Specific Charges for 2015-2016

1. Continue discussions about the library, including off-site storage of collections, study spaces for students and electronic browsing.
2. Continue to explore ways to develop the performing and visual arts at Penn, including ideas for increasing the integration of the arts into academic programming.
3. Review recent developments in Penn Athletics, especially efforts to enhance a culture of respect and safety around athletic participation.
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 2016-2017.

Meetings and Main Recommendations Related to Specific Charges

The Committee met three times this year to address the three specific charges. The Committee communicated via email about planning additional topics for the upcoming year. The Committee chair, Ani Nenkova, met with the chair of the Committee on Facilities, Ann Moyer, to prepare questions and issues for discussion for the meeting on the library.

Athletics: The meeting with the Athletics representatives, Grace Calhoun, director of athletics, and Linda Buonanno, associate AD, recreation & community outreach, was originally meant to focus on efforts to enhance a culture of respect and safety around athletic participation. The presenters touched on this topic but also covered many other topics, detailed in Appendix A.

Two issues requiring further discussion emerged:
1) The presentation covered statistics about school-wide participation, admissions and GPA of scholar-athletes. However, these numbers made no reference to the distribution of students across the four undergraduate schools (SAS, Wharton, Engineering and Nursing) nor to the distribution of grades in these schools. Without these for reference, it is hard to interpret the numbers for athletics. For the analysis of the distribution of undergraduate athletes by school, it would be meaningful to compare the presented numbers with the relative sizes of each of the schools. For this, we will send a questionnaire to Penn undergraduates that are affiliated with each of the schools side-by-side with the numbers we saw.

For the analysis of academic performance of student athletes, reporting the average GPA of athletes is not sufficient to compare them with non-athlete students. It would be more meaningful to see the variance as well. Interpretation of the numbers would be easier if the GPAs were presented as a histogram or a confidence interval for the mean was provided. Again, this number could be compared meaningfully with the histogram/confidence interval of the overall undergraduate population. An even better picture could be presented by showing the data broken down by school, as in the participation results.

If the University and colleagues at Athletics are interested in monitoring participation and academic performance, the above will give a clearer picture of what is going on.

2) The issue of graduate student access to recreational facilities took up a large portion of the discussion. Gym access is included in the tuition of undergraduates but not for graduate students. Graduate students have lower rates of participation at the gym and have concerns over having to pay the fee. At the same time, we acknowledge that participation in recreational sports activities is important for students’ physical and mental well-being.

The difference between opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students was discussed more generally, beyond recreation participation. A couple of Committee members suggested this as a possible topic for a CARA meeting; however, the topic is more directly related to the Committee on Campus and Community Life. We were unable to coordinate a joint meeting with this Committee this year but look forward to seeing their analysis and recommendation and urge the University to continue discussion on the topic.

Arts: At the meeting devoted to the Arts at Penn, Vice Provost for Faculty Anita Allen gave an informative presentation about ongoing initiatives and plans for the future growth of the Arts at Penn. There are several initiatives currently collecting information, including on the use of arts in academic instruction. The outcomes will be of great interest to the Committee.

Detailed notes on the meeting appear in Appendix B.

The Committee would like to point out two classes at peer institutions that combine arts and humanities with instruction in the medical school (writing/narrative and medical communication; fine arts and noticing details in medical practice):
- [http://heymancenter.org/people/rishi-goyal/](http://heymancenter.org/people/rishi-goyal/)

The Expressive and Creative Interaction Technologies (ExCITe) Center at Drexel is a great example of combining arts and engineering:
- [http://drexel.edu/excite/](http://drexel.edu/excite/)

During the discussion it became clear that some courses do already integrate aspects of arts.

It would be great to have a comprehensive list of similar courses and initiatives at Penn, as well as a more representative list of programs and courses at other institutions.

Library: On February 22, CARA held a joint meeting with the Committee on Facilities to discuss the library. Carton Rogers, vice provost and director of libraries, and Kim Eke, director of teaching, research and learning services at Penn Libraries, were the presenters for the meeting. The presentations were replete with information on library growth and usage, which was incredibly helpful in understanding the complexity involved.

Detailed notes from the meeting appear in Appendix C.

Two issues clearly stood out as needing additional discussion and an action plan:
1) Faculty members from the humanities strongly feel that the ongoing trend for digitalization and off-campus storage negatively impacts their ability to do research. This is despite the fact that the library is conservative in decisions about which books to send to off-site storage. The library is key for the research work of faculty in the humanities, yet they represent only a small fraction of all library users. The medical and engineering schools have very different modes of work (journals, with online access, are the main form of publication), but they are much bigger than SAS. To ensure that the needs of the faculty members in SAS are appropriately met, we recommend that the University carry out a survey about the library needs of faculty in humanities.

2) Training students on how to use the library has become more difficult, as many students in various schools and departments rarely need to check out physical books. The library offers excellent introductions for students, but these are most effective when done in the context of a specific class or assignment. This means that the library needs the help of the faculty in focusing opportunities for students. We recommend that the University survey graduate and undergraduate chairs in departments across the University to identify which groups of students get exposure to the library through ongoing classes and which would need special planning to get engaged. Many freshmen get to work with library staff during their writing seminar; however, the work flow does not apply at all to students in the School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, who are not able to read origi-
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nal academic texts in the major so early on in their studies.

Finally, our discussion has made it clear that it is impossible to have a conversation about the library in general. Undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty have different needs. Similarly, different schools and departments have very different needs related to the library. We recommend that future discussions be planned for specific, clearly identified sub-populations of users. This will increase the efficiency of discussion and the likelihood that actionable recommendations will be reached.

Recommended Topics for 2016-2017

1. Study the library needs of faculty in the humanities and recommend ways in which the library can better support their research. This charge combines two of the general charges of the Committee: the development and operation of the libraries and the University environment for research.

2. Does compliance with the library in the writing seminar assignments and how teaching writing is modified for students in the School of Engineering & Applied Sciences.

3. Examine the general environment for research at the University and identify changes, which can improve research productivity and creativity. This general charge of the Committee has not been addressed in recent years.

4. Review how sports and recreational activity opportunities: staff, graduate students, and faculty are planned by the Athletics department and how these can be improved to meet the needs and interests of these members of the Penn community.

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 2016-17.

Appendix A: Detailed Notes from Meeting on Athletics

The Committee held a discussion on Athletics during the October 22 meeting. Two guests presented at the meeting: Grace Calhoun, director of athletics, and Linda Buonanno, associate AD, recreation & community outreach.

Dr. Calhoun explained that this is her second year as the director of athletics at Penn. She began her presentation with an overview of the Athletics Division and explained that it is a broad-based division that sponsors developmental and wellness programming for all students, faculty and staff through intercollegiate teams, club teams, intramural teams, scheduled classes and programs, and drop-in activities. Dr. Calhoun provided a breakdown of the campus-wide participation for each division of athletics and highlights for each group.

Dr. Calhoun explained the core values of the athletics department.

1. Holistic development—thath programing of all types is co-curricular in nature and recognizes individual development.

2. Partnerships—creating strong collaboration with other areas of campus to provide the best learning environments. Current projects include partnering with the medical school and high tech sports performance.

3. Winning with integrity—fostering an environment of high ethical standards, rules compliance and unquestioned character. Dr. Calhoun believes that it is highly important to stay out of the news for the wrong reasons. Academic integrity is just as important as good sportsmanship.

