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From the Provost

An Update on the Open Expression Guidelines

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To the Penn community:

Earlier this spring, I [wrote](#) about Penn's enduring commitment to open expression as a bedrock principle for our campus. Open expression is at the core of our values and fosters engaged learning, rigorous inquiry, informed debate, and authentic community. It is, in the deepest sense, a reflection of who we are and what we aspire to be as a university.

The process of revising the Guidelines on Open Expression should itself be an expression of these values: an opportunity to steward and strengthen commitments that are durable, clear, and genuinely of and for the Penn community. That conviction needs to guide every step of our revision process, and it is why I am writing today with an update on timing and process.

After the draft guidelines were shared with the community in March, we heard from a wide range of faculty, staff, students, and postdocs. That feedback has been substantive, thoughtful, and heartfelt, underscoring deep commitments to the value of open expression. Some reactions have been pointedly critical, while others have identified elements that resonate. Community members have raised important questions about such areas as governance, oversight, academic freedom, and campus safety, as well as about the roles of faculty, students, and staff in implementing and enforcing the guidelines.

We recognize the significance of these concerns and are committed to addressing them as the revision process continues.

President Jameson and I are personally dedicated to ensuring that this input is fully considered and to giving this process the care and attention it deserves. Meant to endure, the Guidelines on Open Expression must reflect the values, expectations, and interests of the Penn community both now and far into the future. It has been more than thirty years since their last major revision, which is why, as early as 2022, members of the Faculty Senate and the Committee on Open Expression were calling on Penn to review and update them. That urgency was reinforced more recently by the recommendations we received from both the Presidential Commission on Countering Hate and Building Community and the University Task Force on Antisemitism, which emphasized the importance of cultivating a campus community where everyone can benefit from our long-standing institutional commitment to open expression.

Another clear message has emerged from campus feedback so far: Members of our community want more time to engage in the process and greater assurance that their perspectives will meaningfully inform the final document. We hear those concerns and are adjusting the timeline and process in response.

Rather than presenting a final draft to University Council at the September 9 meeting, as originally

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University of Pennsylvania Health System CEO Kevin Mahoney's Appointment Extended Through June 2031

Penn Medicine has extended the appointment of chief executive officer Kevin Mahoney through June 2031.

Mr. Mahoney has led the University of Pennsylvania Health System since July 2019. He manages health system operations, which span seven hospitals, 13 multispecialty centers, and hundreds of outpatient facilities in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey. He has advanced Penn Medicine's strategic direction by expanding access points, building a sustainable workforce pipeline, and advocating for safer care environments for team members.

At Penn Medicine, Mr. Mahoney has led initiatives focused on improving patient experience and care efficiency in treatment settings. These include the recent creation of the Clifton Center for Medical Breakthroughs, a 1.5-million-square-foot, future-forward hospital, and the unification of the health system's hospitals, clinics, and home care programs under one shared electronic health records platform.

Drawing from lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Mahoney has created a blueprint for meeting patients when and where they need care. In this model, care is delivered across four sites: in a hospital, at a multispecialty center, in the home, or through telehealth. This approach has led to better patient experiences, reduced hospitalizations, shorter inpatient stays, and decreased health costs, all of which ultimately help people live longer, healthier lives.

Mr. Mahoney joined the system in 1996 and previously served as executive vice president and chief administrative officer. Penn Medicine includes the University of Pennsylvania Health System and the Raymond and Ruth Perelman School of Medicine in Philadelphia.



Kevin Mahoney

Penn Launches Center for Civil Rights

On July 1, 2026, the University of Pennsylvania launched the Center for Civil Rights (CCR), a newly united center that will bring together support, reporting, investigative, and compliance offices related to discrimination and harassment, including sexual misconduct.

CCR will unite the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, the Office of the Associate Vice President for Equity & Title IX Officer, and the Office of Religious and Ethnic Interests (Title VI). It is designed to provide students, faculty, and staff with a single point of contact, as well as to strengthen education and prevention efforts while bolstering consistent, informed responses to civil rights concerns. The center will also enable shared expertise, streamline reporting processes, and use the knowledge and experience of its team members.

"This consolidated Center for Civil Rights will help Penn work better for every member of our community," said Penn President J. Larry Jameson. "Faculty, staff, and students will benefit from greater clarity around resources, reporting, prevention, and legal compliance,

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The Search for Penn's 11th President: Community Survey

As Penn begins the search for its next president, every member of our community has a part to play. This [survey](#) is your opportunity to shape the search. Your responses will inform the Consultative Committee convened by the Board of Trustees, whose work will help define the type of leader the University seeks.

Penn's next president will build on an extraordinary platform: one of the world's great universities, with genuine momentum, exceptional faculty, a preeminent healthcare enterprise, a remarkable research footprint across disciplines, tens of thousands of brilliant students, deep engagement with Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, and much more.

At the same time, the landscape is shifting. The role of universities in public life, the economics of research, the arrival of AI, and the expectations placed on institutional leaders are all changing at once. This is a consequential time

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Penn Launches Center for Civil Rights

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with our subject-matter experts aligned and working together. I am grateful to them and our community leaders as Penn undertakes this latest self-improvement.”

The launch of CCR comes at a time when civil rights responsibilities in higher education are increasingly complex. Federal, state, and local laws require universities to work to prevent and address unlawful discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. As regulatory expectations continue to evolve, CCR will allow Penn to ensure its systems are fair, consistent, and responsive.

CCR’s leadership will be announced this fall, will report to Vice President of Human Resources Felicia Washington, and will serve as a special advisor to the president on civil rights issues. The new office will be located in the Franklin Building and will partner closely with the Office of the General Counsel to ensure alignment with all legal and regulatory requirements.

“We are committed to this transformational journey with humility and openness, embedding civil rights protections into the core of our institutional culture, policies, and practices,” said Vice President Washington. “Our new united center will advance Penn’s commitment to fostering the campus environment we all deserve—one where all community members can live, learn, work, thrive, and know that they matter and belong.”

The center will have three subject-matter areas of responsibility, each led by an executive director and guided by supporting pillars of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and by other federal, state, and local civil rights laws and policies. As a dedicated resource for the Penn community, the center represents a significant investment in protecting the civil rights of every member of the Penn community, building on established best practices, deepening shared commitments, and ensuring these principles are not only preserved but actively strengthened.

- *Equal opportunity* will address matters of employment discrimination relating to employment and educational opportunities with respect to race and color, age, disability,

ity, veteran status, and other related protections, including disability related accommodations. The office will be responsible for compliance with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. This work will include providing available supportive measures; receiving, investigating, mediating, and resolving reports; and providing education and outreach.

- *Sex and gender-based discrimination and harassment* will address matters related to Title IX, sex and gender-based discrimination and harassment, sexual misconduct, and pregnancy discrimination, as well as pregnancy and childbirth-related accommodations. This area will also administer Penn’s Consensual Relationships Policy. This includes addressing matters involving quid pro quo sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and pregnancy discrimination.
- *Religious and ethnic interests* will build upon and advance the work of the Office of Religious and Ethnic Interests (Title VI) by focusing on harassment and discrimination based on religion and national origin, including shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, citizenship, and religious accommodations and related protections to uphold the University’s obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This includes addressing concerns involving antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other religious or ethnic concerns, and discrimination or harassment based on national origin.

CCR will complement Restorative Practices @ Penn, Student Intervention Services, Special Services, Center for Community Standards and Accountability, Penn Violence Prevention, the Office of the Ombuds, and other campus partners, which will remain valued resources for the Penn community. CCR will also work collaboratively with the Office of the Provost and with Deans and other University leaders.

The center reflects Penn’s deep commitment to fairness, respect, and institutional trust, supporting a community where everyone can learn, work, teach, and participate in an environment of dignity and mutual respect.

Add the Academic Calendar to Your Personal Calendar

To add the academic calendar to your personal calendar, visit <https://almanac.upenn.edu/penn-academic-calendar> and click one of the blue calendar buttons. Options for calendars to sync include the ongoing three-year academic calendar, the 2026 summer term academic calendar, and the 2026-2027 academic calendar.

There will be an option to sync it to your personal Apple, Google, Office 365, Outlook, Outlook.com, or Yahoo calendar.

Mounting an exhibit? Orchestrating a concert? Planning a play? Showing a film? Let *Almanac* know so it can be included in the monthly AT PENN calendar!

Almanac’s monthly AT PENN calendar is the only all-inclusive calendar of Penn events on campus. A free listing in the AT PENN increases visibility and attendance. We are currently col-

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planned, we are now targeting the November 18 University Council meeting for that presentation, with a tentative implementation date of January 1, 2027 for the final updated guidelines. This is our target, but, if more time is needed, we will take it.

In partnership with the Committee on Open Expression, the Faculty Senate tri-chairs, student leaders, and other representative campus groups, we envision the following steps:

- This summer, we will prepare a summary of the key themes that have emerged from feedback received to date, to be published in *Almanac* by late August.
- The Committee on Open Expression will meet independently and regularly throughout the summer to consider this current draft of the proposed guidelines along with the feedback received from our community.
- With input from the tri-chairs and the Committee on Open Expression, and with the benefit of the feedback we have received from the Penn community, we will revise the guidelines and distribute them early in the fall semester. We will also provide a summary of how the campus feedback we received informed our approach to the revisions.
- After this new draft is circulated, we will actively seek ongoing opportunities for additional feedback, discussion, and engagement across the Penn community, including community listening sessions for faculty, staff, students, and postdocs, once again moderated by Professor Eric Feldman.
- We will provide a progress update at the October University Council meeting before posting an updated version of the guidelines prior to the November University Council meeting.

We are fully committed to the challenge of revising these guidelines. Questions of open expression are complex and consequential and have been debated for centuries. We do not anticipate unanimity on every point that the guidelines will address. That is to be expected—and even embraced—in a vibrant academic community. Our commitment is to substantive, inclusive engagement: a process ensuring that all perspectives are thoughtfully considered.

