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From the Interim President

Establishing an Office of Religious and Ethnic Inclusion (Title VI) at Penn

September 5, 2024

I am very pleased to be able to share with the entire Penn community that we are announcing the creation of an Office of Religious and Ethnic Inclusion (Title VI). This will be the first of its kind nationally, and is being formed in response to recommendations from the [fall 2023 Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism](#), and the May 2024 reports of the [University Task Force on Antisemitism](#) and the [Presidential Commission on Countering Hate and Building Community](#). The establishment of this new office ensures that Penn can continue to fulfill its obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and under Penn's own policies, to protect students, faculty and staff from discrimination based on their religion, ethnicity, shared ancestry, or national origin, and provides us with a critical central point of contact for Title VI training and compliance related to religion, shared national ancestry, and ethnicity.

Over the past year, our campus and our country witnessed a disquieting surge in an-

tisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of religious and ethnic intolerance. This type of prejudice is simply unacceptable, and has no place at Penn. The Office of Religious and Ethnic Inclusion (Title VI) is being formed to confront this deeply troubling trend, and to serve as a stand-alone center for education and complaint resolution. It represents an institutional commitment to address both the short-term and long-term recommendations that we have received.

We expect the office to open later this fall, and we will soon launch a search for ongoing leadership. In the interim, the office will be co-led by two distinguished professionals who have broad experience in confronting religious and ethnic intolerance: Majid Alsayegh and Steve Ginsburg.

Steve Ginsburg is a national expert at addressing incidents and resolving crises involving bias and extremism. Over a decade as an executive of the Anti-Defamation League, he

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Penn and the Knight Foundation Announce \$10 Million for Center on Media, Technology, and Democracy

Penn has announced \$10 million in funding dedicated to its new Center for Media, Technology, and Democracy. The center will be housed in the Penn School of Engineering and Applied Science and will operate in partnership with five other schools at Penn.

The center will benefit from a five-year, \$5 million investment from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation as well as an additional \$5 million in combined resources from Penn Engineering, Penn Arts & Sciences, the Annenberg School for Communication, the Wharton School, Penn Carey Law, and the School of Social Policy & Practice.

"There is a critical societal need to better understand—and respond to—the way media and information technologies mediate and even influence global conversations," said J. Larry Jameson, Penn's Interim President. "Championing truth and upholding democracy are important elements of Penn's strategic framework, *In Principle and Practice*. We are uniquely positioned to lead on this great challenge through our accomplished faculty in AI and data science who work across disciplines. We are deeply grateful to the Knight Foundation for partnering with us on this critical endeavor."

At the outset, the center will propel research involving media, technology, and democracy within Penn. Once established, however, the hope is for the center to become a global hub for researchers, private sector leaders, and policymakers—by sharing research findings and creating near-real-time dashboards that provide a clear view of the current media landscape, informed by empirical research. Over the long term, the center also aims to serve as a central repository for data sharing with the broader research community.

"The University of Pennsylvania has the expertise and research capacity to study media and the information ecosystem holistically," said Knight Foundation president and CEO Maribel Pérez Wadsworth. "This new center will encourage greater collaboration and create centralized resources to support scholarship and convenings across campus. It will also help establish Penn—and Philadelphia—as a leader in media, technology, and democracy."

The center's primary mission will be to gath-

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Guy Grossman: David M. Knott Professor of Global Politics and International Relations

Guy Grossman, a professor of political science in the School of Arts & Sciences, has been named the David M. Knott Professor of Global Politics and International Relations. A leading scholar of comparative politics whose research focuses on governance, migration, human trafficking, and conflict processes (mostly) in the context of developing countries, Dr. Grossman uses large-scale field experiments to answer central questions about the political causes and consequences of migration and forced displacement. His research has received support from the Fund for Innovation in Development, Development Innovation Ventures, IPA and J-PAL's Displaced Livelihoods Initiative, the UNHCR-World Bank Joint Data Center, Penn Global, and the Program to End Modern Slavery, among other sources.