4. Dr. Calhoun discussed the admissions practices in regard to the athletics department. Admissions policy, as all Ivy League policy matters, is controlled by the eight Ivy League presidents. An academic index is used to ensure the student-athletes gaining admission at each Ivy are representative of the overall class, and this is computed for each prospective student-athlete based upon a combination of GPA and test scores. Dr. Calhoun also provided the percentages for undergraduate academic pursuits among student-athletes at Penn. SAS has the highest percentage at 64%. Peter Rock et al. described the academic success rates for the Athletics Division show a 96% graduation success rate and a divisional GPA average of 3.25. Penn athletics are academically among the top 10% in the country and 15 of 28 NCAA sports had a perfect score. The Athletics Division strictly follows the University policy regarding academic success and student-athletes are encouraged to value their academic success more than their sport.

Dr. Calhoun discussed the culture of respect and safety within the Athletics Division. Regarding student conduct, a divisional task force was convened last fall, and minimum divisional and team discipline standards that cover alcohol, drug use and general conduct were established. Students can be suspended from practices or games and/or removed from their teams, and coaches can elevate their standards regarding the level of acceptable conduct for bad behavior. There is an admissions policy for the highest standards and potential candidates are screened out of programs like Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Student Life, where students and staff can make connections and referrals regarding misconduct. Sexual misconduct prevention is taken very seriously at the University, and the division offers public safety/special services meetings, visual campaigns, coach and student-athlete education and participation in Penn Student Advisory Group. As a requirement, incoming students will have to sign off on policies showing that they agree and understand conduct issues.

Ms. Buonanno explained that her primary goals within the division are advocating wellness through campus recreation, engaging the campus community (students, faculty and staff) to strive for fitness and wellness, providing broad-based opportunities to participate through programming and sports activities, and benefitting all dimensions of wellness: physical, emotional, spiritual, creative, sexual, intellectual, occupational and social. The way that the division plans to meet these goals is through strengthening existing campus collaborations to better support student needs and the needs of the broader campus community. They have been seeking new ways to connect with the other campus groups and provide information to those potential service providers about the services available to everyone. The recreation and community outreach webpage was recently relaunched with updated information and a more user-friendly layout.

The Committee asked what student groups are encouraged to participate in getting funding for their group activity. Ms. Buonanno explained that they are currently in talks regarding refunding and that there are opportunities available depending on the group/activity; they just need to get connected with the recreation department for the requirements and for the next steps toward getting that financing.

The Committee asked, what is the problem or challenge with getting graduate students to participate? Ms. Buonanno discussed that one of the biggest challenges the division has faced is connecting and engaging with graduate students. Many of them feel like they don’t have access, and the division is trying to make that information and access clearer. Many have expressed that they want to participate, but they just don’t know how. Since the division has made more of an effort to reach the graduate students, there has been an increase of 500 graduate students so far this year.

The Committee suggested sending information directly to the departments and that Athletics join with Admissions to help them get information to graduate students. Ms. Buonanno said they will take those suggestions into consideration.

The Committee asked if the fee portion is a deterrent for graduate students participating. Although the fee amount may deter some, the main issue may be more a question of how to pay. Ms. Buonanno explained that many students have expressed to her that the fee itself is the issue. She explained that the best solution is to break up the misinformation with real facts and work through the feedback, and to continue providing the correct information to graduate students, encouraging them to participate.

The Committee asked if Athletics attends and presents at graduate orientations. Ms. Buonanno explained that Athletics does attend and present at most graduate orientations, and it has made a difference.

Ms. Buonanno stated that the department welcomes participation and suggestions and she provided the Athletics and Recreation web address (http://www.upenn.edu/life-at-penn/sports), which provides access to all of the programs and services offered by the Athletics Division.

Appendix B: Detailed Notes from Meeting on the Arts

The Committee meeting on October 29 was devoted to a discussion of the Arts at Penn: Continue to explore ways to develop the performing and visual arts at Penn, including ideas for increasing the integration of the arts into academic programming. Anita Allen, vice provost for faculty at Penn, was the invited guest.

Vice Provost Allen explained that she has been assigned to work with some of the major arts institutions on campus: Annenberg Center, Arthur Ross Gallery, the Penn Museum and ICA, and she also serves as chair of a Provost Arts Advisory Council. This Council is comprised of faculty in the arts and leaders from various art programs on campus whose focus is...
to think strategically about where the arts at Penn need to go, and the next moves to get there.

Vice Provost Allen presented a brief overview of where the arts are currently and some of the more specific goals for the Arts at Penn. She explained that the arts are thriving at Penn. There are many organizations that involve students, faculty and staff in the arts and numerous opportunities for education in the arts, entertainment, enrichment with activities such as Glee Club and theater, dance, ballet, opera, the writing center and writing programs, etc. Penn has several arts-based institutions, community engagement programs, an annual children’s festival, a performing arts center, teenage performances at the Rotunda that are open to the community and several arts exhibits throughout campus. She presented some exciting news: the University is in talks with Comedy Central, which is considering broadcasting from the comedy center during the Democratic Convention.

Vice Provost Allen shared that the President and Provost are committed to supporting the Arts at Penn. It has been calculated for fiscal year 2016 that basic subvention is about $75 million spread over the various groups and organizations within Penn. The Development office confirmed that from the 2015 campaign, $265 million was raised towards the arts from very generous support of donors and alumni.

Vice Provost Allen discussed that there is a sense that there is an arts race going on among elite institutions, with the inference that these universities are putting large amounts of money into capital projects, museums and art centers. Many are concluding that schools are reasserting the essential value of the arts to a well-rounded education. But the question is, do you assert that value by building buildings, or do you assert that value in other ways? What is our Arts Advisory Council (PASC) trying to figure out what is going to be Penn’s way to underscore the importance of the arts to education. For a lot of students, there are ways that engaging in the arts supplements their education via the performing arts and object based learning that complement their enrichment.

The Provost Arts Advisory Council was established last semester and as previously stated, its role is to underscore the centrality of arts and culture here at Penn. They want to build on the success of the Provost Arts Initiative from 2012-2015, managed by Professor Karen Beckman. Some of the accomplishments from the Arts Initiative were the freshman seminar in the arts and the distribution of 26 inter-disciplinary grants to further arts practice and research at Penn. The Provost Arts Advisory Council facilitated the creation of a first-time arts and culture program distributed to hotels and visitors centers throughout the city to emphasize all of the arts organizations on our campus and in the city at large. There is also a new arts and culture website that has a calendar of arts events on Penn’s campus and stories of student and faculty arts activities. They are also currently in development of an arts and culture app.

Vice Provost Allen shared that some additional goals of the Provost Arts Advisory Council are to examine the best practices among peers, while maximizing Penn’s distinctive attributes and to synergize diverse arts organizations, genres and campus groups. It is also seeking to foster new approaches to teaching and learning using the arts and art resources, with hands-on learning through the arts, and to support new campus arts initiatives for education and enrichment.

The Committee asked, what exactly is considered the arts at Penn? Is it just performing arts, the humanities, history? Vice Provost Allen said that primarily we are talking about the arts (Annenberg Center), design and architecture, dance, ballet, music (all forms), musical performance and composition, digital media, painting and visual arts, film, manuscripts, rare books, the museum, fine literature, creative writing, Kelly Writers House, Arthur Ross Gallery. The arts are very broad, but history is not part of the arts. The Council is thinking of ways to make the arts bigger and better, and looking for more opportunities to integrate those genres into academic learning. Most recently, we have had some professional performers interacting with students in private classes and seminars.