We will follow up in August, as indicated above, with updates and additional details. In the meantime, we encourage all members of the Penn community to continue sharing your perspectives and suggestions at OpenExpression-Feedback@upenn.edu. Your continued engagement is essential to our process of successfully shaping open expression principles and guidelines that will serve our community well for decades to come. Together, we will take the time to get this right.

—John L. Jackson, Jr., Provost

Planning an Event? Email *Almanac*

lecting events for the Summer AT PENN calendar and the September AT PENN calendar.

Email us at almanac@upenn.edu with your event details, including the event date, time, topic, speaker information and sponsors.

For more information, visit <https://almanac.upenn.edu/deadlines-for-submitting-at-penn-information>.

The Search for Penn’s 11th President: Community Survey

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to lead Penn and recruiting the right leader for Penn’s next chapter is the Board’s most important task.

Penn’s founder, Ben Franklin, wrote that “energy and persistence conquer all things.” The Board shares that conviction and holds an abiding belief in Penn’s potential. We want a president who sees that potential as clearly as we do, and who has the skill and the will to pursue it alongside the Penn community.

The [survey](#) will take about ten to fifteen minutes. Individual responses are anonymous and will be aggregated by Spencer Stuart, the firm supporting the search. The most useful input is specific and direct. We want to hear what you actually think.

Ongoing updates will be provided on the search [webpage](#).

—Ramanan Raghavendran
Chair, Board of Trustees
University of Pennsylvania

Deaths

Patricia Adams, Penn Nursing

Patricia (Pat) Adams, a retired Penn administrator whose career spanned multiple departments at Penn and who most recently served as director of human resources for Penn Nursing, died on June 12, 2026.

Ms. Adams joined Penn's staff in 1985. Her career included positions in the Wharton School, Information Systems & Computing (ISC), and ultimately the School of Nursing.

In 1995, Ms. Adams served on the Task Force to Restructure Computing Services Across Penn, which brought Penn into the internet age. At Penn Nursing, Ms. Adams led several initiatives, including the Staff Awards Program, Professional Development Week, and the annual performance review process. She coordinated the Penn's Way Annual Charitable Campaign and the Netter Center for Community Partnerships' Annual Holiday Drive, both charitable campaigns that made a difference in the West Philadelphia community, and in 2018, she contributed to the Sustainability Committee for the design of Penn Nursing's One Less campaign team, reinforcing the school's commitment to environmental stewardship. She also worked for the former Living Independently for Elders (LIFE) Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) in West Philadelphia during its expansion. Ms. Adams retired from Penn in 2022.

"Pat brought exceptional skill to her role and a deep sense of compassion to everyone she encountered," said Penn Nursing Dean Antonia M. Villarruel. "She touched countless lives through her kindness, wisdom, and unwavering support, and she left this world knowing she was deeply loved."

Victor Mair, East Asian Languages & Civilizations

Victor Henry Mair, a professor of Chinese language and literature in the department of East Asian languages and civilizations in the School of Arts & Sciences, died on June 28, 2026 from complications of urinary tract cancer. He was 83.

Dr. Mair was born in East Canton, Ohio. He attended Dartmouth College, where he was a member of the basketball team, and graduated in 1965. He then served in Nepal for two years in the Peace Corps. Upon his return to the U.S., he enrolled in the Buddhist studies program at the University of Washington. He then earned an MPhil at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, funded by a Marshall Scholarship in 1974, and again returned to the U.S., where he earned a PhD at Harvard University in 1976. For his dissertation, Dr. Mair con-

ducted pioneering studies on vernacular stories (*bianwen*, or "transformation texts") found in the Buddhist caves of Dunhuang, China.

After three years on Harvard's faculty, Dr. Mair joined Penn's Faculty (now School) of Arts & Sciences in 1979 and taught courses on Buddhist popular literature and on the vernacular tradition of Chinese fiction and the performing arts. In 1990, Dr. Mair led a faculty push to rename Penn's department of Oriental studies to the department of Asian and Middle Eastern studies (*Almanac* October 16, 1990). The same year, he was inducted into the newly-formed Phi Beta Delta honor society for distinguished international scholarship. In 2007, he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society. He researched, lectured, and published peer-reviewed articles on the influence of Sanskrit meter on Chinese poetry, the tangled relation between oral Chinese and its script, and the multifaceted history of tea.

During the 1990s, Dr. Mair organized an interdisciplinary research project, partly funded by Penn's University Research Council, on the Bronze Age and Iron Age mummies of Eastern Central Asia. His efforts resulted in three television documentaries, a major international conference, numerous articles, and a book, *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West* (2000). Dr. Mair also edited the *Columbia Anthology of Tra-*

ditional Chinese Literature (2004) and consulted on the curation of the Penn Museum's landmark exhibition *Secrets of the Silk Road* in 2010 (*Almanac* February 22, 2011). He also founded the journal *Sino-Platonic Papers* and edited the *ABC Chinese Dictionary Series* of the University of Hawaii Press. He held visiting professorships at the University of Hong Kong, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, the Institute for Research in Humanities at Kyoto University, and Duke University.

"Victor was a teacher whose entertaining and inquisitive intelligence shaped not just his undergraduate and graduate students, but the world of Sinology, far beyond the classrooms of Penn," said Dr. Mair's colleagues in an [online tribute](#).

In addition, reminiscences of Dr. Mair from his brother Denis Mair can be found [here](#).



Patricia Adams



Victor Mair

To Report A Death

Almanac appreciates being informed of the deaths of current and former faculty and staff members, students and other members of the University community. Call (215) 898-5274 or email almanac@upenn.edu.

However, notices of alumni deaths should be directed to the Alumni Records Office at Suite 300, 2929 Walnut St., (215) 898-8136 or email record@ben.dev.upenn.edu.

Penn GSE Receives a \$720,000 Grant from the William Penn Foundation to Launch its LEAPS Teacher-Learning Initiative

Penn's Graduate School of Education (GSE) has been awarded a \$720,000 grant by the William Penn Foundation to pilot a groundbreaking teacher-learning initiative designed to strengthen early grade instruction, improve teacher retention, and expand pathways for aspiring educators across Philadelphia.

The grant will support the launch of the Learning Embedded Approach to Preparation and Staffing (LEAPS), an ambitious model that reimagines how teachers learn, grow, and remain in the profession. Built on years of research and deep partnerships with Philadelphia schools, LEAPS creates a new staffing and learning structure that places multiple adults—an experienced attending teacher, an early career teacher, and at least one teacher candidate—in two or more PreK–4 classrooms, all learning together while centering student outcomes.

LEAPS responds directly to long-standing challenges in the teaching profession: steep learning curves for novice teachers, high turnover (especially in high-poverty schools) and limited opportunities for experienced teachers to advance without leaving the classroom.

Great teaching doesn't happen by chance; it's built through practice, reflection, and expert guidance. Through carefully sequenced learning cycles, candidates develop a deep understanding of children, content, and instruction by working with core classroom routines such as interactive read-alouds, number talks, and writing conferences. After building confidence with these practices, they bring them into real classrooms, where they see firsthand how students think and learn. With targeted coaching along the way, candidates refine their approach and learn how to make these routines effective for diverse learners. This approach not only prepares novice teachers to make a meaningful impact from day one, but also offers a powerful model for strengthening the practice of experienced educators over time.

The pilot will focus on PreK–4 classrooms, aligning with the William Penn Foundation's emphasis on early learning. Over two years, the project will create and pilot teacher-learning modules and test model staffing designs at partner schools.

The project is led by Penn GSE faculty members Sarah Schneider Kavanagh and Patrick Sexton, who are nationally recognized experts in practice-based teacher education. Their prior work developing practice-based and school embedded models for teacher learning forms the backbone of LEAPS.

Penn GSE's long-running partnerships with the School District of Philadelphia and local charter networks will guide site selection and ensure that the model is responsive to school level needs. Principals will play a central role in supporting learning teams and communicating the model's benefits to families.

Interest in innovative staffing models is growing across Philadelphia, particularly through networks such as Elevate 215's Citywide Talent Coalition and Teach Plus Pennsylvania. LEAPS stands out for its dual focus on student learning and teacher learning, offering a sustainable pathway for teachers to grow professionally while remaining in the classroom.

With this \$720,000 investment, Penn GSE will pilot a model that could reshape teacher preparation locally and nationally. By integrating rigorous university-based learning with deeply supported classroom practice, LEAPS aims to build a stronger, more diverse, and more stable teaching workforce.

Honors & Other Things

Anita L. Allen: Future of Privacy Forum Career Achievement Award

Anita L. Allen, the Henry R. Silverman Professor of Law in the Penn Carey Law School and a professor emeritus of philosophy in the School of Arts & Sciences, has received a 2026 Career Achievement Award from the non-profit Future of Privacy Forum (FPF). The annual award recognizes individuals whose work has had a lasting impact on privacy protections, responsible innovation, and the advancement of ethical technology governance worldwide. Dr. Allen was recognized for her leadership in advancing privacy protections and responsible approaches to emerging technologies.



Anita Allen

The award was presented at the FPF Advisory Board Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., which brings together leaders from industry, academia, civil society, and government to explore the issues shaping the future of privacy and AI. Dr. Allen was honored alongside Nuala O'Connor, senior advisor of Equal AI, and Harriet Pearson, founder of Axia Advisory LLC.

"At a moment when conversations around privacy, AI, and digital governance are evolving faster than ever, these honorees represent the very best of principled leadership," said Jules Polonetsky, CEO of FPF. "Anita Allen, Nuala O'Connor, and Harriet Pearson have each made extraordinary contributions to advancing thoughtful, practical, and responsible approaches to data protection and emerging technologies. Their work has shaped the field in profound and lasting ways."

Dr. Allen is an internationally recognized scholar whose work has shaped modern thinking on privacy, data protection, ethics, and legal philosophy. Over a career spanning law, philosophy, and public policy, she has examined questions of consent, accountability, equality, and ethical responsibility in public and private life.