Dr. Grossman is the author of numerous books and scholarly articles. In 2022, he won a Political Ties Award for Best Published Article from APSA's Political Networks Section



Guy Grossman

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Salimah H. Meghani: Carol E. Ware Professor in Mental Health Nursing

Salimah H. Meghani, a professor of nursing and palliative care in Penn Nursing's department of biobehavioral health sciences, has been appointed the Carol E. Ware Professor in Mental Health Nursing. Her appointment took effect on July 1, 2024.

Dr. Meghani is a nationally and internationally recognized nurse scientist. She is a senior fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, and director of the palliative care minor and certificate programs. She is leading a strong program of research focused on advancing the field of palliative care and social determinants of health. She is widely published and was a member of the Institute of Medicine study committee that authored the landmark report, *Dying in America: Improving Quality and Honoring Individual Preferences Near the End of Life*. She was appointed by Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell to serve on the Task Force to Improve Quality at the End of Life for Pennsylvanians and to the Patient Life-Sustaining Wishes Advisory Committee, which assessed the feasi-



Salimah Meghani

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From the Senate Office

The following is published in accordance with the Faculty Senate Rules. Among other purposes, the publication of SEC actions is intended to stimulate discussion among the constituencies and their representatives. Please communicate your comments to Patrick Walsh, executive assistant to the Senate Office, by email at senate@pobox.upenn.edu.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Actions Wednesday, September 4, 2024

Welcome and Introductions. Faculty Senate chair Eric Feldman offered a brief review of the Senate and its structure. Professor Feldman discussed the priorities of the tri-chairs in the year ahead, which are also detailed in an [August 27, 2024, letter published in *Almanac*](#).

Issues Requiring a Vote. Following discussion and vote, the following matters were adopted:

- The 2024-2025 Hearing List for the Center for Community Standards and Accountability, by a vote of 44 in favor and 2 opposed;
- The 2024-2025 Hearing List for the Faculty Grievance Commission, by a vote of 44 in favor and 2 opposed;
- The Faculty Membership on the 2024-2025 Committee on Open Expression, by a vote of 40 in favor, 1 opposed, and 5 abstentions; and
- The Draft Charges for Senate Standing Committees, 2024-2025, by unanimous vote.

In addition, SEC members voted unanimously to add the newly established department of cinema and media studies to constituency 7 of the Senate Executive Committee, which also includes the departments of classical studies, French & Francophone, Italian, & German studies, Russian & East European studies, and Spanish & Portuguese.

SEC members were notified about the status of two select committees. CIRCE (the Committee on the Institutional Response to the Climate Emergency) will remain active during 2024-2025 to be chaired by William Braham. CIRCE: Medicine, previously a subcommittee of CIRCE, will be an independent select committee co-chaired by Misha Rosenbach and associated faculty members Farah Hussain and Hari Shankar.

Fall and Spring Symposium Ideas. Professor Feldman invited ideas on how to build upon the [spring 2024 “roundtables”](#) on issues of fundamental importance to higher education. (A summary of the April 2024 event was featured in a [recent *Penn Gazette* article](#)). Ideas may be shared via the [Senate Office](#).

Update from the Office of the Senior Executive Vice President. Senior Executive Vice President Craig Carnaroli and Vice President for Budget Planning and Analysis Trevor Lewis discussed the context and potential implications of Penn’s relationships with federal and state governments.

Update from the Office of the General Counsel. Senior Vice President and General Counsel Wendy White and Associate General Counsel Sean Burke discussed the ways that Penn is responding to information requests from the U.S. Congress.

Celebrate Staff with Models of Excellence Nominations

Penn’s annual [Models of Excellence Award Program](#) celebrates the outstanding achievements of individual full- and part-time staff members and teams throughout Penn’s schools and centers. Now in its 26th year, the program advances the [University’s principles and practices](#) by honoring the people who are the foundation of all we do.

Join this long-standing tradition by nominating individual staff members or teams for a 2025 Models of Excellence honor. The 2025 call for nominations is open now through October 25, 2024.