The Committee asked Vice Provost Allen to explain a little more about the Provost Arts Initiative. She shared that the Provost Arts Initiative was a three-year program that was run by Dr. Beckman. Now, the Provost Arts Advisory Council is the new group that is focused on defining the future of the Arts at Penn, where it is going, and the necessary steps to reach those goals. They also aim to find out what Penn’s signature contribution to student education around the arts will be compared to other institutions.

The Committee asked, who is the new face of the arts at Penn? Vice Provost Allen explained that there isn’t one person, but a shared responsibility among the Council. The Committee also asked if there were other faculty on the Council other than Dr. Beckman. Vice Provost Allen replied that there are several other faculty members on the Council, some from Design and Humanities. Faculty members are critical and appreciated for their time they commit to the Council and for the unique perspectives and ideas they bring. If they find that more faculty involvement is needed, they are open to creating a subcommittee to meet that need.

The Committee asked if there is data on how many students take advantage of the art galleries and museum exhibits on campus and if there is a difference between undergrad and graduate students. Vice Provost Allen stated that there is student data on visits to the museum, and students use their access to these exhibits in different ways: seminars, performances, etc. This data is currently collected informally. The Council is working on refining the data and compiling the statistics specific to art involvement at Penn into a written document. The Committee asked if there was a survey that could help with collecting this data. Vice Provost Allen explained that there isn’t a survey at this time, but that is a tool that the Council would consider using to gather information.

The Committee asked how students prioritize which events to attend, since there is so much going on at Penn. They also asked how students can find balance with already heavy course loads that may not allow them to take an academic arts class or participate in an activity within the arts. Vice Provost Allen stated that it might help to provide students with a better understanding as to why the arts are important to help change the notion that general arts courses aren’t necessary. Currently, the Admissions tours include a segment on the Arts at Penn that includes a video presentation that gives incoming students a sense of the arts opportunities available within the University.

Appendix C: Detailed Notes from Meeting on the Library

CARA charge: Continue discussion about the library, including off-site storage of collections, study spaces for students and electronic browsing.

The Committee welcomed Carton Rogers and Kimberly Eke, who briefly discussed their roles at Penn Libraries: Mr. Rogers, vice provost and director of libraries, and Dr. Eke, director of teaching, research and learning services at Penn Libraries.

Mr. Rogers began his presentation with a brief history of Penn Libraries. Furness Library (now known as Fisher Fine Arts Library) opened in 1891 with a room in it for 300,000 books, with plans to take down the rear wall and extend the stacks should the library reach capacity. Since that time, the University has added numerous on-site libraries (including departmental libraries for each of the schools under the University) with a book volume of over 6 million. Given this tremendous increase of printed materials, in 1998, the Libraries began moving lesser-used volumes to off-campus collections in a space rented from Drexel University. The Drexel space housed 1.6 million volumes; and when that reached capacity, Penn opened a new space, the Penn Libraries Research Annex (LIBRA), in 2011, located in New Jersey. Students, faculty and staff may request books that are located in the LIBRA facility and those books are delivered within one to two days from LIBRA to any campus library, and journal articles can be scanned and delivered electronically.

Mr. Rogers shared that the University’s book is not a Penn-specific problem, but one that may colleges and universities face. Three major reasons for the high volume of books and printed materials are:

1. The explosion of print volumes and books in the 20th century.
2. The lack of physical space on campus to expand libraries into.
3. The cost of keeping lesser-used literature.

In a study conducted by Paul Courant, a University of Michigan faculty member, in 2010, he found that the onsite cost is $4.26 per book per year, vs. the offsite cost of $0.86 per book per year. Mr. Rogers shared that one of the national conversations between library directors is the creation of regional storage facilities instead of the maintenance of individualized facilities by each institution. This also opens up a greater opportunity for shared materials between institutions.

Mr. Rogers explained that there are two types of communities within the University that utilize the facilities: those who rely heavily on electronic information and have abandoned printed books, and those who rely on the printed materials. A challenge that the library has faced is bridging the gap between the two. The Digital Library Resources have exponentially increased, and the library catered to over 1.5 million users in the past year, with 6.9 million article downloads and over a million e-books. The library has spent almost $19 million on digital information. The increase in digital information has allowed Penn to connect with other library collections and share that digital information between universities.

Following Mr. Rogers’ presentation, Dr. Eke shared information regarding Penn Libraries’ support for young scholars. The Libraries offer services to develop course assignments, plan and facilitate in-class activities and design Canvas tools courses, as well (continued on next page)
To fully parse the information contained within this document, please provide a structured format or a list of specific questions about the content.
Off-campus Housing. The University has continued efforts to improve student interests in supporting student access to and the quality of off-campus housing. For example, the University was proactive in improving information to students about housing options (e.g., through a Housing Fair in May) and providing education on leasing policies and tenant rights. In part through University encouragement, most of the largest landlords are now using online maintenance systems, which reportedly has improved service. The Committee was reminded that the University can only nudge and encourage activity by area landlords to do things like institute more flexible leasing policies or improve their responsiveness to tenants’ requests for service. However, the substantial expansion in new housing options within the University City District is expected to address some concerns.

The Committee noted concerns within the community that the housing expansion may have been unintended consequences on access to affordable housing for local residents. However, the Committee also recognized that the University may be limited in its ability to influence private sector development.

Student safety and sexual violence. The University is continuing efforts to address concerns over student safety and sexual violence prevention, drawing on the findings of the Westat (2015) Report based on data from the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. Drawing on these findings, as well as best practices in the field, the University is working hard to improve procedures and protocols for its education and response initiatives, with the goal that Penn become a model campus for sexual violence prevention and support for victims.

The University is undertaking multiple initiatives aimed at creating a major culture shift in attitudes toward and quick, deliberate responses to sexual assault and sexual violence through the Sexual Violence Investigative Office. These include improving security policies and practices, and expanding and improving prevention services (e.g., including the resources available through the web for victim support and dissemination of phone sleeves that contain helpline information). Penn Communications and Public Safety also are actively working with the Office of Sexual Violence Prevention and Education to manage the Penn Violence Prevention Initiatives to educate students, faculty and staff regarding rights, responsibilities and resources. Resources are now much easier to locate and access through Penn’s website and there are efforts to develop networks of Penn Violence Prevention Educators.

The University chose not to adopt the 2014-2015 Committee’s recommendation to define bullying, judging the issue to be too complex to warrant taking a lead in coming up with a definition. While the Committee understands the logic behind this decision, it remains concerned that bullying is a non-trivial concern at the University. It suggests that the University consider dedicating resources to address this issue, along with the other challenging human relations issues it is tackling, such as sexual violence. For example, the Committee believes that even relatively simple education efforts modelled on the posters that have been placed around campus providing illustrations of sexual violence and suggested protective responses might be very helpful in discouraging bullying and in providing victims information about resources they can turn to without fear of retaliation or other adverse consequences.

Challenges facing international students. Two major concerns international students raised with last year’s Committee related to orientation— or “boarding”— and a feeling many have that they are not celebrated members of the Penn community. These are issues that the University, Penn Global and International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) are dealing with in a variety of ways. For example, this year, the University instituted a slightly earlier (36 hours) move-in date for international students. Through education and management efforts, the number of special events for international students has increased, both during orientation and at other key points throughout the year (e.g., major holidays, during breaks and at critical points in the academic calendar). Examples include hosted holiday celebrations, flash talks, a special end-of-year graduation celebration and strategically timed meetings for students to discuss issues and solutions. In addition, Penn Global is taking advantage of opportunities to do some orientation with prospective students in China and India through a new Forerunner Leadership Program. It is expected that beginning in 2016-2017, Perry World House will fill a critical need for more general gathering spaces for international programs and events.

