

## **University Council Committee on Committees Report on the Functioning of Council Committees during Academic Year 2013-14**

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### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Claire Finkelstein

**Staff:** Vicki Hewitt and Joseph Gasiewski

**Members:** Faculty: Eun-Ok Im, Dwight Jaggard, Ian Krantz, Erika Krick, Susan Margulies, Stephen Phipps, PPSA representative: Emma Grigore, WPPSA representative: Loretta Hauber, GAPSA representative: George Maliha, and UA representative: Devin Grossman.

### **Executive Summary:**

This report summarizes the general functioning and procedures of University Council Committees during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. These committees are: the Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA), Committee on Campus and Community Life, Committee on Facilities, Committee on Personnel Benefits, and Committee on Diversity and Equity. Suggestions for enhancing the functioning of these committees typically covered one or more of the following four areas: (1) ask committee chairs to enhance orientation and explanation of duties to new members, especially students; (2) encourage more in-depth feedback from the Administration to committee members with regard to committee recommendations; (3) seek clarification of committee members' roles; and (4) re-examine distribution of charges among committees with overlapping responsibilities..

### **Mechanism of evaluation:**

Each faculty member on the Committee on Committees was assigned to review a Council committee. Each review consisted of in-person, phone, and/or email interviews, typically conducted with the Committee Chair, Administrative Liaison, and staff support person, using the questions below. Committee members were encouraged to speak with members of the various committees in order to explain the nature of the review in greater detail. In some cases other members of the committees were asked for responses to these questions as well. Other University constituencies were asked to provide information on committee performance via their members who serve on the committees. All committee members then reported their findings to the Committee on Committees in March for discussion. This report provides an overview of the general findings, as well as specific comments on the functioning and procedures of each committee. Steering is nevertheless encouraged to look at the individual committee reports to gain a complete view of how the committees are performing.

### **Questions posed to each Committee Chair:**

1. Was the committee's specific charge for this year clear and appropriate?
2. What changes, if any, do you think need to be made in the committee's general charge?
3. What issues were addressed this year and were they resolved?
4. How many times did the full committee meet? If subcommittees were created, how many were created, how often did they meet, and what was their purpose?
5. Based on the charges for this year, and the discussion to date, was the committee able to satisfactorily resolve the issues discussed, and what do you see as issues emerging for consideration next year?
6. Which members would you recommend to serve on the committee next year? Is there anyone on the current committee who is the logical successor as chair, either now or in the future?
7. Is the membership of the committee well suited to the committee's charge? (*Expertise, representation of interests, etc.*)

8. What was the role of the Administration's liaison in your committee? (*The liaison is an appropriate administrative person who can provide relevant information for a committee charge or connect the committee with others on campus with relevant information*)
  9. Did someone from the Administration provide explicit feedback on last year's recommendations? Was the feedback satisfactory? Were there any remaining aspects that were have not been resolved or a path developed?
  10. What problems did the committee encounter, e.g., access to necessary resources?
  11. Did the committee structure work involving opportunities for oversight, opportunities to work with your Administrative Liaison to resolve specific issues, and opportunities to generate larger recommendations?
- [Each committee has been charged to operate with three approaches: 1) Perform general oversight reviews of their area of concern which may not turn up any specific problems to deal with; 2) where there are specific issues that they want to address (o they have been charged to address) to try and resolve them working through their Administrative Liaison; 3) where the intra-committee level effort is not able to resolve issues to move towards generating fully elaborated recommendations to be addressed outside of the committee (as formal proposals to be forwarded to the Administration, or for the Council to consider.) Was this how the committee worked? Was it an effective structure of tasks for accomplishing the committees' charges?]*
12. What recommendations about the committee's process and organization would you make going forward?
  13. Is there any question that should have been asked about process that was not included?
  14. **Students only:** Do the student members feel their voices are heard? Were there a primary and an alternate student representative on each committee?

**General Comments:**

Each UC committee has two major roles:

1. Broad review in its area(s) of interest, as well as monitoring to determine whether there are any issues requiring deeper exploration. Sometimes no recommendations emerge from this process, but the University is well served by having a representative body tracking important institutional and community matters on a consistent basis.
2. More in-depth consideration of a small number (typically one or two) issues that arise from last year's agenda and its recommendations, or new information relating to the work of the previous year's committee. These issues might be examined by the committee as a whole, or by subcommittees, and will likely involve multiple meetings and conversations with people around the University engaged with the issue. Most can be resolved by working directly with the administrators responsible in the focus area to clarify issues and consider policy modifications. In the absence of a resolution of a given matter, the relevant committee may request that Council Steering reexamine the issue. Committees and Council Steering should nevertheless bear in mind the importance of closure on matters addressed by the various committees.
3. In order to be effective in fulfilling the above two roles, the most important factor appears to be the clarity of the chairs in explaining the purpose of the committee and the role of the various members of the committee. In the UC Committee on Committees' review, many University Council committee members, especially students, asked for more orientation and a better explanation of their role in the committee, and the committee's role in the University as a whole. They also asked for more opportunities to interact informally with other committee members. Some committees were not satisfied with the Administration's

responses to their recommendations, and some felt they did not get enough information about whether their recommendations were implemented and what the outcomes were.