Anyone in the Penn community may nominate individual Penn staff members and teams for an award in three categories: Models of Excellence, Pillars of Excellence, and Model Supervisor. Visit www.hr.upenn.edu/models to learn more about the practices recognized for each category.

In all Models of Excellence categories, award recipients each receive \$500 and a symbolic award. Nominees selected for honorable mention receive \$250 and a symbolic award. Awards will be announced in the spring term. The next Models of Excellence Award Ceremony will take place in Harrison Auditorium at the Penn Museum on April 7, 2025.

The Models of Excellence Selection Committee rates each submission based on the content of your nominations. That means your submissions are crucial to make sure all worthy staff have the opportunity for recognition.

Nomination Information Sessions

Learn how to submit a nomination that conveys the exceptional work of your colleagues by attending a virtual *Writing a Compelling Models of Excellence Nomination* session on Thursday, October 3 at noon or Wednesday, October 16 at 2 p.m.

Register at www.hr.upenn.edu/models-infosession.

Visit the [Models of Excellence Program webpage](#) or email models@hr.upenn.edu for more information.

—Division of Human Resources

Trustees Meetings: September 26, 2024

The Penn Trustees’ Budget & Finance and Executive Committees will meet on Thursday, September 26, 2024, at the University Meeting and Guest House.

The meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, September 26

11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Budget & Finance Committee

3:15–3:30 p.m.

Public Meeting of the Executive Committee

Agendas for the meetings will be available September 26, 2024, on the Office of the University Secretary website: <https://secretary.upenn.edu/trustees-governance/open-trustee-meeting>.

Due to capacity constraints, in-person attendance is limited to 15 observers. Individuals not directly involved in the presentation are encouraged to use the dial-in option, which will be available September 26, 2024, on the Office of the University Secretary website at <https://secretary.upenn.edu/trustees-governance/open-trustee-meeting>.

Deaths

Susan Duggan, Benjamin Franklin and University Scholars

Susan Zebley Duggan, the former coordinator of Penn’s University Scholars program, died on August 16. She was 84.

Born and raised in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Ms. Duggan graduated from Bryn Mawr College, where she earned a degree in psychology.

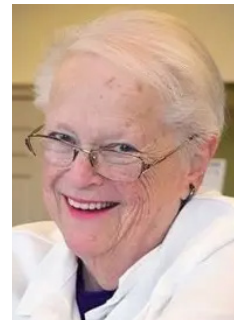
Her academic journey led her to Penn in the 1960s, where she conducted psychological research and published a paper on eating disorders.

In 1983, Ms. Duggan returned to Penn to work in the College of General Studies (precursor to today’s College of Liberal and Professional Studies), where she directed summer enrichment programs. She later served as the coordinator and advisor for the Benjamin Franklin Scholars and University Scholars programs at Penn.

She was a member of the University Council’s communications committee from 1990-1991 and then served on the admissions and financial aid committee from 1994-1996. For her outstanding contributions to the Penn community, Ms. Duggan was honored with a Models of Excellence award in 2000. She retired shortly thereafter in 2001.

Ms. Duggan is survived by her brother, Culver Zebley; her three children, Paul Duggan, Susan Smith, and Richard Duggan; ten grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in her name to the National Federation for the Blind or World News Group.



Susan Duggan

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collaborated with a diverse group of experts to counter hate and deliver anti-bias education programs on topics including antisemitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, and racism. An experienced attorney, Steve helped create Connecticut's statewide Hate Crimes Advisory Council and was appointed a founding member by Gov. Lamont. He was also a member of the state's racial profiling and police accountability task forces and led advocacy efforts resulting in legislation requiring Holocaust and genocide education, strengthening hate crimes enforcement, and outlawing doxing and cyberharassment. In the 1990s, Steve lived in Sarajevo as an American Bar Association Rule of Law liaison working with Bosnians of all ethnicities to reform the legal system.