Despite these considerable efforts to improve support for and integration of international students, we heard residual concerns from representatives of the Assembly of International Students (AIS). Specifically, they expressed three concerns. First, they feel strongly that the 36 additional hours of advance time to get settled prior to orientation is inadequate, especially for students who have very long flight times. Moreover, they stated that Penn’s orientation for international students is considerably shorter than orientations at some of our peer institutions. Second, while acknowledging the benefits of the Forerunner Program, which provides pre-orientation support for incoming freshmen during the summer before they arrive on campus, international student representatives noted that this is only available to prospective students from India and China. Thus, it is not relevant for a majority of international students. Third, while students acknowledge the importance of Perry World House for meeting the academic and social needs of international students, faculty and scholars, their intelligence leaves them concerned that Perry World House will not address the need among international students for community gathering spaces on campus.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that the University form an ongoing working group (including student representatives) to monitor and address the nonacademic needs of international students as they continue to evolve and, as warranted, the working group should make recommendations for improving the climate and coordination of resources to support the needs of international students.

Student mental health benefits. The Committee was asked to look at student health benefits, paying particular attention to the interplay of health insurance, CAPS and access to private health care providers.

The Committee learned that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has not had a discernible impact on either the likelihood that students remain on their parents’ healthcare or the percent enrolling in the Penn Student Health Plan (PSHIP). While there had been concern that enrollment in PSHIP might have increased in graduate student populations, that reportedly has not happened. However, health insurance coverage does play an important role in the ability of CAPS to help students transition to continuing care options.

Although CAPS does not have a limit on students’ use of its services, it is intended and staffed to serve primarily as a short-term care provider. Generally, its role with students requiring more than acute care is to stabilize them and help them transition to continuing care providers within the community. Reportedly, about one fourth of students who visit CAPS require a referral for continuing care.

The University does require that all students have health insurance (either through student health or through another documented plan) and the provisions of students’ plans affect options for and conditions of referring students to community providers. Penn Behavioral Health, which is a major provider of care to students, is unable to meet much of this need and many other area providers do not accept the students’ health insurance. Thus, CAPS is challenged in making timely referrals for continuing care and sometimes they are faced with trade-offs among quality of the match between the provider and students’ health care needs, location of the provider and financial burden for students. Virtually all health care plans include a sizeable copayment for out-of-network providers and/or deductibles that reportedly has not happened. However, health insurance coverage does play an important role in the ability of CAPS to help students transition to continuing care options.

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CAPS has worked hard to develop relationships with providers in the city and, presently, they have a rapport with a network of 50-60 providers who will accept the students’ health insurance. However, reportedly, because of the relatively low reimbursement rates under typical insurance plans, many of the providers with whom CAPS has established relationships limit the number of student referrals they will accept. Moreover, these same limits on reimbursement rates limit the ability of students to identify providers on their own.

The Committee was told that CAPS has succeeded in reducing its wait times for initial (non-urgent) appointments to about three days and presently, wait times for referrals for continuing care are approaching three weeks.

Recommendation: The Committee has a three-pronged recommendation: (1) it recommends that Penn explore options for increasing capacity within Penn Behavioral Health to serve student referrals from CAPS (for example, by creating a unit of psychiatrists and/or expanding capacity within current specialty units to allow it to serve more Penn students); (2) it recommends conducting a survey of students to assess their perceptions of unmet need for and barrier to receipt of mental health care; and (3) it recommends examining the pattern of gaps in provider fees and health insurance reimbursement rates for both the Penn Student Health Plan and the most common of the alternative plans used by students to better understand the likely options for further expanding supply and addressing gaps in health insurance coverage.

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Campus and Community Life

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3. Local community and economic initiatives

The Committee was asked to consult with Penn’s Office of Government and Community Affairs and the Netter Center about their local community and economic initiatives. Both organizations are actively engaged in many projects that aim to improve the local economy. For example, the former engages in economic development initiatives that are closely aligned with Penn’s campus expansion, renovation and maintenance efforts, and the latter is involved in numerous efforts to strengthen the school to career pipeline for youth and young adults in the community, while also improving academic experiences for Penn students.

The Office of Government and Community Affairs has 16 very large ongoing development projects, including projects moving into the Grey’s Ferry area of the city. These projects have large expenditures and provide many jobs, particularly in construction, human resources and purchasing. The office is working with Philadelphia’s job training providers to expand the size of the local workforce that is trained to fill construction jobs. It also networks with numerous community organizations to ensure that stakeholder interests are heard and addressed and that Penn attends to community development opportunities and needs as it pursues its expansion and improvement efforts.

The Committee was pleased to learn that the University is undertaking an examination of economic opportunities in the West Philadelphia area with the goal of informing Penn’s efforts to exert effective leadership as an anchor institution. This scan is expected to encompass issues related to preparation for career and college readiness of students coming out of area high schools; occupational skills training at the secondary, post-secondary and adult education levels; and efforts to promote women and minority purchasing programs.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that the University create and maintain an inventory of community development related initiatives and create a portal for information on jobs, job training providers, and other community resources that could support strong community development.

4. Student employment arrangements

The Committee was asked to consider student employment arrangements, especially Work Study policies, and ways to improve the availability of adequate student employment. All student employment, including Work Study, is administered through the University’s Student Employment Office, which is directed by John Rudolph. According to Mr. Rudolph, the University of Pennsylvania receives about $4 million a year in Work Study support for students and it is required to spend a minimum of 7 percent of these funds for community service jobs (FSA Handbook, Chapter 2, page 17). Work Study jobs are supported by a combination of federal and nonfederal funds, with the shares varying depending on the nature of the position. In addition, students may work in non-Work Study positions, regardless of whether they have a work study award.

Reportedly, about 4,000 students received Work Study awards last year and about 2,900 of those authorized for Work Study jobs actually obtained positions, regardless of whether they have a work study award. Moreover, some of the jobs are in inconvenient locations.

It was the judgment of the Director of the Student Employment Office that there was not a shortage of Work Study jobs. He also feels that they have had a sufficient number of Work Study jobs to meet demand, while also acknowledging that some Work Study-eligible students prefer other types of positions, positions closer to campus and/or positions paying more than some Work Study jobs. Reportedly, Work Study jobs generally pay between $7.25 and $12.80 per hour and the type of work varies widely from menial jobs to intellectually engaging, skills-building positions. Moreover, some of the jobs are in inconvenient locations.

Recommendation: It would be useful for the University to determine how many students with Work Study awards are not using them and the reasons. If there is a sizeable number of Work Study-eligible students who are not using Work Study positions due to reasons related to the nature of the work, the hours, the location and/or the pay, the University should consider possible remedial actions. It also would be useful to gather information on the reasons sizeable numbers of Work Study-eligible students work in non-Work Study jobs.

Suggested issues for consideration by next year’s Committee

The final charge to the Committee was to 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 2016-2017. The Committee recommends that the University consider continued efforts to examine two issues addressed by this year’s Committee and it offers two suggestions for new focus areas.

The two recommendations for building on work by the 2015-2016 Committee include the following:

1. Conduct ongoing monitoring and assessment of the adequacy of mental health services, with a particular focus on issues of access to and adequacy of care available to students who need continuing care beyond that normally provided by CAPS.