In light of the foregoing, and other feedback the Committee on Committees received, specific recommendations for next year include the following:

1. Enhance orientation and explanation of duties to new members, especially for students. Provide all of last year's committee reports to committee members and encourage them to review the charges and outcomes.
2. Invite the members of the previous year's committee to attend the first half of the first meeting of the new academic year, in order to facilitate continuity from one year to the next.
3. Continue the Administration's practice of giving verbal feedback at the first meeting of the year to the full Committee regarding recommendations from the previous year.
4. Consider incorporating an informal lunch or reception at the first committee meeting that would give committee members time for informal interaction.
5. Clarify the roles of committee members, especially the relation between the Chair and the Administrative Liaison.
6. Consolidate campus security matters on a trial basis under the specific charges of the Committee on Facilities in order to lighten the load of the Committee on Campus and Community Life and focus security matters in a single committee.
7. Assemble information regarding staff diversity and gender balance and consider which committee would be best suited to address this data.

## **University Council Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA)**

### **General comments:**

The committee met regularly, and considered the topics of undergraduate research and the reorganization of the bookstore in depth. The committee formulated recommendations on both of those topics. Several members felt there was not enough orientation for new members, especially students. There was a suggestion to encourage some informal interactions among committee members. Some thought the General Charge for this committee was too broad.

*The University Council Committee on Committees suggested the possibility of changing the Undergraduate Assembly election process to allow undergraduate members to serve longer terms on the committees, providing more continuity for student members of the committees. The UA representative will bring this to the attention of the UA.*

### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Steve Kimbrough

**Liaison:** Leo Charney

**Staff:** Susan White

**Members:** Faculty: Frederick Dickinson, Paula Henthorn, Michael McGarvey, Ani Nenkova, Mechthild Pohlschroder, Barbara Riegel, Rahim Rizi, PPSA representatives: Melissa Hartz and Laurie-Ellen Shumaker, WPPSA representatives: Suzanne Oh and Peter Rockett, GAPSA representatives: Akriti Bahal and Ruoyun Wang, and UA representatives: Jonathan Korn and Yessenia Moreno.

### **General Committee Charge:**

The Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA):

- (i) shall have cognizance over matters of recruitment, admissions, and financial aid that concern the University as a whole and that are not the specific responsibility of individual faculties, including the authority to carry out studies on existing recruitment and admissions procedures and their relationships with existing policies on admissions and financial aid and to recommend changes in policy to the Council;
- (ii) shall consider the purposes of a University bookstore and advise the Council and the management of the University bookstore on policies, development, and operations;
- (iii) shall review and monitor issues related to the international programs and other international activities of the University, including advice and policy recommendations in such areas as services for international students and scholars, foreign fellowships and studies abroad, faculty, staff and student exchange programs, and cooperative undertakings with foreign universities;
- (iv) shall advise the vice provost and director of libraries on the policies, development, and operation of the University libraries;
- (v) shall have cognizance over recreation and intramural and intercollegiate athletics and their integration with the educational program of the University, including the planning and provision of adequate facilities for various sports and recreational activities; and
- (vi) shall have cognizance of all matters of policy relating to research and the general environment for research at the University, including the assignment and distribution of indirect costs and the assignment of those research funds distributed by the University, and shall advise the Administration on those proposals for sponsored research referred to it because of potential conflict with University policy.

**2013-14 Specific Charges:**

1. Continue discussions concerning undergraduate research. Follow up on recommendations that aimed at raising the awareness of students, faculty, and the general public and to discuss innovative ideas that were raised last year by the committee. Explore ideas for increasing the scope of undergraduate research opportunities. Consider the best practices in place at Penn.
2. Continue present conversations with Business Services as the bookstore is reorganized.
3. Continue annual dialogue with the Dean of Admissions Eric Furda at a joint meeting with the Senate Committee on Students and Educational Policy (SCSEP).
4. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.