Majid Alsayegh was born and raised in Mosul, Iraq, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1975. He is the founder of Alta Management Services, LLC, a project management firm, which has overseen management of large complex projects, including those that assisted clients with criminal justice reform. Majid chairs the board of the Dialogue Institute, a nonprofit that teaches leadership, dialogue skills, and critical thinking. He serves on the national Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council, a bipartisan group of business, political, and religious leaders who have worked together to address hate crimes and protect religious freedom. He also serves on the board of Abraham House in Washington, D.C. and is a co-founder and chairman emeritus of Intercultural Journeys, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit that connects diverse communities through music and the arts.

Under the leadership of Mr. Ginsburg and Mr. Alsayegh, the Office of Religious and Ethnic Inclusion (Title VI) will work to ensure that Penn takes all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of hate, and in so doing maintain an environment that is welcoming and not hostile to any individual or group based on shared ancestry, ethnicity, or religion. Working in partnership with the Offices of the President, Provost, the Office of the Chaplain and Spiritual and Religious Life Center (SPARC), and Institutional Research, as well as the Divisions of Human Resources and Public Safety, the office will assist in identifying and supplementing the development of new programs and strategies to support an educated, respectful, diverse community on our campus.

To ensure a uniform response across all our schools and to be certain that complaints from (and about) different stakeholders (*i.e.*, students, faculty, staff and postdocs) are treated seriously and sensitively, investigated, resolved or referred, and recorded, the office will be the sole, University-wide point of contact for receiving and responding to reports of alleged violations of our policies against religious and ethnic discrimination, and will be designed to ensure that investigations happen swiftly and thoroughly.

We believe the establishment of this office is essential to ensuring that Penn can continue to offer its students, faculty, and staff the most welcoming, supportive and safe environment possible. Its creation reflects Penn's unwavering determination to confront antisemitism and

Islamophobia and establishes our University as a national leader in this critical effort.

Further information about the office, its activities and programs, procedures, and contact information, will be forthcoming. Prior to the formal opening of the office, individuals may continue to report concerns about having been treated in a biased or discriminatory manner by completing a Bias Incident Reporting form or file a complaint with OAA-EOP. To file a report, please visit this page: <https://diversity.upenn.edu/diversity-at-penn/forms> or file a complaint by contacting the Office of Affirmative Action or completing the form that can be found here: <https://upenn.app.box.com/s/l31ml76pao0ffimeo7vf4xl7povg47tc>.

—J. Larry Jameson, Interim President

Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowships: October 18, 2024 Application Deadline

The Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowships seek to attract promising candidates from a diverse array of backgrounds and populations whose life experience, research experience, and employment background will contribute significantly to Penn's academic and research missions. Fellowships are available for postdoctoral training in all areas of study at Penn. Successful candidates will receive highly mentored scholarly and research training, as well as access to many University resources to enhance their research and professional success skills.

For fellows starting in July 2025, the stipend is \$66,300 in year one, with increases of \$2,000 in years two and three, as well as annual \$7,000 allowances for travel and research expenses and a one-time relocation allowance of \$5,000 (if eligible). The University also provides a comprehensive benefits package: <https://www.hr.upenn.edu/PennHR/benefits-pay/postdoctoral-researchers-and-fellows>.

The application deadline is October 18, 2024. Complete details about the program can be found at <https://postdocs.upenn.edu/provosts-fellowship/>. Eligible applicants can apply here: <https://apply.interfolio.com/149732>. Penn graduate students or graduate students from other academic institutions who are completing their doctoral programs and looking for postdoctoral positions are eligible to apply. More information on eligibility can be found here: <https://postdocs.upenn.edu/provosts-fellowship/provosts-postdoctoral-fellowship-for-academic-diversity/>.

Please note that fellowships are funded in partnership between the postdoctoral fellow's host school and the Office of the Provost. Questions should be directed to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at opa@provost.upenn.edu.