2. Examine the University’s plans to reduce sexual harassment and violence among students to develop parallel policies and practices to address sexual harassment, assault and bullying that involve faculty and staff as victims or as perpetrators.

In addition, the Committee identified two additional areas that it recommends for consideration by next year’s Committee:

1. Examine the breadth and depth of Penn’s engagement with the City in the areas of health, education, social services, criminal justice and community and economic development and make recommendations for improving the coordination and benefits to Penn and the community of such engagements.

2. Examine the Riverfront Development plans to identify unoccupied opportunities for improving campus and community life, as well as to identify possible threats, for example, related to housing, safety or community engagement opportunities.

Committee on Campus and Community Life 2015-2016

Chair: Rebecca Maynard; Faculty: Angela Bradbury, Monica Calkins, Jonah Gelbch, Campbell Grey, Emily Hanum; PPSA: Peter Gemmella-ro, Namrata Narain; WPPSAS: Simcha Katsnelson, Joyce Woodward-Jones; Graduate Students: Lirui Li, Jia Xue; Undergraduates: Natasha Galperin, Adam Mansell, Liaison: Karu Kozuma; Staff: Cydnee Bryant

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 arise.

Committee’s Specific Charges for 2015-2016

1. Obtain data relating to the diversity of Penn staff and discuss the University’s efforts to recruit and retain diverse staff.

2. Continue discussion of the University’s efforts to attract diverse graduate students.

3. Examine the environment and resources available to low-income undergraduate students.

4. Consider gender diversity in STEM fields for undergraduate and graduate students.

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 2016-2017.

Priorities

The Committee agreed that the four main charges for the year would be a lot to cover and do any real justice. Thus, the Committee began working immediately on the second and third charges and it was officially announced at the December 2015 meeting that we will focus our work on these two charges. We also agreed to revise the second charge to

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focus specifically on the resources for and experiences of diverse graduate students, and the third charge to examine the environment and resources available to low-income and first-generation undergraduate students.

**Number of Meetings**

The Committee met six times.

**Major Points Addressed by the Committee**

1. During our first meeting on October 7, 2015, the Committee had Will Gipson, Leslie Kruhly and Anita Mastroieni as invited guests. Dr. Mastroieni indicated that the Enrollment Students Survey does not include responses from professional or master’s students. The challenge that her office is faced with is how to include more students on existing surveys and noted that she would like to have permission from the master’s degree deans to include master’s degree students in the survey. Mr. Gipson encouraged cultural centers to support graduate student leadership, which is the best way to support affinity groups.

2. During our November 4, 2015 meeting, the Committee invited Hannah Sweeney and Juana Granados, undergraduate students from the new organization PennFirst. The students spoke highly of PennCAP (Penn College Achievement Program) but said that not every student has the opportunity to participate. Not everyone is invited and some students have to work during the summer months in order to meet their financial need to attend Penn. While Ms. Granados has expressed that as a junior she is just beginning to feel acclimated to the University community, Ms. Sweeney (a freshman) said she does not feel like she belongs at Penn because of the negative comments received from some wealthy students. She stated this is not her reality and that she does not feel accepted or “like” a traditional Penn student. It was noted that Penn has been a school for the elite and has not done a successful job with providing an environment for low-income students. It was also mentioned that the Penn community is not good at welcoming first-generation students. Students do not feel comfortable approaching faculty, staff or other students for assistance. Finally, it was noted that there is a cultural bias at the institution that is shared by people on campus, particularly faculty, that all students who attend Penn come from privileged backgrounds.

3. During our December 16, 2015 meeting, the committee invited William Schilling, interim director, Student Financial Services, to discuss financial aid concerns pertaining to low-income and first-generation students. To begin, the Committee discussed that graduate students need a representative of accountability to whom students would go for assistance. It was mentioned that there is not a designated person to address their grievances and the onus is being placed on the students. Mr. Schilling provided a thorough explanation of financial aid and the process of student awards. The Committee agreed that the institution is providing substantial resources for low-income students and that there is likely more of an issue of institutional culture and issues of student awareness of resources.

4. On January 27, 2016, the Committee convened its third meeting. Anita Mastroieni, director of the Graduate Student Center, was the invited guest and was tasked with resources for diverse graduate students. The Committee began with a brief summary of what has been learned thus far regarding first-generation and low-income students, then discussed the subcommittee report on diverse graduate students from academic year 2014-2015. The Committee wanted to recap the Committee’s findings in relation to the University’s response to the recommendations. The Committee acknowledged the University’s response that resources are available to students via the Graduate Student Center and the cultural centers, but the information is not easily accessible. It was also importantly noted that there is not a centralized location for dealing with graduate student diversity. Dr. Mastroieni discussed the various programs and resources of the Graduate Student Center. She emphasized the value of a number of programs, including providing both resources and a community network for PhD students from underrepresented backgrounds.

5. The Committee convened for its fifth meeting on February 18, 2016. Sam Starks opened the meeting with a discussion of Penn’s revised Sexual Misconduct Open Forum Project Survey. In light of the survey results, it was stated that the financial aid package to low-income students should be reviewed. More information is needed on how aid is calculated and how a student’s financial aid package varies. The Committee agreed that Penn would need to become more diligent in providing information to students about the resources available to them.

6. The Committee had its final meeting on March 23, 2016. The Committee summed up the work of the Committee as well as considered future work and how to approach that work as a Committee in the future. The chair summarized a separate meeting he had with Vice Provost of Education Beth Winkelstein, Karen Lawrence and Anita Mastroieni on institutional resources for diverse graduate students. It was learned that one of our recommendations from last year (i.e., to implement a regular survey of graduate student experiences, with a focus on diverse graduate students) has been in the making this year and will be piloted in April 2016. There are at least two sampling challenges that were mentioned. One of the challenges is that not every school or program has opted to participate. The other sampling challenge is that if a department or program has fewer than 20 students from a particular group of students, then it will not be able to provide reporting on those students due to confidentiality concerns. The rest of the meeting was devoted to discussing findings and recommendations.

7. Additional information learned by the Committee:

   a) We reviewed the Undergraduate Assembly’s Social Justice Committee Project Survey, led by undergraduate students Hannah Sweeney and Justin Hopkins, and administered to students involved in PennFIRST, Questbridge Scholars, Mayor Scholars and PennCAP. Of the 99 respondents, the survey indicated that 70% identified as first-generation college students and only 29% of the students participated in PennCAP, the majority of whom appear to be aware of various resources on campus such as Weingarten, CURF and CAPS. However, the use of these resources appears to be underwhelming with some estimates as low as 19% for CURF, 32% for CAPS and 42% for the Tutoring Center.

   b) Some of the survey results indicated:

      1) “I don’t think that my experiences with CAPS have helped. CAPS is temporary help and not a replacement for actual therapy.”
      2) “Generally the experience of people I know with advising at Penn is not very good. I know someone, who was already struggling with mental health issues, that was told she was “exaggerating her home situation.” I don’t think there is enough support for first-generation and low-income students, particularly mental and emotional needs. All the resources are scattered and I think we need a Center for First-Generation and Low-Income Resources. A center would be something that really shows students Penn welcomes them with a greater sense of understanding.”
      3) “I also feel that the culture of Penn is difficult to navigate as a first-generation student, and like more resources should be given to first-gen students as soon as they arrive on campus to prepare them for the difficulties that may face them. I feel that, in particular, academic and pre-professional advising need to be improved upon.”
      4) When asked about what workshops they would have been interested in attending, students cited time management, understanding financial aid, career/pre-professional advice and internship/fellowship help with the highest frequencies.
      5) “Also, TBH [to be honest], someone just needs to sit low income and first-gen college students down and explain the different people at Penn (in marketing, we would call these segments of the population). We’re getting exposed to people that dress differently than us, that have a lot more money than us, and have dealt with totally different problems through life than we have. Understanding how the other half lives is the first step in being able to effectively interact and cope with these people that we’re forced to interact with on a daily basis. But no one ever tells you that these are the kind of people that go to Penn, and that’s why you may not have much in common with them. Why your values may be different, etc. … Lay it out for us all that ‘these are how rich people think and act and where they come from’.”
      6) In the inquiry conducted last year on the resources and experiences of diverse graduate students, data collection included semi-structured interviews, focus groups and document analysis. In the focus group with 30 graduate students from eight of the 12 of Penn’s graduate and professional schools, the students expressed the following:

         1) Feelings of isolation
         2) Feeling marginalized
         3) Having experienced microaggressions from faculty
         4) Interest in more diverse faculty
         5) Need for more networking opportunities
         6) Need designated place for dissertation work
         7) Need for diversity community space
         8) Need for diversity education
         9) Need for diversity in programs
         10) Need for more networking training
         11) Need to destigmatize mental health diversity
         12) That real, important connections have been made at affinity groups
         13) Schools not caring about diversity issues

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COUNCIL 2015-2016 Year-End Reports

Committee on Diversity and Equity

Recommendations to University Council

For Charge on the Environment and Resources Available to Low-Income and First-Generation College Students (LIFG Students)

1. We learned that the University does have a host of resources in place for LIFG students, but either those resources focus on a specific subset of students or students are not aware of the resources. It was expressed in the Undergraduate Assembly’s Social Justice Committee Project Survey on first-generation and low-income students that resources are not easily accessible; there are gaps in financial aid awareness; and there is a lack of clarity on the terms and process of Work Study. Given these resource-related concerns, the Committee recommends that resources be better consolidated via an official office (see Recommendation 2) that puts together resources and contacts students about these resources prior to their attending the institution. This might be easily addressed by expanding the reach of the University of Pennsylvania College Achievement Program (PennCAP) such that all low-income and first-generation students are invited to participate in PennCAP. LIFG students who were able to participate in the past reported that both the summer event and continued programming during the academic year were crucial to their adaptation to Penn, and thus PennCAP should be expanded to include more LIFG students.

2. The Committee recommends that the University establish a First-Generation Office that is responsible for monitoring and being responsive to the needs and concerns of first-generation students, offering ongoing programming that helps to bridge the knowledge gap regarding assumed institutional processes (e.g., What is research? And, how can undergraduates become involved?), and conducting ongoing work that will both enable the student’s transition into the Penn community and shift the institutional culture. The office could be made up of a staffed University official; graduate student staff who coordinate programming, such as mentoring programs between graduate students and LIFG students, or events on relevant topics; and undergraduate leadership from PennFirst that can develop programming while also providing an ongoing voice and input to community needs and concerns. This office would be able to facilitate the building of community while also organizing and implementing programming that would help address issues and concerns pertaining to institutional culture. Peer institutions such as Brown University have already established a First-Generation College Student Office.

3. All advisors should be trained to increase awareness of and sensitivity to LIFG students, but the administration should also explicitly identify and recruit advisors who themselves were LIFG college students to work with current cohorts. Special care should also be taken to ensure that all advisors assigned to LIFG students will be in-residence (i.e., not on sabbatical) during the entire advisory period.

4. Finally, while each of these recommendations provides an institutional mechanism to be responsive to the various concerns, needs and experiences of first-generation students, also very clearly expressed through both interviews and the Undergraduate Assembly’s Social Justice Committee Project Survey were issues pertaining to the institutional culture. These concerns included everything from socially and culturally elite student conversations to elite assumptions made by faculty in classroom discourse. LIFG students expressed how the elite culture of the institution has been socially and culturally marginalizing and has made for a difficult existence, specifically during the first two years. While the Committee does acknowledge that the normative context of the institution is not an easy ship to move, we do think there are mechanisms and procedures that can be implemented in order to enable an incremental institutional cultural transformation. Thus, we recommend:

1) Ongoing faculty training on unconscious bias, microaggressions and how to teach diverse students.

2) Added programming during new student orientation that raises awareness of diversity by incorporating topics such as cultural sensitivity, race, gender, class, sexuality, dis/ability and unconscious bias to its daily line. LIFG students indicated that a reception during NSO would facilitate the dissemination of information, allow LIFG students to establish networks of support, and provide an opportunity for a representative of the University to explicitly welcome and express support for LIFG students.

For Charge on Resources for and Experiences of Diverse Graduate Students

1. The Committee applauds and encourages the University’s efforts to create and implement a graduate student survey. It will likely provide information that will identify strengths and weaknesses and may help direct future efforts. That said, our current view is that more needs to be done, as outlined below. The Committee would like to request access to the survey and data for review next year. The Committee also thinks the University needs to develop mechanisms for enabling appropriate and affirmative use of the data.

2. Fontaine Society has been a tremendous resource for PhD students from underrepresented backgrounds, both in funding and as a network. While Fontaine Society is not currently limited to PhD students who are funded via Fontaine Society, there continue to be procedural gaps in identifying and inviting underrepresented PhD students who are not funded by Fontaine. The Committee does think that addressing these procedural issues and inviting all underrepresented PhD students will go a long way in addressing their needs and concerns.

3. The Committee acknowledges that there are currently several cultural centers on campus that are designated as both undergraduate and graduate student resources. However, the Committee’s inquiry between last year and this year has discovered that the primary programming focus of the cultural centers tends to be on the undergraduate student population. Even though this is not uniform for all cultural centers, it does seem to be overwhelmingly the case. Thus, in order to incentivize the cultural centers’ graduate student programming and resources, the Committee recommends that the University: (1) allocate a specific proportion of the cultural centers’ funding toward graduate student programming and resources; (2) encourage and prioritize the cultural centers’ pursuit of the recent Provost $20,000 allocation for race and gender bias programming for both undergraduate and graduate students; and (3) have an allocated set of funds for diverse graduate student programming and resources that is available by proposal only and available to the cultural centers and schools.

Recommendation of New Topics or Continuing Topics to be addressed the Following Year

1. Obtain data relating to the diversity of Penn staff and discuss the University’s efforts to recruit and retain diverse staff.

2. Consider gender diversity in STEM fields for undergraduate and graduate students.

3. Examine the campus climate and experiences of LGBTQ students, staff and faculty.

4. Examine and discuss the pilot survey and data on graduate students, with a particular focus on diverse graduate students.

5. Continue to monitor efforts related to the campus climate for undergraduate students for low-income and first-generation undergraduate students.

NOTE: The Committee considers “diversity” comprehensively, to include components of identity including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, immigration and legal status, disability, mental health, veteran and family status, faith traditions and socio-economic background. The Committee recommends including these varied identity components when examining faculty, staff and graduate student recruitment and retention.

Committee on Diversity and Equity Members 2015-2016

Chair: Ezekiel Dixon-Román; Faculty: Regina Austin, Herman Beavers, Chenoa Flippen, Nancy Hirschmann, Joie Libonati, Jonni Moore, Sharorna Pearl; PPSA: Kristin Field, Shaina Adams-El Gulabi; WPPSA: Lauren Kemp, Irene Tan; Graduate Students: Justine Seifcz, Lloyd Talley; Undergraduates: Ann Okhupe, Cheyenne Rogers; Liaison: Sam Starks; Staff: Kuan Evans

www.upenn.edu/almanac  ALMANAC Supplement April 26, 2016
Committee on Facilities

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.