## **The University Council Committee on Campus and Community Life**

### **General Comments:**

Reports suggested the Committee had difficulty carrying out its specific charges for this year. Members generally regarded the charge concerning the Penn Alexander School insufficiently specific. They were unable to get data or speakers on the issue. Members also voiced the concern that they were unable to get anyone to speak to them on the issue of historic preservation. Members of the Committee were frustrated that several recommendations it had made last year had not been attended to, including recommendations made concerning Counseling and Psychological Services and Dining (Business Services). Committee members also echoed what CARA members said about increasing orientation, especially for students, and encouraging informal interactions among committee members.

*The University Council Committee on Committees recommends revising the charge concerning public elementary education to make it more specific. The committee also recommends considering ways the committees can feel their input is valued, even if their recommendations cannot be implemented.*

### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Kent Bream

**Liaison:** Karu Kozuma

**Staff:** Amelia Carter

**Members:** Faculty: Janice Asher, Andrea Doyle, Campbell Grey, Randall Mason, Rebecca Maynard, Matt McHugh, Guobin Yang, PPSA representatives: James Allen and Heather Calvert, WPPSA representatives: William Melleby and Joyce Woodward-Jones, GAPSA representatives: Shicong Meng and Tianyuan Shi, and UA representatives: Christian Cortes and Alex Zimmermann.

### **General Committee Charge:**

- (i) shall have cognizance over the University's communications and public relations activities in their various formats and media including electronic, audio (the telephone system), video and printed copy, and it shall monitor the University's internal communications, the operations of the University Communications Office, communications to alumni, and the interpretation of the University to its many constituencies;
- (ii) shall advise the Council on the relationship of the University to the surrounding community and the relevant University policies, work to ensure that the University develops and maintains a constructive relationship with the community, and monitor pending real estate activities of concern to the community;
- (iii) shall have cognizance of the conditions and rules of undergraduate and graduate student life on campus, including 1) gathering and analyzing information concerning student life and student affairs and making recommendations to the Council; and 2) responding as appropriate to requests from and reporting information and recommendations concerning student life and student affairs to the vice provost for university life and other appropriate administrative officers; and
- (iv) shall advise the president, the director of public safety, and the administrators or directors of specific buildings, offices, or projects on all matters concerning safety and security in the conduct of their operations, including consideration and assessment of means to improve safety and security on the campus.

### **2013-14 Specific Charges:**

1. The committee should review Penn's engagement in and support of public elementary education in the surrounding community.
2. The Committee should review the role of historic preservation in the development of the main campus of the University and its off-campus properties.
3. As part of general charges (i), (ii), and (iii), the committee should look at political discourse on campus and university support for local and national civic engagement.
4. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.

## **The University Council Committee on Diversity and Equity**

### **General Comments:**

This committee focused on two of its specific charges: the role of the Diversity Search Advisors and religious diversity on campus. A committee member asked to include charges that address staff diversity, not just faculty and students, in the future. Committee members asked for more follow-up from the Administration on the outcomes of the recommendations the committee made: were the recommendations implemented and what were the results? The committee also asked for more orientation for students and more informal interactions for committee members.

*The University Council Committee on Committees recommends including a future charge for this committee that addresses staff diversity issues.*

### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Joe Libonati

**Liaison:** Lubna Mian

**Staff:** Iris Leon

**Members:** Faculty: Regina Austin, James Cornish, Ezekiel Dixon-Roman, Chenoa Flippen, Wei Guo, Jonni Moore, Reshma Munbodh, PPSA representatives Tia Dreher and Kristin Field, WPPSA representatives: Ashley Gripper and Rosa Vargas, GAPSA representatives: Paule Joseph and Johnna Marcus, and UA representatives: Thando Ally and Joyce Kim.

### **General Committee Charge:**

The Committee on Diversity and Equity aids Penn in fostering and taking full advantage of its diversity as well as in strengthening ties across all boundaries to enrich and enliven the campus community. The Committee shall advise the offices of the president, provost, and the executive vice presidents on ways to develop and maintain a supportive atmosphere on campus for the inclusion and appreciation of diversity among all members of the University community. The Committee will review and provide advice regarding the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and policies. The areas in which the Committee shall report to the Council include diversity within the educational and work settings, integration of staff and faculty into the larger campus community, and ways to foster a campus environment that is inclusive and supportive of difference. The Committee also will advise the Administration on specific diversity issues that may arise on campus.

### **2013-14 Specific Charges:**

1. Recommend options for developing/expanding/supporting programs to build cultural understanding, inclusiveness, and support across campus related to different faith traditions.
2. Continue to work with the Office of the Provost and other appropriate offices to monitor University processes documenting recruitment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented minority graduate students.
3. Work with the Office of the Provost and with the Senate Committee on Faculty Development Diversity and Equity (SCFDDE) to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the school-level facilitators, and to assess the progress in implementing the University of Pennsylvania Diversity Action Plan.