Dr. Allen serves on the board of the FPF, and on the advisory board of the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), where she previously served as board chair. She has also received EPIC's Lifetime Achievement Award. She is a member of the Pennsylvania and New York bars and an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Law Institute, and the American Philosophical Society.

The Career Achievement Award recognizes Dr. Allen's decades of scholarship, teaching, and public service, which have shaped global conversations about privacy, artificial intelligence, and ethical technology governance.

William W. Burke-White: 2026-2027 Berlin Prize Fellow

William W. Burke-White, a professor of law in the Penn Carey Law School, has been named a 2026-27 Berlin Prize Fellow by the American Academy in Berlin, a distinguished program for scholars, writers, artists, and public policy leaders. The Berlin Prize recognizes individuals

whose work represents the highest standards of excellence in their fields and provides recipients with the opportunity to pursue significant scholarly and creative projects while in residence in Berlin.

Dr. Burke-White, a leading expert on U.S. foreign policy, multilateral institutions, and international law, was selected for his book project, *Connectivity Without Consensus: Recasting International Economic Law for a Fragmented World*. As detailed by the academy, the project asks whether international economic law remains fit for purpose when governments are increasingly using tariffs, sanctions, export controls, investment screening, subsidies, and industrial policy not only to regulate markets, but to advance national security and geopolitical objectives.

At the center of the project is a question with urgent practical stakes: how can international law continue to support cross-border trade, investment, finance, and technological exchange when states no longer share a common vision of globalization? Rather than calling for a return to the political and economic consensus that shaped the postwar order, Dr. Burke-White argues that international economic law may need to do something different: build procedural frameworks that manage conflict, structure domestic intervention, and preserve channels of economic connectivity in a more fragmented world.

The fall semester fellowship will support work that forms part of a broader book project that Dr. Burke-White will pursue during his upcoming sabbatical. Berlin offers a particularly fitting setting for the project, given Europe's central role in current debates over economic security, industrial policy, sanctions, investment screening, and the future of the transatlantic economic order. The project builds on Dr. Burke-White's recent scholarship on investment law, national security, and the transformation of global economic governance.

Awarded annually by the American Academy in Berlin, the Berlin Prize provides fellows with the opportunity to pursue independent projects while engaging with fellow scholars, artists, and public leaders in one of Europe's leading centers for intellectual and cultural exchange.

Gerald Campano: Diane Lapp and James Flood Professional Collaborator Award from the International Literacy Association

Gerald Campano, a professor in the Graduate School of Education, has received the Diane Lapp and James Flood Professional Collaborator Award, a national honor from the International Literacy Association that recognizes an outstanding and long-standing scholarly collaboration that has significantly shaped the field of literacy education. Dr. Campano shares this distinction with his collaborator and wife, Maria Paula



William Burke-White

Ghiso, GRD'09, of Teachers College at Columbia University, whose joint research over many years has illuminated the experiences of multilingual students, immigrant communities, and families engaged in grassroots educational inquiry.

Their partnership—rooted in relational ethics, community knowledge, and justice-centered literacy—has become a model for how sustained collaboration can transform both scholarship and practice.

This award caps an exceptional year for Dr. Campano, who was also named a 2026 fellow of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), one of the field's highest honors, which recognizes scholars for their exceptional contributions to education research. In addition, Drs. Campano and Ghiso received the AERA Division G Luis Moll Creative Work/Book Award, which recognizes outstanding scholarship on the social contexts of education, for their *Methods for Community-Based Research*.

Nick Dockery Awarded United States Medal of Honor

Retired U.S. Army Major Nicholas Dockery, a student in Penn's MBA Program for Executives in the Wharton School, was recently awarded the Medal of Honor, the United States' highest military decoration for valor, for his actions in Afghanistan in 2012.

The medal was presented by President Donald J. Trump on behalf of the U.S. Congress during a ceremony at the White House. On conferring the medal, President Trump said Mr. Dockery left the battlefield "a legend and a hero."

The medal followed a March vote by the U.S. House and Senate authorizing the president to confer it. The Medal of Honor recognizes service members who distinguish themselves through gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives, above and beyond the call of duty. First awarded in 1862, it has gone to roughly 3,500 recipients.

Mr. Dockery received the honor for numerous acts of valor during an October 2, 2012, ambush in Kapisa Province, where his platoon and allied Afghan forces came under attack by an estimated 150 Taliban fighters. Serving as an Army second lieutenant and infantry rifle platoon leader in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he crossed open ground under fire, rallying his forces and leading an assault that cleared ground, saved a wounded comrade from enemy capture, and rendered the soldier lifesaving aid. When an enemy grenade landed nearby, Mr. Dockery pushed another soldier behind cover and shielded him from the blast, and while under fire, he moved to the compound's open roof, exposed and without cover, to mark his position for the gunships that suppressed the enemy, and refused to leave the battle until every wounded soldier reached safety. He served with the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Light), 4th Infantry Division.



Nick Dockery

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Mr. Dockery also holds the Silver Star for a 2018 engagement in Faryab Province, a 10-hour firefight that left more than 100 enemy fighters dead. He also received the Soldier's Medal for risking his life off-duty to stop an armed assailant and render lifesaving aid to a wounded civilian during a December 2025 incident. His other decorations include the Legion of Merit, multiple Bronze Stars, two Purple Hearts, the Nininger Award for Valor at Arms, the MacArthur Award for Leadership, and recognition as the *Military Times* Soldier of the Year. Taken together, these awards place Mr. Dockery among the most highly decorated soldiers of his generation. A 2011 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Mr. Dockery earned a master's degree in public policy from the Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs as a General Wayne A. Downing Scholar. He served as a White House Fellow from 2024-2025 and now leads the Nicholas Dockery Foundation, which funds organizations using evidence-based experimental and alternative therapies to help people living with trauma, depression, and suicidality.

Jesús Fernández-Villaverde Honored by Heritage Foundation and AAS&L

Jesús Fernández-Villaverde, the Howard Marks Presidential Professor of Economics in the School of Arts & Sciences, has won the Freedom and Opportunity Academic Prize of the Heritage Foundation. Winners receive between \$15,000-\$20,000 for research education.

He has also received the Barry Prize for Distinguished Intellectual Achievement from the American Academy of Sciences & Letters, which honors scholars whose work has made outstanding contributions to humanity's knowledge and understanding of the world. The prestigious prize, which includes a cash award, also confers lifetime membership in the academy. It is made possible through a gift from the John and Daria Barry Foundation. Dr. Fernández-Villaverde's primary research interests are in the formulation of dynamic equilibrium models, their efficient computation, and their estimation, in particular using machine learning. He has also worked on issues related to monetary economics, economic history and political economy.

Pilar Gonalons-Pons: Devah Pager Outstanding Article Award from ASA's Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility Section

Pilar Gonalons-Pons, the Alber-Klingelhofer Presidential Associate Professor of Sociology



Pilar Gonalons-Pons

Dr. Gonalons-Pons received the award for her article "Care Labor and Family Income Inequality: How Child-care Costs Exacerbate Inequality Among U.S.

Families." This study demonstrates how market-priced childcare systems widen family income inequality in the United States. Using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and state-level childcare costs, she shows that high childcare prices reduce post-birth earnings for mothers without college degrees much more than for mothers with college degrees. These losses are not offset by partners' earnings or by income transfers. As a result, childcare costs exacerbate family income gaps between partnered women with and without a college degree by 34 percentage points.

The Devah Pager Outstanding Article Award recognizes innovative and impactful scholarship that advances scientific understanding of inequality, poverty, and mobility. Dr. Gonalons-Pons is affiliated with Penn's Population Studies Center, program in gender, sexuality and women's studies, and Leonard Davis Institute for Health Economics. She was a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation and received a PhD in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a postdoc at Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Marie Gottschalk: 2026 Robert F. Kennedy Book Award

Marie Gottschalk, the Edmund J. Kahn Distinguished Professor of Political Science in the School of Arts & Sciences, has received the 2026 Robert F. Kennedy Book Award for her book *Crime and No Punishment: Wealth, Power, and Violence in America*. The honor comes with a \$2,500 cash prize awarded by the Robert & Ethel Kennedy Human Rights Center.



Marie Gottschalk

Crime and No Punishment has received critical acclaim for its incisive look at how concentrated economic and political power in the United States has fostered forms of violence stemming from C-suites. The book highlights the U.S. military, the opioid epidemic, and the Great Recession as major inflection points that have spurred crises across the country and left many people at a stark disadvantage.

Founded in 1980, the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award draws on proceeds from Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.'s bestselling biography, *Robert Kennedy and His Times*. Per Mr. Schlesinger, the award is intended to honor a work that "most faithfully and forcefully reflects Robert Kennedy's purposes—his concern for the poor and the powerless, his struggle for honest and even-handed justice, his conviction that a decent society must assure all young people a fair chance, and his faith that a free democracy can act to remedy disparities of power and opportunity."

Dr. Gottschalk accepted the award on May 20 during a ceremony where she thanked the prize committee and said she hoped her work can help fuel a shift in how people perceive and ultimately address violence. "Even though my book can be bleak at times, I think I end on a note that it's not too late to seek a newer world."

Kyle Jacobson, Nathalie Rincon, and Mikaela Wells: PCL's Inaugural Dr. Sadie T.M. Alexander Fellows

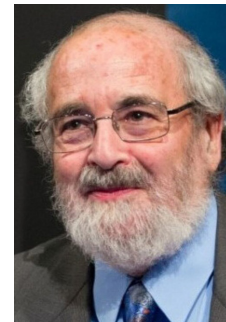
The Penn Carey Law School announces Kyle Jacobson, L'26, Nathalie Rincon, L'26, and Mikaela Wells, L'26 as the inaugural recipients of the Dr. Sadie T.M. Alexander Postgraduate Fellowship.