Committee’s Specific Charges for 2015-2016

1. Consider the availability and cost of parking for members of the Penn community.
2. Continue discussion of active learning spaces on the campus.
3. Explore ways to reduce barriers to interdisciplinary teaching and academic initiatives across different schools, including reducing costs for shared event spaces and audiovisual charges in different Responsibility Centers.
4. Continue to monitor and update the Penn Connects plan.
5. Follow up on Philadelphia Bike Share and impact on campus and students.
6. Revisit efforts to reduce smoking on campus and consider expanding no-smoking zones on campus.
7. Review and discuss this Committee’s general charge and identify two of the highest priorities for the Committee’s work in academic year 2016-2017.

In addition, the Committee met jointly with the Committee on Academic and Related Affairs because its first charge related closely to facilities: “Continue discussions about the library, including off-site storage of collections, study spaces for students and electronic browsing.”

Each charge is discussed below, followed by the Committee’s recommendations related to that charge.

1. Availability and cost of parking

This issue was addressed at the September meeting; several representatives from Business Services addressed the Committee. There are 26 parking facilities on campus, 8 garages and 18 lots, comprising approximately 4,800 spaces. There has been a fairly consistent number of permit holders over the years, with 4,243 permit holders this year. Prices, on average, are $18 for a garage and $12 for a lot. Garages are more expensive than lots to maintain; many have aging infrastructure. Business Services has a six-year upgrade program that includes adding automated vehicle IDs, improving entries and exits, new signage and sustainability initiatives, as well as general upgrades as needed. Business Services collaborates closely with the Climate Action Plan and considers parking an integrated component of all transportation services and sustainable transportation. Sustainability initiatives include electric charging stations, solar kiosks, bike parking, van/car pool and the occasional parking program. A Penn ID will give users access to the Penn Transit options as well as the LUCY bus and Drexel transit. In the future, Business Services would like to integrate the PennCard and the SEPTA pass. The new technology in the SEPTA contactless card makes this possible; they are awaiting the pilot to come from SEPTA.

Recommendations: Continue with ongoing programs and initiatives. Encourage additional bicycle parking within the garages as part of the garage upgrades. The Committee particularly welcomes the efforts to encourage use of public transportation and the coordination of public transit with private vehicles.

2. Continue discussion of active learning spaces on the campus.

At the November meeting, the Committee was joined by Bruce Lenthal, executive director of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). We met in the active learning classroom at Van Pelt-Dietrich Library. Dr. Lenthal raised three issues that should be given high priority for the Committee’s work in academic year 2016-2017.

a. Continuation and expansion of active learning classrooms; some committee members have already used them.

b. There has been a growing demand for SAIL classes (structured active in-class learning), for both STEM and non-STEM classes, since 2012. It is less clear how quickly demand will rise and what will be the ultimate level of demand for such classrooms. They require more instructional space and technology than do regular classrooms, though some other types of courses could be taught in the spaces. Modular furniture might help ease potential problems if other kinds of courses are assigned to such spaces. The scheduling for the active learning classrooms is done centrally through SAS. The need for communication and support for faculty was also discussed; CTL continues to manage these issues.

Recommendations: A. The Center for Teaching and Learning is already contributing significantly to the development and use of active learning classrooms on the Penn campus. We would hope they could continue to serve as a central point for further development, particularly in working with individual departments.

• Information gathering: it would be helpful to know which departments (academic and administrative) want to increase their commitment to using active learning classrooms. What rooms are they now using? Do they want or need additional rooms, and if so, what sizes? Do they have specific needs in terms of facilities in those rooms?

• Information distribution (orientation, training, and more): it would be helpful for CTL to work at the department level (in addition to its regular lunchtime discussions throughout the year) to help faculty learn how to re-design courses so as to use active learning classrooms effectively. This is especially important because these methods may be adopted by survey courses that are taught regularly by more than one faculty member in a department, and also because effective use may vary considerably from one discipline to another.

B. Although it is still difficult to estimate long-term demand, it looks now as though Penn needs to add two active learning classrooms to the central pool of classrooms over the next 3-5 years—in any case, as quickly as is feasible. They should accommodate a total of 100 students. These might be added in stages, but should be added nonetheless.

C. The criteria for assigning classes to central pool active learning classrooms need to be clear and well publicized so that individual faculty members and department coordinators may plan and request them. The process needs to be streamlined and more efficient than it is at present.

D. In addition to the courses that need to be scheduled into active learning classrooms for the entire course, many more would benefit from occasional use for special projects. Therefore, it would be helpful to have at least one such room centrally located and available for special bookings if that were possible.

3. Explore ways to reduce barriers to interdisciplinary teaching and academic initiatives across different schools, including reducing costs for shared event spaces and audiovisual charges in different Responsibility Centers.

The charge was clarified for the Committee by Leslie Krughy, vice president and University secretary. There are three linked threads found in investigating the charge: people want to book space on campus for talks, seminars or other academic gatherings and meetings often find it difficult or impossible without having the right connections, and there is not a centralized system that allows for a comparison of spaces that may be available; people/departments want to control their spaces and fear that an effort to centralize their spaces will result in a loss of control; the only centralized, easily found and available spaces are managed by VPUL and there are charges associated with those spaces.

The issues admittedly have no easy solution or recommendation. No existing Penn unit seemed an obvious potential home for information, reservations or referrals. Perhaps a new module under Pennant could be used as a larger reservation system. Other possible recommendations seemed to raise new problems in turn. For example: it would be helpful to the Penn community to have a centralized “list” of spaces with contact info and perhaps other qualifying information such as IT availability, seating capacity and costs (for example, security or cleaning). Yet such a list could create new or drive up current costs for the space if it had the effect of increasing requests for spaces controlled by units such as academic departments that lack sufficient staff to handle increased requests.

Recommendation: To address this issue in a way that is satisfactory to all stakeholders work should continue among them. We recommend that the staff members in charge of scheduling and managing such spaces in each of the schools meet to discuss how and whether they want to go about sharing such meeting space and informing one another about availability. We also suggest a benchmarking study with other universities that have a cost-center responsibility model to see how other such institutions manage this issue.

4. Continue to monitor and update the Penn Connects plan.

At the December meeting, University Architect (and Committee Staff Liaison) David Hollenberg presented an update to the Committee. He included accomplishments since 2006 as well as current and future projects. In 2006, the University purchased the Postal Lands, leading to a master planning effort. The lands included open space that is now Penn Park, the Post Office building that was immediately sold to the IRS, and the
space in between that is ground leased to a developer to create Cira Centre South. The master planning effort, called Penn Connects, reserves the core of campus for academic uses; it locates more administrative units at the perimeter, focuses on connectivity and expands Penn’s character and resources. The capital projects from the plan were largely funded through President Gutmann’s Compact and fundraising initiatives, in particular the Making History campaign. At the end of 2011, the plan was refreshed and published as Penn Connects 2.0. The focus brought attention to renovations on campus and added sustainability goals and major projects (>$5 million) involving rehabilitation of existing buildings. Five themes were developed: 12 Outstanding Schools; Research and Clinical Care; Living and Learning; Campus and Community; and Past and Future. Examples of projects in each theme were provided and discussed. The plan incorporates Pennovation Works (previously known as South Bank or Marshall DuPont Labs).