4. Related to the above, aid in identifying ways to strengthen and support the newly-instituted role of diversity search advisor.

5. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.

## **The University Council Committee on Facilities:**

### **General Comments:**

The committee focused on Penn Connects, the Century Bond program, and the planned bike paths. They are continuing to monitor spaces for nursing mothers on campus and feel they received adequate feedback from the Administration regarding the recommendations they made last year on this issue. They started to look at the issue of classroom spaces, but felt they had some difficulty gaining access to data and speakers who could help them address this issue. We note, however, that they did meet with Andy Binns and Michelle Brown-Nevers, among others.

*The University Council Committee on Committees suggests that the Facilities Committee's charges relating to classroom space be clarified in order to identify precisely what information is needed for the Committee to address its charge on this item and to help identify relevant individuals to meet with the Committee moving forward.*

### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Stephanie Weirich

**Liaison:** David Hollenberg

**Staff:** Taylor Berkowitz

**Members:** Faculty: Faizan Alawi, Zahra Fakhraai, Eun-Ok Im, Eric Marsh, Ann Moyer, James Palmer, Dominic Vitiello, PPSA representatives: Nikola Sizgorich and Marcy Weitz, WPPSA representative: Linda Satchell, GAPSA representatives: Benjamin Chrisinger and Kejia Rui, and UA representatives: James Fangmeyer and Danielle Golub.

### **General Committee Charge**

The Committee on Facilities shall be responsible for keeping under review the planning and operation by the University of its physical plant and all services associated therewith, including transportation and parking.

### **2013-14 Specific Charges**

1. With the support of the Classroom Committee, investigate the adequacy of classroom and event space on campus, including various sizes, formats (dry/wet labs, lectures, discussions) and technology needs, with special attention to the central pool classrooms and suggest changes to ones that need it most. Consider alternate strategies for enhanced access to non-central pool spaces.
2. Working with Parking and Transportation Services, discuss and recommend a comprehensive bicycle communication plan for the campus with a focus on routes and paths, construction detours, and parking for bikes on campus. This discussion should incorporate public safety and facilities needs and concerns.
3. Investigate and understand the maintenance of Penn's buildings, including the new Century Bond program. Suggest ways that the Penn community can assist Facilities in the effort to make Penn's campus more energy efficient.
4. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.

## **The University Council Committee on Personnel Benefits**

### **General comments:**

The Personnel Benefits Committee addressed most of their specific charges. Several members of the Committee called for clarification regarding the roles of individuals within Committee, in particular the relative duties of the Chair and the Administration liaison. The Committee on Committees recommends continuing the discussion of staff maternity leave policy during the 2014-15 academic year in the context of a broader discussion of leaves at Penn. Mental health benefits were also suggested as a possible charge for next year.

*The University Council Committee on Committees recommends that the roles of the Committee Chair and the Administrative Liaison be clarified with the current and future holders of these roles. It also recommends continued discussion of leave policy, as per the Committee's recommendation, and agrees with the recommendation to add mental health benefits to the list of specific charges.*

### **Membership:**

**Chair:** Tom Baker

**Liaison:** Jack Heuer and Susan Sproat

**Staff:** Sheila Hall

**Members:** Faculty: David Balamuth, Anthea Butler, Carolyn Cannuscio, Daniel Polsky, Lorraine Tulman, Rakesh Vohra, Tess Wilkinson-Ryan, PPSA representatives: Heather Frattone and Thomas Wilson, WPPSA representatives: Joe Mellon, Jr., Peter Rockett, and Joyce Woodward-Jones.

### **General Committee Charge:**

The Committee on Personnel Benefits shall have cognizance over the benefits programs for all University personnel. The Committee shall consist of eight faculty members (of whom one shall be a member of the Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (SCESF)), three representatives of the Penn Professional Staff Assembly, and three representatives of the Weekly-Paid Professional Staff Assembly. The Vice President for Human Resources, Associate Provost, and Director of Benefits shall serve as non-voting *ex officio* members.

### **2013-14 Specific Charges:**

1. Continue to discuss and investigate how information on health insurance and retirement alternatives is disseminated, how constituencies use this information, and how the communication and decision process can be improved. Explore how Penn can productively engage faculty conducting research related to employee benefits in order to improve Penn's benefit design, communication, and utilization.
2. Continue to discuss and review the requirements of Health Care Reform and consider needed changes in University benefits.
3. Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Penn's program with Health Advocates.
4. Continue to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of Penn's wellness initiatives.
5. Discuss and review Penn's current Maternity Leave Policy for staff in comparison with work-relief policies offered at peer institutions.

6. Review and discuss this Committee's general charge and identify two or three issues that should be given the highest priority for the committee's work in academic year 2014-15.