The fellowship, established in fall 2025, honors the life and legacy of Sadie T.M. Alexander, Ed'1918, G'1921, L'1927, Hon'1974, the school's first Black female graduate and among the first Black women in the United States to earn a PhD in economics.

"Dr. Alexander's life was defined by trailblazing achievement and service," said Dean and Bernard G. Segal Professor of Law Sophia Z. Lee. "This post-graduate fellowship ensures that her legacy endures not only within the Law School, but in the work that our graduates carry forward into the world."

In honor of Dr. Alexander's 50-year career as a lawyer, leader, and activist, the Dr. Alexander Postgraduate Fellowship recognizes graduates whose work advances civil rights. The fellows' public interest projects will be funded for the next two years at their host organizations.

Alan Charles Kors and Philip E. Tetlock: American Academy of Sciences and Letters



Alan Charles Kors



Philip E. Tetlock

Alan Charles Kors and Philip E. Tetlock are among the 60 newly invested permanent members of the American Academy of Sciences and Letters in recognition of their outstanding scholarly achievements. The nonpartisan academy provides platforms for academics to share their scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering. It supports early-career scholars, offers public programming, and promotes the ideals of traditional liberal arts.

"Like other academies, we honor intellectual excellence, but our academy is distinguished by a special accent on intellectual courage," said academy president Donald Landry, who is also interim president of the University of Florida. "All our new members this year reflect the independence of mind we strive to honor."

Dr. Kors is the Henry Charles Lea Professor Emeritus of History. He taught in the School of Arts & Sciences at Penn from 1968 to 2017, specializing in European intellectual history of the 17th and 18th centuries. Dr. Kors has authored multiple books and articles on early modern French intellectual history, includ-

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Honors & Other Things

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ing a trilogy on the origins of atheism, and was editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*. Dr. Kors has received the National Humanities Medal and was a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar. He served on the board of governors of the Historical Society and on the executive committee of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. At Penn, his teaching has earned both the Lindback Award and the Ira Abrams Memorial Award.

Dr. Tetlock is the Annenberg University Professor and a Penn Integrates Knowledge Professor with primary appointments in the School of Arts & Sciences and the Wharton School and a secondary appointment in the Annenberg School for Communication. His work explores decision-making, the challenges of assessing “good judgment,” and the criteria that scientists use in judging judgment and drawing conclusions on bias and error. He has published more than 200 articles and written or edited more than 10 books, including *Superforecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction* and *Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?* His awards and honors include the Woodrow Wilson Award for best book on government, politics, or international affairs and election as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Beth Linker: Shortlisted for 2026 George Rosen Prize

Beth Linker, the Samuel H. Preston Endowed Term Professor in the Social Sciences and chair of the department of history & sociology of science in the School of Arts & Sciences, was shortlisted for the 2026 George Rosen Prize for her book, *Slouch: Posture Panic in Modern America*. The prize is awarded by the American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM).



Beth Linker

Christian S. Warren of Brooklyn College was announced as the winner of the Rosen Prize on June 6 at the AAHM's annual meeting in Buffalo, New York.

Dr. Linker is also a professor of medical ethics and health policy in the Perelman School of Medicine and a core faculty member in Penn's program in gender, sexuality, and women's studies. She has held fellowships at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin and at Penn's Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing and Wolf Humanities Forum. In the spring of 2017, she received the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, the University's highest teaching honor. She teaches classes on the history of disability, surgery, healthcare policy, gender, and the body.

Hardik Makkar and Christopher Madl: CiPD/Penn Health-Tech 2026 IDEA Prize

The Center for Innovation & Precision Dentistry (CiPD) and Penn Health-Tech have



Hardik Makkar



Christopher Madl

awarded their 2026 IDEA (Innovation in Dental Medicine and Engineering to Advance Oral Health) Prize, a highly selective competition to support a dental and engineering collaboration focused on unmet needs in oral and craniofacial health. This year's recipients are Hardik Makkar, a CiPD NIH/NIDCR R90 postdoctoral fellow at Penn Dental Medicine, and Christopher M. Madl, an assistant professor in Penn Engineering's department of materials science and engineering, for their project, “Gingival Filler for Precision Restorative Periodontics.”

They are working on a translational biomaterials strategy designed to treat severe periodontitis by restoring the mechanical integrity of diseased gingival tissue. The project's broader impact lies in its shift from reactive microbial control to proactive biomechanical maintenance. By treating extracellular matrix (ECM) stiffness as an actionable therapeutic target, Drs. Makkar and Madl are advancing a new framework for chronic oral inflammatory disease: one in which biomaterials are used not simply to fill or repair tissue, but to restore the physical cues that help tissues remain healthy.

Dr. Madl is an assistant professor in the department of materials science and engineering and a core faculty member of Penn's Center for Precision Engineering for Health (CPE4H). He also holds a secondary appointment in chemical and biomolecular engineering and is a faculty member of the bioengineering and biology graduate groups. Dr. Madl has been recognized with a Life Sciences Research Foundation postdoctoral fellowship, an NIH K99 Pathway to Independence award, and a Maximizing Investigators Research Award (MIRA) for Early-Stage Investigators (ESI) (NIH R35). The Madl laboratory develops new hydrogel materials to study the role of biophysical cues from the extracellular environment on tissue dysfunction in aging and disease. The lab employs protein engineering and stimuli-responsive bioorthogonal chemistries to make materials with on-demand tuning of mechanical and microstructural cues.

Through his fellowship at CiPD, Dr. Makkar is building expertise in periodontal mechanobiology, tissue mechanics, and epigenetics—skills that will support his long-term goal of establishing an independent research program focused on mechano-immune therapeutic strategies to advance periodontal disease treatment and improve oral health outcomes. A dentist-scientist with advanced training in oral biology and bioengineering, Dr. Makkar has more than 10 years of research experience in biomaterials, tissue engineering, and host-microbe interactions in periodontology. Dr. Makkar's research focuses

on understanding how the gingival ECM stiffness influences periodontal health and disease. His work investigates how ECM degradation during periodontitis alters tissue biomechanics and, in turn, shapes host immune responses.

The IDEA Prize—an \$80,000 award—focuses on supporting innovative collaboration at the interface of dental medicine and engineering to develop new solutions to study, diagnose, prevent or treat oral diseases, craniofacial disorders, and cancers. The award program supports investigators with no prior collaboration, as well as ongoing collaborative teams, who are investigating novel ideas using engineering and computational approaches to kickstart competitive proposals for federal funding and/or private sector/industry for commercialization.

Andrea Liu: ICBS's Inaugural Marie Curie Medal in Physics

Andrea Liu, the Hepburn Professor of Physics in the School of Arts & Sciences, has won the first-ever Marie Curie Medal in Physics in recognition of her pivotal work with theoretical soft and living matter. Awarded by the International Congress of Basic Science (ICBS), the medal recognizes mid-career and younger scientists around the world who have achieved major and groundbreaking advancements in their research.



Andrea Liu

In announcing the Marie Curie Medal, ICBS praised Dr. Liu as a physicist “whose ideas and results have transformed our thinking of disordered systems,” particularly her work pioneering the jamming paradigm. That framework has helped scientists understand how amorphous systems develop mechanical rigidity, a foundational step in the field.

“Liu's legacy displays an unswerving commitment to finding simple conceptual understanding within the complexity of nature,” ICBS said. “Her work has not only pushed the envelope of statistical physics, but has also galvanized a new echelon of investigators to probe the most daunting questions of disordered systems.”

Other ICBS medals are awarded for various achievements in physics, along with mathematics and engineering. Nine scientists received medals this year in addition to Dr. Liu, marking the inaugural class of winners for the elite honor. All ten award winners were honored during an event at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

Arnold Mathijssen: RCSA's Cottrell Scholar Award

Arnold Mathijssen, an assistant professor of physics and astronomy in the School of Arts & Sciences, is among 24 recipients of this year's Cottrell Scholar Awards. Bestowed by the Research Corporation for Science Advancement (RCSA), the honor comes with a \$120,000 prize to bolster each honoree's research.

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Prospective Cottrell awardees submit research proposals to be considered for the award. Dr. Mathijssen's lab explores the physics of life, combining experimental and theoretical techniques across the disciplines of both physics and biology. His successful submission for the award is titled "Bacterial Active Matter in Self-Regulating Flow Networks" and focuses on the growing threat bacteria pose to human health.



Arnold Mathijssen

RCSA, a scientific foundation devoted to furthering science, selects scholars through a rigorous peer review process. Early career scholars in chemistry, physics, and astronomy are eligible for the award and must be based in Canada or the United States.

"This is an exceptional cohort of teacher-scholars whose innovative work fuels discovery across the physical sciences," said Eric Isaacs, president and CEO of RCSA. "Their insights and energy will strengthen a 600-member network of researchers, leaders, and mentors dedicated to pushing the boundaries of knowledge while shaping the future of science and science teaching."

Daniel Moriarity: APS Rising Star

Daniel Moriarity, an assistant professor in the department of psychology in the School of Arts & Sciences, has been named a Rising Star by the Association for Psychological Science. The APS Rising Star designation is presented to outstanding APS members in the earliest stages of their research career post-PhD.

Drawing its name from an *Observer* editorial series that featured exemplars of the exciting work being done by the field's newest researchers, this designation recognizes researchers whose innovative work has already advanced the field and signals great potential for their continued contributions.

Dr. Moriarity directs the the Precision Psychopathology + Dynamic Immunopsychiatry (PPDI) Lab at Penn. This lab conducts research on the dynamic interplay between stress, immunology, and affective psychopathology (depression, anxiety and hypo/mania).

Marcy Norton: Three Book Prizes

Marcy Norton, a professor of history in the School of Arts & Sciences, has received three honors for her book, *The Tame and the Wild: People and Animals After 1492*:

- The Friedrich Katz Prize from the American Historical Association for the best book published in English focusing on Latin America, including the Caribbean.
- The Elinor Melville Prize from the Conference on Latin American History for the best book on Latin American environmental history published in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.
- The Maria Elena Martínez Prize from the Conference on Latin American History for

the most significant work on the history of Mexico published during the prior year.

