President of the University Park Undergraduate Association, for remarks to the Committee.

Nick Jones spoke briefly about access and affordability in education, and provided an update from the Strategic Plan draft theme working group report on transforming education. Damon Sims commented on University responses to student concerns about insensitive social media postings following demonstrations on campus. Additionally, he provided updates on the development of a campus recreation policy and reviewed the University alcohol policy.

Rob Pangborn provided an update on the 2015 admissions cycle and plans for expanded institutional scholarship programs. He reported that Clark Brigger, the new executive director for undergraduate admissions, will join the management team in February. Anand Ganjam provided a report which included UPUA initiatives to develop a Diversity and Inclusion report which addresses issues of cultural insensitivity; identifies methods to inform students about tuition allocations; explores open educational resources to mitigate course material costs for students; and advocates for the expansion of Counseling and Student Services.

The Committee heard a presentation from the co-chairs (Janet Schulenberg, Margaret Slattery, and Mary Beth Williams) and a student member (Carlos Rodriguez) of the General Education Planning and Oversight Task Force. The task force was composed and jointly charged by the University Faculty Senate Chair and Provost in March 2013 to undertake a comprehensive review of the core curriculum that serves as the common experience for all undergraduate students at Penn State and has been in place in its current form for the past 15 years. The presentation provided a summary of the work of the Task Force, including analyses it conducted of the current program, reviews of advancements in General Education scholarship, and

benchmarking conducted of approaches used at other institutions. A revised goal statement for the General Education program was presented that will be proposed to the Faculty Senate for adoption in the Spring, including learning objectives based on broad input solicited from students and faculty and other stakeholders. The presenters described curriculum prototypes under consideration for a new General Education model, as well the steps and infrastructure that will be needed to implement and assess the new program.

Damon Sims presented his progress report on the actions of the Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Task Force, which he chairs. The group briefed the President on its findings, and submitted its report this week. Included in the report were the following recommendations: the creation of a new Title IX coordinator position, with accompanying staff and related resources; the expectation that all University employees be trained to understand their reporting and other obligations in response to sexual misconduct; a University-wide climate survey on the issue; the adoption of an investigative approach, rather than a traditional hearing model, for resolving these cases; and, the development of increased educational and bystander initiatives to prevent these troubling occurrences. He concluded by stating that the President and other senior University leaders will now review and engage various constituencies in discussions about the report and its many recommendations. A comprehensive conversation about the actions to be taken in response to this review will be provided to the full Board at its March meeting.

The public session of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Student Life was adjourned at 3:42 p.m. No Executive Session of the Committee was required.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Zirkle
Administrative Support Coordinator,
Office of the Board of Trustees