Guy Grossman: David M. Knott Professor of Global Politics and International Relations

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for "Viral Voting: Social Networks and Political Participation," which he co-authored. He is the founder and co-director of Penn's Development Research Initiative (PDRI-DevLab), a faculty affiliate of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity, Race, and Immigration, a member of the Lauder Institute's graduate group in international studies, and an advisory board member of Perry World House and the Penn Center for Social Norms and Behavioral Dynamics.

The David M. Knott Professorship of Global Politics and International Relations was established by the late David M. Knott, C'67, WG'73. David Knott founded Knott Partners and served on the boards of several nonprofit organizations. At Penn, he was a member of the Wharton School's Graduate Executive Board and the University Committee for Undergraduate Financial Aid.

Salimah H. Meghani: Carol E. Ware Professor in Mental Health Nursing

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bility of the Pennsylvania Orders for Life Sustaining Treatments (POLST) paradigm in Pennsylvania. In the Psychedelic Revival initiative, she also provided expertise in relating these therapies to compassionate end-of-life care. At Penn, Dr. Meghani is a faculty member of the Abramson Cancer Center cancer control program. Her research and advocacy has influenced health policy reports and congressional testimonies positively impacting seriously ill individuals and their families, and the practitioners who provide care.

For more than 20 years, Dr. Meghani has received continuous research grants from federal agencies and private foundations, including the American Cancer Society, National Cancer Institute (NIH), National Institute of Nursing Research, and others. She has won many honors and awards, including induction into the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame; appointment as member of the NIH/NIDA Partner Consultation Board for the Multilevel Interventions to Reduce Harm and Improve Quality of Life for Patients on Long Term Opioid Therapy research network; the 2021 Distinguished Nursing Researcher Award from the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association; and the 2021 Lindback University Award for Distinguished Teaching from the University of Pennsylvania.

The Carol E. Ware Professor in Mental Health Nursing was established in 2012 to advance the Penn Nursing psychiatric-mental health program. The purpose of this endowment is to dedicated support to a Penn Nursing professor whose research has an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to addressing issues in mental health.

Penn Global Research Grant Proposals Accepted Until October 7

Penn Global announces the 2024 Call for Proposals for new research grants. Proposals will be accepted until October 7, 2024. Visit the [Apply for a Research Grant webpage](#) to learn more about the application process and access the application form, and attend an [information session for prospective applicants](#) before you submit. Contact global@upenn.edu with any questions.

Honors & Other Things

Penn Nursing Faculty and Alumni: Honored by the American Academy of Nursing

Ten nursing professionals with ties to Penn Nursing will be inducted as 2024 fellows of the American Academy of Nursing (AAN). One is a current Penn Nursing faculty member and alumna, and the nine others are Penn Nursing alumni. All inductees will be honored at a ceremony during the AAN's 2024 Health Policy Conference, taking place from October 31-November 2, 2024, in Washington, D.C.

The Penn Nursing faculty inductee is Rebecca R.S. Clark, an assistant professor of perinatal nursing, midwifery, and women's health in the department of family and community health and a nurse scientist at Pennsylvania Hospital.

The Penn Nursing alumni inductees include:

- Christine E. Bader, GR'18
- Sandra Davis, GNU'97
- Alexa C. Curtis, NU'84
- Louise D. Jakubik, NU'94, GNU'97
- Kim Mooney-Doyle, GNU'05, GR'14
- Adrianna Nava, GNU'12
- Lydia D. Rotondo, GNU'86
- Tina R. Sadarangani, GNU'11
- Danielle A. Sarik, NU'10, GNU'11, GR'15

Penn Nursing also congratulates professor Julie A. Fairman and former professor Mathy D. Mezey for both being designated as Living Legends. This honor is bestowed upon a person who has made significant contributions to nursing and healthcare over the course of their career. This is the academy's highest honor.

In addition, Penn Nursing professor emerita Loretta Sweet Jemmott will be presented with the academy's Civitas Award, which recognizes an individual who exemplifies extraordinary dedication to excellence in promoting quality care.

Laura Hinnenkamp: Del Duca Award

Laura Hinnenkamp, L'24, has been selected to receive the Professor Louis Del Duca Memorial Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Business Law Section.