Previously, Dr. Norton received the 2025 Bentley Book Prize for her book. The honor came with an award of \$500, along with a one-year membership to the World History Association, which administers the prize.

Published in 2024 by Harvard University Press, *The Tame and the Wild* has received considerable acclaim, including being short-listed for the 2024 British Academy Book Prize. The book centers on the early history of colonization in the Americas, placing wildlife and livestock at its heart and looking at the very different ways colonists and Native Americans interacted with animal life.

Dr. Norton, a historian of the early modern Atlantic world, has closely studied interspecies relationships as well as the history of food, drugs, and science. In addition to *The Tame and the Wild*, she has also authored *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World*, the 2008 winner of the best book prize from the Association for the Study of Food and Society.



Marcy Norton

Adrian Raine and Greg Ridgeway: American Society of Criminology Fellows

Adrian Raine, the Richard Perry University Professor of Criminology, Psychiatry, and Psychology, and Greg Ridgeway, the Rebecca W. Bushnell Professor of Criminology, both in the School of Arts & Sciences, have been elected as American Society of Criminology fellows.

This honor recognizes their significant scholarly contributions to the field of criminology. Dr. Ridgeway is recognized for his pioneering work in statistical, computational, and analytical methods in policing. Dr. Raine is recognized for his groundbreaking work in neurocriminology, particularly in using neuroimaging to study the brains of murderers.

The ASC fellows were honored during the ASC Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Andrew Rappe: 2026 American Chemical Society Jack Simons Award

Andrew Rappe, the Blanchard Professor of Chemistry in the School of Arts & Sciences and a professor of materials science & engineering in Penn Engineering, has received the 2026 American Chemical Society Jack Simons Award in Theoretical Physical Chemistry.

Dr. Rappe received his AB in chemistry and physics summa cum laude from Harvard University in 1986 and his PhD in chemistry and physics from MIT in 1992. He was an IBM postdoctoral fellow at UC Berkeley before joining Penn in 1994. He received an NSF CAREER award in 1997, an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship in 1998, and a Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award in 1999. He was named a fellow of the American Physical Society in 2006.

Nominations Open for 2026 Penn Local Economic Impact Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2026 Local Economic Impact Award. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of individuals or teams who are driving intentional impact in local procurement at Penn. It is intended to honor faculty and staff who are championing Philadelphia-region purchasing across campus, as well as to celebrate projects that are fueling business growth with locally owned enterprises.

Visit the [Local Economic Impact Award page](#) to review the nomination guidelines and information about the submittal process. Nominations will remain open until Friday, September 18, 2026. Award recipients will be honored at the Penn Local Business Exchange event on November 11, 2026.

Questions may be directed to LocalBusiness@pobox.upenn.edu.

Penn Vet's Working Dog Center Receives Two-Year \$404,000 USDA Grant to Combat NWS

The Working Dog Center at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine (Penn Vet) has received a two-year \$404,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that will develop a canine-based surveillance capability for locating the soil-stage New World screwworm (NWS). The grant, awarded through the USDA's NWS Grand Challenge program, is an element of the NWS Domestic Readiness and Response Initiative. Because working directly with NWS is highly regulated, researchers will use a screw-worm proxy species to evaluate how effectively detection dogs can locate the target odor while the pests are in their underground stage. The team will use in-lab olfactometer testing and field trials to measure search accuracy, time-to-detection, and effective buried target detection range.

NWS is a serious pest that affects livestock, pets, wildlife, and, less commonly, people. As of June 22, 16 cases of NWS have been confirmed in Texas in goats, cattle, and sheep, as well as in one dog in New Mexico. NWS larvae feed on the living tissue of warm-blooded animals. NWS was eradicated from the United States in 1966, and a small outbreak in the Florida Keys was eliminated in 2017. However, there was a resurgence of NWS in Panama beginning in 2023, which spread northward into the United States.

Renowned for its research and training in canine scent detection, the Penn Vet Working Dog Center has demonstrated dogs' ability to identify distinct odor signatures associated with diseases, invasive species, and other biological targets, including hemangiosarcoma, chronic wasting disease, ovarian cancer, spotted lanternflies, and COVID-19.

The study, titled "Detection Dogs as a Surveillance Tool for Locating Soil-Stage New World Screwworm Using Proxy Calliphoridae Species," was one of 40 projects out of a total of 226 submissions to receive funding through the USDA's NWS Grand Challenge. Projects were selected based on their potential to significantly accelerate the prevention and response to NWS.

Penn Vet's Cynthia (Cindy) Otto and Clara Wilson and Texas Tech's Chad L. Cross will serve as co-PIs on the study.

2026 Penn Association of Senior and Emeritus Faculty Annual Report

PASEF, the Penn Association of Senior and Emeritus Faculty, is the organization of and for senior (age 55+) and emeritus and retired faculty from all schools of the University. PASEF encompasses both standing faculty and associated faculty with the rank of associate and full professor on the academic clinician, research, and practice tracks. Per its mission statement, PASEF “informs and advocates on matters of concern to senior and retired faculty through dialogue with the University administration and communication with its members and the larger community.”

PASEF shares important information relevant to senior and emeritus faculty with its members and engages with the administration when matters of concern to the membership arise or when we feel that our experience can be helpful to the larger Penn community. The core mission is service to faculty retirees and faculty approaching retirement and advocacy on their behalf. Our monthly email newsletter is opened on average by over 600 of our members each month, our *Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement* received 1,066 views by 789 users last year and our *Guide to Continuing Care Retirement Communities* (CCRCs) received 1,315 views by 855 users. The PASEF president usually meets monthly with the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty, Laura Perna, to discuss issues of concern, and we thank her for her assistance.

PASEF Size and Scope

PASEF's membership is large and largely Philadelphia-based. As of July 2, 2026, PASEF had 2,363 members, including 1,447 senior faculty and 916 retired faculty. Of the retirees, 714 remain in the Philadelphia area.

The PASEF Council meets monthly throughout the academic year and attendance at council meetings is high, averaging 85–90%. Our meetings are hybrid, thus allowing those members who live far from Philadelphia or those travelling to participate. PASEF members sit ex-officio on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and four of the standing committees of the Faculty Senate: Faculty and the Academic Mission; Faculty and the Administration; Students and Educational Policy; and the now dormant Faculty Development, Diversity, and Equity. PASEF designates a member of Penn's Committee on Personnel Benefits. And PASEF's president sits on the Executive Council of the school-based organization, the Association of Senior and Emeritus Faculty of the Perelman School of Medicine (ASEF-PSOM).

PASEF Activities

PASEF's principal activities consist of membership programs, membership engagement and communication, community service, and engagement with the Penn administration to discuss issues of relevance to our membership.

Membership programs. (<https://pasef.provost.upenn.edu/events/>) PASEF offers retirement-related, academic, and cultural programs for its members. Many are provided in hybrid form with videos for most archived on our website. Our newly re-constituted program committee, co-chaired by Brenda Casper and Jerry Jacobs, developed a strong program this past year. Crucial to our budget given the unexpected constraints this year, they negotiated the no-cost use of an academic space on campus for our academic talks. Given this availability, our academic program incorporated a new hybrid Brown Bag Lunch series, with five talks ranging in topic from what we learned about the office by working remotely to the remarkable role of mussels in restoring the Delaware River. Our fall lecture and reception featured a well-received lecture by Inga Saffron on the history of newspaper buildings in Philadelphia and their impact on the city, with about 110 people viewing the talk. We had three programs and panels this year in our late afternoon Zoom-only series on retirement, providing guidance for the various stages of the retirement process. These included repeats of our annual or biennial panels of current retirees discussing their own decisions about living options in retirement and a panel of University experts on the nuts and bolts of retirement for those beginning the process. New this year was a presentation by an expert on estate planning for our retirement accounts. Attendance at these was strong, with 90 people on average at these panels. Our fall outing, a trolley tour of Philadelphia Mural Arts masterpieces, was a well-attended success, as were our two spring outings, a guided tour of the new Calder Gardens and a walking tour of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum.

This year's *Newly Retired & Emeritus Faculty Celebration*, honoring 66 professors and sponsored jointly by ASEF-PSOM and PASEF, was held on May 4 in the Jordan Medical Education Center Atrium, with remarks by Senior Vice Provost Perna, ASEF-PSOM president-Fran Barg, and PASEF president Mitch Marcus, with piano music by former PASEF president Roger Allen.

Membership engagement and communication. Membership in PASEF is automatic, but ongoing engagement of our membership depends on effective communication. Currently, PASEF has four key channels of communication: PASEF e-newsletters, the PASEF website, and two informational guides, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement* (<https://pasef.provost.upenn.edu/retirement/hitchhikers-guide-to-faculty-retirement/>)

and our *Guide to Continuing Care Retirement Communities* (<https://pasef.provost.upenn.edu/retirement/guide-to-retirement-communities/>). PASEF's flagship publication is *The Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement*, now in its 19th edition. Though not an official publication of the University, the *Hitchhiker's Guide* has become the *de facto* retirement manual for Penn faculty. Annual updates and release notes are published each year, usually at the beginning of the winter semester. Janet Deatrick, Janice Bellace and Martin Pring ably managed this latest annual revision.

Eight PASEF e-newsletters were sent to members in the 2025-2026 academic year. The newsletter highlights upcoming PASEF activities; the president's column alerts members to upcoming deadlines and changes in benefits, benefits administration, and other issues affecting retirees. We also sent several “PASEF Alerts,” primarily on benefit changes requiring individual action that our members might miss.

The two PASEF reading groups—Center City and Main Line—initiated by our Membership Engagement Committee last year are thriving, with regular meetings in participants' homes, good attendance, and lively conversations. These will continue in the coming year.