Recommendations: The Committee is very impressed with the program, the priorities for which were set through the Penn Compact and Making History campaign. It expressed a strong interest in seeing one feature added: more classroom space.

5. Follow up on Philadelphia Bike Share and impact on campus and students

This issue was addressed at the October meeting. Brian Manthe and Matthew Brown of Business Services presented on Philly Bike Share and Biking at Penn.

Philly Bike Share was launched in April 2015; it placed 600 bikes in 70 stations citywide. Three of the stations are on the Penn campus: 40th and Spruce Streets; 36th and Sansom Streets; and the intersection of South Street and Convention Avenue. The stations on campus are highly utilized. Two new locations are being considered, outside of the Quad and at Pennovation Works. The capacity of the station at South Street and Convention Avenue may be expanded. The stations are easy to move, are modular and expandable and do not require a lot of infrastructure to install. General information can be found at http://www.rideindiego.com

Penn’s Bicycle Planning Committee includes representatives of many campus units, including Business Services, Facilities and Real Estate, Public Safety, Student Health Services and Penn Cycle. That Committee is charged with providing guidance and recommendations for Philly Bike Share, bike corrals, repair stations, commuter incentives and access, outreach, safety (including increased use of helmets) and a bicycle master plan. The Committee would like to develop incentives that encourage the use of helmets; for example, Penn Cycle offers a helmet with the rental of a bicycle for the semester or year.

It was also noted that Penn has two repair stations, one at the 1973 Wing of the Chemistry Building and one outside of Pottruck. They have been well used. In addition, the City is considering extending the Chestnut Street bike lane west of 34th Street.

Recommendations: The Committee reiterates its support for additional bicycle parking space on Penn’s parking garages. We recommend and encourage more efforts to promote helmet use (for example, publicizing Blue Cross’s reimbursement program for helmet purchases).

Repair spaces: we recommend the addition of instructions to aid riders with less experience in bicycle repair. They might be posted on site, or it might be more efficient to post a link to a website with instructions or videos, so that users could access the information via phones or other devices. We also recommend that the Bicycle Planning Committee keep an eye on potential competition for space use between Philly Bike Share racks and parking spaces for regular bicycles.

6. Revist efforts to reduce smoking on campus and consider expanding no-smoking zones on campus

The meeting of March 21 was devoted to this charge. The Committee was joined by Ashlee Halbritter, director of campus health; Frank Leone, director of the Comprehensive Smoking Treatment Program; and Sue Sproat, executive director of benefits, Human Resources. Dr. Leone summarized the three-year task of a campus committee established to explore Sproat, executive director of benefits, Human Resources. Dr. Leone summarized the three-year task of a campus committee established to explore

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The Committee focused on a variety of benefits issues this year with no central issue predominating. The issues discussed are identified below in the context of reviewing the charges for this year and recommending charges for next year. The Committee continued to have a strong working relationship with its Administrative Liaisons, Jack Heuer, vice president, Human Resources, and Susan Sproat, executive director, Benefits. The Committee met seven times.

2015-2016 Specific Charges & Recommendations for Future Charges

1. Continue discussion of Penn Behavioral Health, with particular focus on out-of-network benefits and the administration of claims, as well as compliance with new federal regulations regarding mental health benefits.

The Committee met with Angel Medina, the interim director of Operations for Penn Behavioral Health. The Committee was encouraged by the improvements being made in the administration of Penn Behavioral Health.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that it be charged with continuing to monitor the effectiveness of the administration of mental health benefits and the adequacy of mental health benefits.

2. Consider Penn’s retirement benefits for faculty and staff.

Evaluate retirement benefits, particularly retirement (qualified plan) and especially in relation to peer institutions.

The Committee reviewed Penn’s contribution to retirement savings in light of peer institutions. Penn’s retirement contributions are within the range of peer institutions, though below the average benefit provided by peers.

In the course of this review, the Committee became aware of a concern with the current rules governing qualification for other retirement benefits (e.g., retiree health benefits). Under the existing rules, if an employee had a period of part-time service interposed between two periods of full-time service, the initial period of full-time service was not counted in determining eligibility for retirement. The Committee was concerned that the rule was unfair to employees whose life circumstances dictated a period of part-time employment. In consultation with the Committee, the University decided to change the rules to permit bridging of full-time service across periods of part-time service. The Committee applauds this decision, which enhances Penn’s commitment to family-friendly benefits.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that it be charged with continuing to monitor retirement benefits in coordination with the Faculty Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty.

3. Review same-sex partner benefits in light of the changes in laws governing same-sex marriage.

The Committee worked with Human Resources to achieve a fair transition to parity of benefits for same-sex and different-sex couples.

Recommendation: The Committee should be charged with continuing to monitor the transition to parity of benefits.


The Committee continues to monitor the implementation of the revised short-term disability policy. The Committee continues to believe that the new policy is in line with Penn’s commitment to providing competitive and family-friendly benefits.

The Committee believes that next year it should look more broadly at the issues surrounding benefits for new parents.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends that it be charged with reviewing and making recommendations with respect to Penn’s provision of benefits for new parents.

5. Continue to discuss and review the requirements of health care reform and consider needed changes in University benefits.

The Committee continued to work with Human Resources on the implementation of health care reform and its implication for health care benefits over time. The Committee was briefed in detail on the possible implications of the impending health care excise tax on the provision of health care benefits. The Committee has striven to become more educated in the major questions of plan design. The Committee expects that health care benefits will continue to evolve and believes that the Committee has an important role to play in advising on such changes.

Recommendation: The Committee recommends it be charged with continuing to review health care benefits in light of evolving legal and market conditions.

6. Continue to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of Penn’s wellness initiatives, including Penn’s program with Health Advocate.

Human Resources provided updates to the Committee on Penn’s wellness initiatives and Health Advocates. The sense of the Committee was that these are valuable services and should be continued. The Committee also believes that it is important to monitor such initiatives so that they provide benefits to the University community without infringing on individual privacy or personal autonomy.

Recommendation: This charge should be continued.

7. Continue to discuss and investigate how information on benefits is disseminated and possible improvements thereto.

This charge should be continued.

8. 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 2016-2017.

Recommendation: Highest priority should be given to 1) monitoring the implementation of changes to health plan design and pricing given health care reform and the current health market; and 2) reviewing whether Penn’s benefits with respect to new parents are competitive and consistent with Penn’s commitment to family-friendly benefits.

Committee on Personnel Benefits 2015-2016

Chair: Ann Moyer; Faculty: Tom Daniels, Jerry Jacobs, Tanja Kral, Kathryn Michel, John Puckett, Masao Sako; PPSA: Elizabeth Hartzell, Kristen McMullen; WPPSA: Leon Malloy; Graduate Students: Salomon Moreno-Rosa, Matthew Rappaport; Undergraduates: Elena Rohner; Liaison: David Hollenberg; Staff: Taylor Berkwitz
A Special Oasis at Penn

Tucked away in the midst of the expansive urban campus in the fifth largest city in the United States, Penn has beautifully landscaped, carefully cultivated corners such as the Kaskey Park. A densely planted botanical garden with trees, shrubs, flowers, ground cover and grass; mulched paths and slate steps; wood and iron benches; branches, railroad ties and Belgian block, is a green space named the James G. Kaskey Memorial Garden. The garden and pond were originally created under the direction of Provost Harrison as part of the great transformation of the campus in the 1890s. See http://www.facilities.upenn.edu/maps/locations/kaskey-park