"It is an honor to receive the 2024 Professor Louis Del Duca Memorial Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association," Ms. Hinnenkamp said. "I am looking forward to practicing in corporate and business transactions in Philadelphia and to applying the knowledge and skills I have learned at Penn Carey Law."



Laura Hinnenkamp

The award honors the memory of Louis Del Duca, who taught on the faculty of Penn State's Dickinson School of Law for over 50 years. Mr. Del Duca was a prominent commercial and comparative law scholar and a member of the American Law Institute and the U.S. Secretary of State's Committee on International Trade Law. He also served as president of the International Academy of Commercial and Consumer Law and was the United States' collaborator to the Rome International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).

The Del Duca Memorial Award was inaugurated in 2019 to honor law students from Pennsylvania's ABA-accredited law schools who excel academically, especially in courses related to business law, and who intend to practice law in Pennsylvania. Award winners receive a free year of membership in the PBA and its Business Law Section beyond the year of free membership extended by the PBA to all new graduates and are encouraged to become active section members and leaders.

Ms. Hinnenkamp is among the class of the Toll Public Interest Center's Annual Pro Bono Recognition, receiving a 2024 Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award. "I am grateful for the support and guidance that the faculty and staff has provided me throughout my time in various business law courses and experiential opportunities," she said. "Congratulations to my fellow nominees and graduates!"

Sharon Irving: NLN's Isabel Hampton Robb Award

Penn Nursing's Sharon Y. Irving, a professor and the Miriam Stirl Endowed Term Chair in Nutrition in the department of family and community health in Penn Nursing, will receive the 2024 National League for Nursing (NLN)'s Isabel Hampton Robb Award for Outstanding Leadership in Clinical Practice. She will be honored during the 2024 NLN Education Summit: *A Daring Proposition: Competency-Based Education*, on September 18-20, 2024, in San Antonio, Texas.



Sharon Irving

The award recognizes the outstanding contributions of an individual who inspires passion for clinical nursing, promotes evidence-based practice by building practice-education partnerships, encourages clinical expertise and inter-professional practice, challenges students to expand their clinical knowledge base in innovative ways, conducts scholarly research to assess learning outcomes that improve patient care, and fosters development of clinical reasoning in the culture of patient care.

Donovan Schaefer: Virginia Public Humanities Fellowship

Donovan Schaefer, an associate professor in the department of religious studies in the School of Arts & Sciences, has received the Virginia Public Humanities Fellowship. The fellowship helps a wide range of Virginians—from writers and university faculty members to independent scholars and community historians—pursue projects related to Virginia's history and culture. Dr. Schaefer will be a resident at the Library of Virginia in Richmond.

Dr. Schaefer is the author of several books on the relationship between emotion, power, society, and religion. His current research considers the affective dynamics of public material culture, especially Confederate commemoration. His project for the Virginia Public Humanities Fellowship explores a number of questions:

What do monuments do? How do they shape public life? What roles have they played in U.S. history since the Civil War? Why have they become so prominent in our present moment? And what is at stake in their removal, transformation, defacement, or continued existence?



Donovan Schaefer

In addition to researching the history of Confederate commemoration in Virginia, Dr. Schaefer's project will involve a public-facing website, "[False Image of History: Perspectives on Confederate Commemoration from the Black Press](#)," the result of a multi-year study of Black journalists' responses to Confederate commemoration from Reconstruction to the present.

Kate Shaw: Administrative Conference of the United States

Penn Carey Law School professor of law Kate Shaw is among the newest appointed members and senior fellows of the Administrative Conference of the United States (ACUS).

"ACUS warmly welcomes these distinguished new members," said ACUS chair Andrew Fois. ACUS is an independent, non-partisan federal agency within the executive branch dedicated to improving administrative law and federal regulatory processes. It conducts applied research and provides expert recommendations and other advice to improve federal agency procedures. Its membership is composed of senior federal officials, academics, and other experts from the private sector.