Community Service. The highlight of our community outreach this past year was the continued growth of the PASEF Speakers Bureau. With initial funding from Senior Vice Provost Perna, the bureau has expanded over the last several years from about five annual talks to well over 40 this year, largely due to the efforts of our associate director Sarah Barr and her assistant Jennifer Shotto. Ms. Shotto's role will continue due to the success of our new fundraising effort (see below). As of the end of the 2025-2026 academic year, PASEF's Speakers Bureau has 12 members, including three new members this year. Some of the most popular lecture topics included food biology, detective fiction, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, elections and the electoral college, and artificial intelligence.

University Engagement and Consultation. PASEF had a wide range of interactions with the Faculty Senate this year, with PASEF Council serving as a kind of “Council of Elders,” given how many of us have served as former chairs of the Faculty Senate. This past year, several emendations we suggested to Senior Vice Provost Perna were incorporated into newly adopted regulations in the Faculty Handbook about the use of the emeritus title. We also provided feedback to early drafts of the one-page description of shared governance at Penn that the Faculty Senate adopted and sent to the Penn faculty as a whole, as well as various statements from the Faculty Senate on the proposed Open Expression guidelines.

In response to the federal lawsuit brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) against Penn demanding that Penn hand over, without their consent, a list of Jewish faculty, staff and students, including many of our members, along with home addresses and phone numbers, PASEF Council in January asked the court to grant our organization intervenor status in that suit along with several other organizations, and the district court granted our request. PASEF has since been party to both the subsequent hearing in district court on the lawsuit, with strong support for the University's position, and the ongoing appeal request resulting from Penn and the intervenors' loss in that suit.

PASEF's leadership is responding to changes to Penn's benefits and privileges for retired and emeritus faculty and seeks to ameliorate changes that negatively impact our members. Early last summer, we worked with Penn Human Resources executive director of benefits Susan Sproat to quickly inform our membership on the Independence Blue Cross (IBX) Medicare supplement plans that a major change in card numbers would take place before IBX would send out the relevant cards, and then to push IBX to send out a second physical mailing about this change when the first was sent in envelopes that looked like junk mail. We then tracked and informed HR as software issues at IBX caused months of problems for many of our members.

Last year, PASEF formed an ad hoc committee to investigate what privileges would be useful to retired associated faculty and to advocate for such privileges. While qualifying retired associated faculty (primarily research faculty, practice professors and academic clinicians) receive the same retirement benefits as all other retired Penn staff, they receive few of the retirement privileges granted to retired standing faculty and clinician educators. This year, the committee agreed that most necessary were those that fostered connection to colleagues and supported continued academic involvement including email, departmental directory listing, access to academic and research buildings, and the like. The committee also developed a survey to investigate which, if any, of Penn's individual schools grant at least some of these to retired associated faculty. The committee's work this coming year will begin by developing this information and then seeking a path towards meeting these needs.

This past year, PASEF created an ad hoc committee to clarify the rights families have to access the email accounts of deceased faculty members af-

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The revised University of Pennsylvania Anti-Hazing Policy brings the University into compliance with new federal Stop Campus Hazing Act requirements while maintaining alignment with Pennsylvania law. Developed through extensive consultations with student and other University leaders, the revisions strengthen compliance, prevention, education, and transparency, with the goal of ending hazing in all forms on Penn's campus.

—John L. Jackson, Jr., Provost

University of Pennsylvania Anti-Hazing Policy

The University of Pennsylvania is a scholarly community and expects all members to respect the rights of others to participate in the academic and social environment of the University. Hazing is inconsistent with the goals and purposes of the University and is explicitly prohibited under University policy, Pennsylvania's Timothy J. Piazza Anti-Hazing Law, and the federal Stop Campus Hazing Act. This policy aligns with state and federal requirements, including reporting obligations under the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act as amended by the Stop Campus Hazing Act.

This policy applies to all University students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) and all student organizations, whether recognized or not, including off-campus and virtual activities. It incorporates obligations under Pennsylvania law and the Stop Campus Hazing Act, including requirements for hazing prevention programs, reporting procedures, and transparency disclosures.

I. Definitions

A. **Student Organization:** A student organization is defined as any group at an institution of higher education (including but not limited to clubs, societies, associations, athletic teams or groups, fraternities, sororities, pre-professional and academic groups, performing arts groups, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

B. **Hazing:** For purposes of this Policy, hazing means any intentional, knowing, reckless, or willful act or situation that:

1. recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student;
2. willfully destroys or removes public or private property; or
3. creates or causes a risk—beyond reasonable risks inherent to participation in activities such as athletic training—of physical or psychological injury.

Hazing is prohibited when conducted for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for ongoing membership in a student organization as defined in Section I.A. Hazing creates an unsafe environment by perpetuating an unhealthy power dynamic and potentially hostile environment. In consideration of what actions or activities may fall under this Policy, the University will consider the context and totality of the circumstances surrounding a reported incident.

For purposes of this Policy, any activity as described herein, upon which initiation, admission, affiliation, or ongoing membership in a student organization as defined in Section I.A is directly or indirectly conditioned, shall be presumed to be "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.

Hazing specifically includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical brutality or endangerment, such as kidnapping; restraining someone's movement or ability to communicate; or striking someone with or without an object
- Forced consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or other substances
- Extreme mental stress or degradation, including sleep deprivation or forced social exclusion
- Sexual acts compelled as a condition of membership
- Threats or acts that place a person in fear of bodily harm
- Placing a person in a situation of actual or simulated peril or jeopardy
- Undignified stunts or actions, either private or public, and/or any ordeal that is in any respect indecent or shocking to moral scruples or University values
- Willful destruction or removal of property
- Unreasonable financial demands separate from expected dues or other fees that are a condition of ongoing membership for all members
- Any act that violates federal, state, tribal, or local laws and rules, including the Code of Student Conduct, when required as a condition of participation or affiliation

C. **Time and Place Limitations:** There are time and place limitations on all organization activities related to initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for membership. For purposes of this section, orientation or new or continued membership activities include anything expected or required of an applicant or potential new member, or ongoing member in an organization.

1. There shall be no orientation or potential new member activities between midnight and 8:00 a.m.
2. Orientation and potential new member or continued membership activities shall not occupy more than ten hours per week, excluding reasonable varsity-level athletic preparation and competition, study hours, and community service.

3. Orientation or potential new member or continued membership activities must not disrupt educational and other activities of the University community nor damage University property.

Potential new member activities are also subject to the following:

1. The length of any initiation period is limited to six weeks.
 - a. For OFSL groups, more information is available on the website of Penn's Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.
 - b. With very limited exceptions approved in advance, the University expects that no potential new member or continued membership activities occur during University-recognized breaks.
2. Raids, treasure hunts and scavenger hunts are expressly prohibited.
3. No potential new member shall be required to engage in unreasonable travel inconsistent with University expectations.

II. Enforcement

The Center for Community Standards and Accountability (CSA) is responsible for investigating all allegations of hazing and other forms of student misconduct. Disciplinary processes are set by the Charter of the University of Pennsylvania Student Disciplinary System. Penalties for engaging in hazing activities include University sanctions against individuals and organizations and possible criminal proceedings. Some actions may also be in violation of other University policies and may result in additional sanctions. All students, whether or not they are affiliated with an organization, are governed by the Code of Student Conduct.

- A. **Individuals:** Violations of the Anti-Hazing Policy are subject to sanctions described in the Charter of the University of Pennsylvania Student Disciplinary System, which allows sanctions up to and including expulsion.
- B. **Organizations:** As defined above, all student organizations are subject to sanctions up to and including loss of University recognition and privileges.
- C. **Criminal and Civil Liability:** In addition to the sanctions identified above, a student or organization that engages in hazing or other prohibited activities may be subject to civil and/or criminal liability. In addition to the federal Stop Campus Hazing Act, students and organizations are also subject to Pennsylvania's Timothy J. Piazza Anti-Hazing Law.

D. **Hazing Transparency Report:** Twice a year, the University will post on a publicly accessible website a Hazing Transparency Report listing all substantiated incidents of hazing. The report will be updated at least twice annually and include, but is not limited to:

- Name of the student organization as defined in Section I.A
- Dates and details of the violation(s)
- Sanctions imposed on the organization and/or individuals

In compliance with FERPA and other applicable privacy laws, the report will not include the names of individual students, or any other personally identifiable information protected under FERPA.

Consistent with the University's obligations under the Clery Act, some of this information shall also be included in the Annual Security Report that is publicly available online.

E. **Reporting Incidents of Hazing:** There are multiple ways that you can make the University aware of hazing concerns and request support. There is collaboration among the many schools, centers, and resource offices at Penn to ensure that all complaints of hazing are routed appropriately.

You may call the UPenn Division of Public Safety 24/7 at (215) 573-3333 to report concerns of hazing, and you may also make a report via the Public Safety [website](#).

Incidents may also be referred to Penn's Center for Community Standards and Accountability via their [website](#) or by calling (215) 898-5651 to make a formal complaint related to violations of University policy.

Suspected violations of policy, law or compliance requirements can be reported via the (215) P-Comply hotline, which is Penn's confidential reporting and help line. Reports can also be made via the (215) P-Comply website. All the reporting options above can receive anonymous reports if desired.

III. **Hazing Prevention and Education:** In compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act, the University will implement campus-wide, research-informed hazing prevention and awareness programs. These programs will include primary prevention strategies, bystander intervention training, and educational resources for students and organizations. Programming related to anti-hazing training is offered throughout the year in many different formats. Trainings include but are not limited to a mandatory Public Safety presentation and video for all incoming undergraduate students, mandatory sessions for all recognized undergraduate student groups, school-specific programming for graduate students, and many other training courses throughout the year. Training is offered as scheduled and is also available to groups upon request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs.

**Division of Public Safety
University of Pennsylvania Police Department Crime Report**

About the Crime Report: Below are the crimes against persons and/or crimes against property from the campus report for **June 29-July 5, 2026**. The crime reports are available at: <https://almanac.upenn.edu/sections/crimes>. Prior weeks' reports are also online. —Eds.

