Committee on Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life (AARSL)

AY 2023-2024 Plan_v2 (FINAL)

AY 2023-2024 Committee Priorities:

Goal 1: Enhance Student Success:

    Focus Areas:

- Align education offerings and advising with employment trend and employer experience data.
- Develop avenues for students to tap into alumni network for mentorships and job searches.
- Make paid internship opportunities possible for all students.
- Establish a curricular and co-curricular map for each student to help them discover and engage in a range of engagement opportunities.
- Integrate cutting-edge research and engagement opportunities in the classroom.
- Focus on student mental health and financial literacy.

Goal 2: Grow Interdisciplinary Research Excellence

    Focus Areas:

- Identify key research areas for greater investment and growth.
- Increase research expenditures to lead Penn State to top research rankings.
- Build a robust pipeline of historically marginalized and underrepresented researchers/scholars.
- Support faculty at all campuses in their research activities, across their careers.
- Pursue large Project Program (P01) grants and incentivize interdisciplinary and multi-university partnerships that increase research funding and scale of impact.
- Increase biomedical and health-related research, translational research, and commercialization opportunities.
- Provide research opportunities to students at the Commonwealth Campuses.
- Align the health enterprise to support and contribute to medical education and research that transform health care and enhance health for people everywhere.(from Goal 6).
- Increase the College of Medicine's national education rankings and research prominence (from Goal 6).

Risk Oversight Responsibilities for AARSL:

- Enrollment Management – issues, tuition, costs/revenues, student debt, completion rates, land grant mission
- Management of grant-related requirements and research funding agreements that could lead to the loss of research agreements, fines, faculty departures, and other financial risks.

2023-2024 AARSL Agendas/Topics:

- **October 19, 2023 Meeting - AI & the Implications for Higher Education**
  - **Academic Affairs:** Explore how AI can be incorporated into the classroom and what are the implications and boundaries?
  - **Research:** Leveraging AI in advancing research at PSU.
  - **Student Life:** How will AI be used to support student life/success, advising and other resources for students at PSU? What are the associated potential social media impacts on/for students?

- **January 18, 2024 Meeting – Enrollment/Building the Future Pipeline & Initial Assessment on CoM Research Growth Opportunities**
  - **Academic Affairs:** Review of AY23/24 enrollment and the strategies for growth (and status) at the Commonwealth Campuses. How do we improve the yield of admitted students? What are the projections for AY 24/25, what are the budget assumptions, and what are the strategies to achieve the projections?
  - **Research:** Initial assessment report from Dr. Karen Kim on the CoM research enterprise growth opportunities.
  - **Student Life:** Building a pipeline for student success. Engaging in the communities in which PSU serves, at the high school level, and especially in the areas served by the Commonwealth Campuses. Marketing PSU and specific programs of interest, preparing for college and the cost of attendance, financial aid education, job projections, educating parents/guardians, etc.

- **March 21, 2024 Meeting – Focus on the Campuses & Research Leadership Focus**
  - **Academic Affairs:** Defining the plan, and actions to be taken, to utilize financial aid and admissions strategies to ensure that all available seats in the Commonwealth Campus system are utilized to their maximum potential. What are our current CwC retention rates from the first year to the second year and what are the strategies to improve them?
  - **Research:** Growing the research enterprise and focusing on the areas where Penn State is (or can be) a leader in higher education, including partnering with other leading universities. Can we further leverage our success with governmental research, agriculture, etc.? What investments are required? How do we build a pipeline of historically marginalized and underrepresented researchers/scholars (university-wide)? Availability of undergraduate research opportunities at UP and the Commonwealth Campuses. How do we leverage the 67 Penn State Extension offices and is there more that we can do?
  - **Student Life:** The plan and current status, to address closing the gap in graduation rates for underrepresented student populations; and between UP and the Commonwealth Campuses. What are the programs in place to proactively reach out to those students "at risk" based on known data trends. What are our peer student strategies? How do we assess the risk for students to be housing and/or food insecure, and how does PSU proactively engage these students?

- **April 18, 2024 Meeting – Advancing the Road to Success**
  - **Academic Affairs:** What programs (ie: Fast Start, LEAP, etc.) are currently in place for incoming freshman, which are deemed (with data) to be most impactful, and should we automatically enroll "at risk" students into those programs to foster their early success? How do we expand these opportunities to more students? What is available to prospective PSU students in the local community K-12 schools?
  - **Research:** Building and leveraging research strengths to create greater connections with industry and driving industry-sponsored research growth (in conjunction with ODCR). Creating the climate that enables PSU to grow research commercialization (in conjunction with FBCP?).
  - **Student Life:** How are we leveraging technology to centralize resources and data to connect employers with students for internship opportunities and permanent employment across the Penn State system (all campuses)? What plans are underway to improve those relationships with industry?

- **June 20, 2024 Meeting**
  - **Academic Affairs:** A review of the data on academic success and graduation rates for PSU students across all campuses. Where are the gaps and how do we close the gaps?
  - **Research:** A review of the AY 23/24 against the established targets and plans for AY 24/25. A review and discussion regarding the CoM plan for growth and status of the progress towards creating strategies for current/proposed areas of excellence. Updates on applying AI in research endeavors.
  - **Student Life:** An update on the plan, and actions already underway/completed, to consolidate the various support systems (advising, online informational websites, CAPS, Complete Penn State, etc.) that improve the relationship between Penn State University and our student engagement.

**Note: The meeting time on the off-cycle dates will be determined by the BOT Office.

Possible Educational Conference Session Topics (dates & prioritization TBD)

- **Update on Student-Athlete Academic Performance** – What are the current validated numbers on the academic performance for our 800+ student athletes at UP in terms of GPA and 4-year & 6-year graduation rates? What are the current supports in place and is additional investment required? What are the academic performance metrics for student-athletes at our Commonwealth Campuses?