Ms. Shaw is a constitutional law scholar who has taught courses in administrative law and legislation and a seminar on the Supreme Court. Her academic work focuses on executive power, the law of democracy, the Supreme Court, and reproductive rights and justice. She joined Penn Carey Law as a full-time faculty member in January 2024 from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, where she was also co-director of the Floersheimer Center for Constitutional Democracy. Ms. Shaw was elected to the American Law Institute in July.

Ms. Shaw previously worked in the Obama White House Counsel's Office and served as a law clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens and the Honorable Richard Posner of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

"As a teacher and a scholar, I've benefited enormously from ACUS's important work, and I look forward to helping advance its mission of improving administrative procedure for the American public," said Ms. Shaw.

Since 1968, ACUS has issued hundreds of recommendations, published reports and reference guides, and organized forums to improve the efficiency, adequacy, and fairness of administrative processes such as rulemaking and adjudication. Many have resulted in reforms by federal agencies, the President, Congress, and the Judicial Conference of the United States.

One Step Ahead

Security & Privacy
Made Simple

Another tip in a series provided by the
Offices of Information Security, Information
Systems & Computing and Audit,
Compliance & Privacy

Third-Party Risk Management: V-STAR

Changes are coming to Penn's V-STAR (Vendor Security Technical Assessment of Risk) questionnaire, which Penn community members use to assess technology risks posed by vendor-provided solutions. As of September 1, 2024, two new questions will be added, one replacing and clarifying the existing question about data, and the other a new question about artificial intelligence (AI). For more information about Penn's stance on AI, please see the University's guidance document here: <https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/AI-guidance>.

The updated V-STAR with the new questions is available here: <https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/vstar>.

These new questions begin a general overhaul of the V-STAR questionnaire. Over the next year, Penn plans to transition V-STAR from being a Word document into an automated online solution using software called Risk Cloud. As part of the transition, the V-STAR questions are being revised.

The revised questionnaire and new software will have several benefits:

- V-STAR responses can be stored so Penn community members can see if a V-STAR has already been completed for a particular vendor
- A workflow for assessment of vendor responses will be deployed, so V-STAR responses do not have to be transmitted via e-mail or Secure Share
- Attachments can be included, such as a SOC2 Type II report or other documentation from the vendor
- Aggregate reporting on V-STAR responses can be conducted

This project is being spearheaded by the Office of Information Security, with participation from the Privacy Office and Procurement Services. To learn more, please join us at the Q&A sessions on September 17 and October 16. Please contact younes@upenn.edu to register for the sessions.

For additional tips, see the One Step Ahead link on the Information Security website: <https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/news-alerts#One-Step-Ahead>.

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er data into one repository and to facilitate research synergies across the fields of law, political science, media, communications, data science, AI, and more.

"The contemporary media ecosystem is comprised of a wide array of diverse producers, consumers, and content types," said Penn Provost John L. Jackson, Jr. "Understanding systems at this scale and complexity presents unprecedented challenges to methods and research design. This pioneering research center will develop new programs, support new opportunities, and coalesce many different data sets so that they are available for others to use. In these ways, it will vividly reaffirm Penn's leadership in the interconnected system of global media, technology, and democracy."

The center will operate around four programmatic pillars, including an annual flagship conference for media leaders industry-wide, an internal grants program to support research among Penn faculty and students, a research infrastructure to facilitate data sharing and collaboration, and a cohort of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers.

"One of the center's primary goals is to promote empirical research into digital media's im-

pact on democracy," said Christopher S. Yoo, Imasogie Professor in Law and Technology at Penn Carey Law, with secondary appointments in SEAS and Annenberg. "Without sound, evidence-based insights into what is really going on, arguments risk devolving into polarized positions, which in turn can lead to a breakdown of trust in media and institutions and our shared commitment to democratic processes. The health of our society depends on finding ways to prevent that from happening."

Drs. Yoo and Duncan Watts, the grant's two principal investigators, are trusted partners in industry and academia.