This summary is prepared by the Division of Public Safety (DPS) and contains all criminal incidents reported and made known to the Penn Police, including those reported to the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) that occurred within our patrol zone, for the dates of **June 29-July**

5, 2026. The Penn Police actively patrol from Market Street to Baltimore Avenue and from 30th Street to 43rd Street in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police.

In this effort to provide you with a thorough and accurate report on public safety concerns, we hope that your increased awareness will lessen the opportunity for crime. For any concerns or suggestions regarding this report, please call DPS at (215) 898-7297. You can view the daily crime log on the [DPS website](#).

Penn Police Patrol Zone

Market Street to Baltimore Avenue and from 30th Street to 43rd Street

Crime Category	Date	Time	Location	Description
<i>Aggravated Assault</i>	07/01/26	1:44 AM	3800 Spruce St	Road rage/assault incident
<i>Aggravated Assault/Gun</i>	07/03/26	3:59 AM	3000 Walnut St	Aggravated assault with handgun
<i>Assault</i>	07/04/26	1:18 AM	51 N 39th St	Assault by subject/Arrest
<i>Auto Theft</i>	06/29/26	10:50 AM	3900 Walnut St	Theft of electric bike
	06/29/26	8:31 PM	3730 Walnut St	Theft of secured electric scooter from bike rack
	06/30/26	1:15 AM	4100 Spruce St	Automobile stolen
	06/30/26	10:12 PM	200 S 40th St	Theft of e-bike/Arrests
	07/01/26	4:20 AM	3800 Walnut St	Attempted vehicle theft
	07/01/26	6:47 PM	4000 Chestnut St	Theft of unsecured e-bike from sidewalk
	07/02/26	9:19 AM	3900 Walnut St	Automobile stolen while unattended, engine on and unlocked
	07/02/26	10:00 AM	3900 Powelton Ave	Automobile stolen
<i>Bike Theft</i>	07/05/26	5:16 PM	3131 Walnut St	Theft of bike
<i>Burglary</i>	07/04/26	9:00 AM	3200 Chestnut St	Burglary discovered
	07/04/26	11:30 AM	3180 Chestnut St	Burglary discovered at place of business
<i>Disorderly Conduct</i>	06/30/26	7:59 PM	3935 Walnut St	Several subjects cited for disorderly conduct
<i>Fraud</i>	06/29/26	5:20 PM	4240 Chestnut St	Wire fraud by deception
	06/30/26	5:31 PM	Other jurisdiction	Unauthorized credit card charge made
	07/01/26	6:59 PM	3335 Woodland Walk	Theft of monies by electronic deception
	07/02/26	5:37 PM	4030 Sansom St	Theft of monies by electronic deception
<i>Other Offense</i>	06/30/26	8:40 PM	40th & Walnut Sts	Endangering welfare of children; referral to Philadelphia's DHS
<i>Retail Theft</i>	07/01/26	9:15 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft of alcohol; offender fled the area
	07/02/26	3:04 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft of alcohol; offender fled the area
	07/05/26	12:03 AM	3744 Spruce St	Retail theft of consumable goods; offenders fled the area
	07/05/26	8:52 AM	3925 Walnut St	Retail theft/Arrest
	07/05/26	6:23 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft of alcohol; offender fled the area on a bike
<i>Theft from Building</i>	06/29/26	8:39 AM	4105 Spruce St	Theft from building
	06/30/26	12:43 PM	3730 Walnut St	Theft of unattended personal belongings from unsecured room
	06/30/26	2:54 PM	4039 Chestnut St	Package theft from inside lobby of apartment building
<i>Theft from Vehicle</i>	06/29/26	8:26 PM	3600 Chestnut St	Theft of personal items from unsecured vehicle
	06/30/26	7:38 PM	3900 Pine St	Theft of items from inside secured vehicle
	07/03/26	9:03 AM	3300 Chestnut St	Theft from unsecured work truck
<i>Theft Other</i>	06/29/26	11:07 AM	3160 Chestnut St	Theft of metal trash can lids from numerous locations
	06/29/26	12:33 PM	4001 Walnut St	Theft of personal and work-related items from unattended parking booth
	07/02/26	4:01 PM	3604 Chestnut St	Theft of personal belongings from unsecured bike bag

Philadelphia Police 18th District

Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue

Below are the crimes against persons from the 18th District: 9 incidents were reported for **June 29-July 5, 2026** by the 18th District, covering the Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue.

Crime Category	Date	Time	Location
<i>Aggravated Assault</i>	06/30/26	1:59 PM	4508 Sansom St
	07/01/26	1:44 AM	S 38th & Spruce Sts
	07/03/26	4:07 AM	30th & Walnut Sts
	07/03/26	6:46 PM	S 45th St & Woodland Ave
<i>Assault</i>	06/30/26	5:08 AM	220 S 47th St
	07/01/26	12:45 PM	4014 Walnut St
	07/03/26	2:34 AM	S 44th & Chestnut Sts
	07/05/26	6:33 PM	S 48th St & Woodland Ave
<i>Robbery</i>	07/05/26	10:03 PM	Unit Blk of S 46th St

The Division of Public Safety offers resources and support to the Penn community. DPS has developed a few helpful risk reduction strategies outlined below. Know that it is *never* the fault of the person impacted (victim/survivor) by crime.

- See something concerning? Connect with Penn Public Safety 24/7 at (215) 573-3333.
- Worried about a friend's or colleague's mental or physical health? Get 24/7 connection to appropriate resources at (215) 898-HELP (4357).
- Seeking support after experiencing a crime? Call Special Services (support and advocacy resources) at (215) 898-4481 or email an advocate at specialservices@publicsafety.upenn.edu.
- Use the [Walking Escort](#) and [Riding](#) services available to you free of charge.

- Take a moment to update your cell phone information for the [UPennAlert Emergency Notification System](#).
- Download the [Penn Guardian App](#), which can help police better find your location when you call in an emergency.
- Access free [self-empowerment and defense courses](#) through Penn DPS.
- Stay alert and reduce distractions. (Using cell phones, ear buds, etc. may limit your awareness.)
- Orient yourself to your surroundings. (Identify your location, nearby exits, etc.)
- Keep your valuables out of sight and only carry necessary documents.

Sheraton Philadelphia University City Hotel \$60 Million Transformation Completed

Sheraton Philadelphia University City Hotel, located in the heart of the city's vibrant academic district, has announced the completion of its \$60+ million renovation, unveiling a fully refreshed guest experience that positions the hotel as a dynamic gathering place for the University City community and visitors to Philadelphia alike. The comprehensive transformation introduces revitalized guest rooms, modernized communal spaces, and elevated dining offerings, including the debut of the brand's signature &More Café.

Designed by Gensler, the renovation reimagines the property's interiors with a contemporary aesthetic inspired by the surrounding campus en-

vironment. This blend of timeless sophistication and of-the-moment functionality honors the hotel's longstanding role as a gateway to the University of Pennsylvania and West Philadelphia.

"With the completion of this renovation, we're excited to welcome guests back to a completely refreshed Sheraton Philadelphia University City Hotel," said Michael Bennett, general manager. "These enhancements reflect our commitment to providing a premium experience for the many travelers who visit the area, from individuals and families drawn by West Philadelphia's world-class higher-education and health-care institutions to corporate groups and event attendees."

The renovation introduces top-to-bottom upgrades across all 332 guest rooms and suites, featuring beautifully appointed furnishings, inviting textiles, revitalized lighting, and thoughtfully-designed workspaces tailored to today's traveler.

Public spaces have been fully transformed to create welcoming environments for connection, productivity, and relaxation. The redesigned lobby now features a library-inspired gathering space with communal seating, while new meeting pods with integrated A/V capabilities provide flexible areas for collaboration and informal meetings.

A highlight of the renovation is the addition of the hotel's multiuse outdoor terrace, designed as a vibrant extension of the property's social spaces. The terrace serves as a flexible venue for outdoor meetings, social gatherings, fitness programming, and seasonal events. Dining experiences have also been transformed with the introduction of &More Café, Sheraton's signature concept, offering morning coffee service, light fare, and evening cocktails in a relaxed, communal setting for both hotel guests and local visitors.

For meeting planners and academic partners, the renovation enhances the hotel's position as a leading venue in University City. The property offers more than 11,000 square feet of flexible meeting and event space, complemented by updated technology, refined gathering areas, and proximity to the University of Pennsylvania campus, its medical complex, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). Funded by the University of Pennsylvania, the renovation represents a significant investment in the hospitality infrastructure of West Philadelphia and supports the continued growth of the area as a destination for academic, medical, and corporate travel.

"This investment reflects Penn's commitment to supporting University City's continued growth," said Michael D. Scales, vice president of the division of Business Services. "Modernizing a key asset like the Sheraton enhances the visitor experience and supports ongoing economic activity."

—Division of Business Services

2026 Penn Association of Senior and Emeritus Faculty Annual Report

(continued from page 8)

ter we learned that a member's surviving spouse could not use the member's Penn e-mail to inform his professional colleagues and collaborators of his passing. The issue proved to be more complex than originally expected because of the large variety of electronic data faculty members have rights to themselves. In the coming year, this Ad Hoc Digital Beneficiary Committee intends to move toward a deep enough understanding of current policies, relevant issues, and legal concerns that it can propose a set of changes from current policy, including increased communication to inform faculty and staff about their digital and electronic property rights so they can make informed decisions when estate planning for retirement, incapacitation, or death.

Budget and Fundraising. To meet the 5% budget cutback imposed at the end of last year, PASEF took the following steps: 1) the Program Committee eliminated the need for room rentals and for hiring a videographer for our programs, and 2) associate director Sarah Barr reduced the cost of our website maintenance contract by over \$3,000 with no reduction in service by pooling service reserves with two other groups. With help from Senior Vice Provost Perna, we instituted the [PASEF Gift Fund](#), a PASEF-dedicated fund in the development office, with an easy-to-use link to allow donations. Giving this initial year topped \$7,000. This guarantees funding for next year for Jen Shotto's support of the Speakers Bureau, as the initial multi-year funding is nearly exhausted.

PASEF Council and Committees. A list of 2025-2026 PASEF Council and committee members is appended.

—Mitchell Marcus, 2025-2026 PASEF President

Appendix: 2025-26 PASEF Council Members

Sherrill L. Adams—Dental Medicine (Biochemistry)—*Representative to Faculty and the Academic Mission (SCOF)*

Gustavo Aguirre—Penn Vet (Clinical Sciences & Advanced Medicine)—*At-large member of Council*

Roger M. A. Allen—Arts & Sciences (Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations)—*Representative to Senate Executive Committee (SEC); Former President*

Regina Austin—Law—*Secretary*

Janice Bellace—Wharton (Legal Studies & Business Ethics)—*Past President; Representative to University Council Committee on Personnel Benefits (PBC); Co-Editor of The Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement*

Brenda Casper—Arts & Sciences (Biology)—*At-large member of Council; Co-Chair, Program Committee*

Peter Conn—Arts & Sciences (English)—*Library Liaison*

Patricia Danzon—Wharton (Health Care Management)—*At-large member of Council*

Janet Deatrick—Nursing (Family & Community Health)—*Co-Editor of The Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement; Representative to Senate Executive Committee (SEC); Former President*

Joni Finney—Graduate School of Education (Institute for Research on Higher Education)—*At-large member of Council*

Joan Gluch—Dental Medicine (Preventive and Restorative Sciences)—*At-large member of Council; Chair, Community Involvement Committee*

Robert Hornik—Annenberg School for Communication—*At-large member of Council; Website and Communications Liaison*

Jerry Jacobs—Arts & Sciences (Sociology)—*At-large member of Council; Co-Chair, Program Committee*

Peter Kuriloff—Graduate School of Education—*Member, Steering Committee*

Mitch Marcus—Engineering & Applied Science (Computer and Information Science)—*President; Chair, Steering Committee; Chair, Ad hoc Associated Faculty Retirement Privileges*

Marshall W. Meyer—Wharton (Management)—*Chair, Membership Engagement Committee; Former President*

Charles Mooney, Jr.—Law—*At-large member of Council; Representative to Faculty and the Administration (SCOA)*

Gail Morrison—Penn Medicine (Medicine)—*At-large member of Council; Representative to Students & Educational Policy (SCSEP)*

David Pope—Engineering & Applied Science (Materials Science and Engineering)—*President Elect; Chair, Nominating Committee*

Martin Pring—Penn Medicine (Physiology)—*Co-Editor of The Hitchhiker's Guide to Faculty Retirement*

Iris M. Reyes—Penn Medicine (Emergency Medicine)—*At-large member of Council*

Irene Wong—Social Policy & Practice—*At-large member of Council*

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University of Pennsylvania Board of Trustees Governance Changes: A Conversation with Board Chair Ramanan Raghavendran

Penn's Board of Trustees has undertaken a significant governance overhaul over the past two years. Board chair Ramanan Raghavendran sat down with *Penn Today* to explain the changes, the reasoning behind them, and how he hopes they will strengthen Penn in the long run.

Q: Can you give us a broad overview of the board's governance work?

A: First, I want to say that I am glad to have the chance to talk about this, even as I acknowledge that "trustee committee restructuring" is unlikely to trend on social media! But these changes matter to Penn, and I want to ensure that our community understands them.

Our main goal is to position the board well for the next quarter-century. At the highest level, you can think of us as focused on two things: who serves, and how they work together. In other words, composition and structure. We streamlined Trustee categories, set clear term limits, developed a restructured committee framework with fewer and more focused committees, revised the schedule for Trustee meetings, and made many other amendments that simplify, clarify, and modernize. The changes also enhance the board's role and culture, making it easier for Trustees to engage with strategy and fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities, while delegating management to University leadership and faculty. The board now has a cleaner, more durable structure for the years to come.

Q: What prompted these actions, and what is the unifying thread?

A: Periodic review is a feature of good governance. Penn has grown significantly in size and ambition since our last review, while the opportunities and the pressures on higher education have no real precedent. It was time to take a fresh look.

Penn is a remarkably complex institution: a great university built on shared governance, with the faculty at its heart, but also encompassing tens of thousands of students, a major health system, a vast research enterprise, deep civic roots, and so much else. The President and leadership team connect the board to all of it, helping us provide oversight and offer advice. That lens led us to the one question that unites everything we have done: how do we make the board as effective as possible in supporting the President and leadership team across that full complexity for the decades ahead?

Q: How did the board go about this effort? How formal and organized was the process?

A: In the summer of 2024, we began a formal governance review facilitated by external advisors. That process produced recommendations focused on issues rather than prescriptions, giving us a roadmap to follow. The Governance Committee, with the close involvement of the President, has worked diligently to develop proposals aligned with that road map. The Trustees have approved these in phases over the last year.

We consulted widely both inside and outside Penn and heard many perspectives. We took a careful look at peer institutions, and that research was genuinely useful as a gut check and a source of ideas. But we quickly came to appreciate that each institution is a creature of its own history and particular setting, and, in the end, we made choices we believe are right for Penn.

Q: Let's get into what changed. You mentioned two areas, composition and structure. Start with composition.

A: The composition changes, approved in November 2025, aim to ensure the right people serve for the right time, with clear expectations. Penn's board had accumulated distinct categories of Trustees over the decades, differences that had become more of a historical quirk than a purposeful design. We eliminated the categories: every voting Trustee now has the same standing, duties, and voice. At least 90% of voting Trustees, excluding Commonwealth Trustees, must be Penn alumni, preserving the fundamental link to our alumni body.

Trustees now serve a single five-year term, renewable once, for a maximum of ten years. That is long enough to develop real expertise and a real working relationship with the President's team, but not so long that the board grows static. We also clarified the role of our emeritus Trustees, retaining access to their wisdom and celebrating their decades of service through ongoing engagement with the University outside of board governance.

Q: And the structural changes?

A: The structural changes, approved in June 2026 (*Almanac* June 16, 2026), sharpened how our committees work. The goal was better logic, clearer mandates, and more focused engagement between Trustees and Penn's leadership.

The substantive work happens in six standing committees, split evenly between operations and mission. Operations committees—Budget and Finance; Audit, Risk and Compliance; External Affairs—help keep Penn institutionally strong. Mission committees—Education, Research, Frontiers—oversee Penn's academic work and strategic growth. Three other

committees, which are responsible for how the board carries out its duties, remain unchanged: Executive, Compensation, and Governance. The Development Committee continues to be overseen by the board but is structured to permit broader participation beyond Trustees. Each committee has a senior administrative leader as liaison.

The structure is intended to foster meaningful Trustee engagement and input on the most important issues facing the University. The whole edifice is designed to endure across strategic plans and leadership cycles. For example, one can see how each of Penn Forward's initiatives readily maps to a Trustee committee, allowing the board to track progress and support implementation.

We have also done a better job articulating what I call our governance architecture: the full set of linked boards and committees are now laid out on the public [Trustee website](#). None of this should be a state secret.

Q: You now have the structure. What has to happen to achieve the board's goals?

A: A governance reorganization is not, by itself, an improvement. What makes committees work well is the engagement of the chair and members, the relevance of the agendas, and the culture of the meetings. For me, that means Trustees wrestling with substantive questions rather than just receiving briefings. We can design an elegant structure—and I think we have—but it amounts to very little without the software to go with the hardware.

The real test is whether the work of the committees is genuinely useful to the institution. The new structure creates conditions for that, but the work itself happens in the rooms, over the years. No elegant org chart can ever substitute for that.

Q: One thing you did not change is the Presidential selection process. Can you say something about that?

A: This is a topical question (*Almanac* June 16, 2026)! Penn has been around for 286 years, and much of what we have works just fine. That includes Presidential selection. The process in our statutes is well-designed to be genuinely consultative while preserving clear accountability. We saw no reason to revisit any of this.

Q: Stepping back from these specifics: What do you think is the most underappreciated aspect of what the board actually does?

A: Structural moves attract attention, but ultimately, almost everything comes down to relationships. Governance mechanics matter because they help create the conditions for meaningful engagement, but relationships of trust are what make constructive oversight possible. That is an underappreciated dimension of governance.

A board is only as effective as its relationships with the President and senior leadership, and with each other. At Penn, those relationships have been built over many years of working together. That matters enormously, requires effort, and is not something any of us takes for granted.

While we are on the topic, I can add that trust, in this kind of setting, benefits from clear roles. The President, as Penn's chief executive, sets the University's strategic direction; the board's role is not to devise strategy but to engage with it thoughtfully and rigorously and to support its successful execution.

Q: Beyond all the structural changes, do you have a broader message for the Penn community?

A: The events of late 2023 were difficult for Penn and higher education more broadly. What I can say is that difficulties can have a way of concentrating the mind. The review allowed us to hold a mirror up to ourselves, examine long-standing practices, including many that directly affected individual Trustees' own terms and roles, and ask whether these still served Penn's interests.

The discussions throughout were marked by genuine collegiality and a focus on what Penn needs. I am proud of how my fellow Trustees approached this work, and of the culture of candor that made it possible. I believe Penn is stronger as a result, and the board is better prepared to support President Jameson and his successors.

I hope this spirit of collegial self-examination resonates more broadly. The question we asked ourselves—what does Penn need from us, now and for the long term—is one every part of our community can ask.

I should close by saying that the work is never truly done. We have made a set of considered changes to position Penn for what lies ahead. But it is to be expected that a future board, working closely with the President of the day, will have new ideas and new plans. That is in keeping with my favorite phrase from our values statement: "imperfect but self-improving." To me, that means an unending desire to get better.

That desire is alive across this entire University, and it makes Penn's future very bright indeed.

Adapted from a [Penn Today](#) article, June 21, 2026.