Dr. Yoo is the founding director of the Center for Technology, Innovation, & Competition at Penn Carey Law. His work focuses on normative issues in legal policy. Dr. Watts, the founding director of Penn's Computational Social Science Lab, is an empirical scholar whose research is marked by innovation. He is also the Stevens University Professor and a Penn Integrates Knowledge Professor with appointments in Penn Engineering, Annenberg, and Wharton, where he is also the inaugural Rowan Fellow. Together, Drs. Yoo and Watts offer synergies between policymakers and leaders in media and technology.

"The United States and other countries around the world are living through a series of crises associated with a high level of affective polarization and diminishing trust in institutions. Increasingly, we are finding ourselves in different universes in terms of what we understand about the world," said Dr. Watts. "But public discourse is limited to simplistic explanations of what's happening. Social media has a lot of data, but it is hard to get."

"Our approach will use a combination of AI methods applied to large data sets and behavioral experiments to uncover the prevalence, causes, and consequences of misinformation and bias. These empirical insights will inform our legal and policy work that is dedicated to identifying system solutions that benefit society."

The Penn Center for Media, Technology, and Democracy will be housed in one of Penn's newest buildings, Amy Gutmann Hall, a hub for cross-disciplinary collaborations that harness research and data across Penn's 12 schools, located at 34th and Chestnut Streets. The search for an executive director for the center is underway, along with other staff to manage operations, communications, and the Penn-wide research network.

"The timing is obvious, and the need is obvious," said Dr. Yoo. "We are committed to bringing together many disparate data sources that are hard to get and organizing and analyzing them so that those resources are available for everyone to use."



An Ursula scarecrow from a previous contest.

Morris Arboretum & Gardens' 17th Annual Scarecrow Design Contest

Morris Arboretum & Gardens' Scarecrow Design Contest is back for its 17th year. *Villain* is this year's design theme. Participants can recreate a scarecrow version of their favorite comic book and cartoon references, sports nemeses, or wrongfully maligned historical figures.

Scarecrows will be on display throughout the arboretum from October 1 through October 31. Visitors may vote for their favorite scarecrow on-site October 1-17 to determine the winners. The top three scarecrows win a cash prize: \$300, \$200, and \$100.

The design contest registration deadline is Thursday, September 27. The cost is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members.

For more information and to register, visit <https://www.morrisarboretum.org/events/scarecrow.shtml>.

Add the Academic Calendar to Your Personal Calendar

To add the 2024-2025 academic calendar (fall 2024 and spring 2025 terms) to your personal calendar, visit <https://almanac.upenn.edu/penn-academic-calendar> and click the blue Add to Calendar button. There will be an option to download it to Apple, Google, Office 365, Outlook, Outlook.com, or Yahoo calendars.

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 **August 26-September 1, 2024**. 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 **August 26-September 1, 2024**.

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
Assault	08/30/24	2:17 AM	1 Convention Ave	Offender struck a hospital employee in the face during treatment
	08/30/24	11:19 AM	3900 Walnut St	Simple assault
	08/30/24	1:34 PM	3800 Market St	Simple assault
Auto Theft	08/27/24	8:29 AM	3610 Hamilton Walk	Secured scooter taken from bike rack
	08/29/24	12:10 PM	3730 Walnut St	Unsecured scooter taken from bike rack
	08/30/24	5:15 PM	1 S 41st St	Stolen automobile
	08/30/24	6:40 PM	4200 Pine St	Stolen automobile
Bike Theft	08/30/24	12:41 AM	3735 Walnut St	Secured bicycle taken from rack outside of bank
	08/26/24	9:02 PM	210 S 34th St	Secured bike taken from bike rack
	09/01/24	1:41 AM	3901 Locust Walk	Secured bicycle taken from east side bike rack outside Rodin College House
Fraud	08/29/24	11:09 AM	4041 Walnut St	Debit card used without authorization
	08/30/24	3:27 AM	3901 Locust Walk	Unknown offender attempted transactions on debit card without authorization
Other Offense	08/26/24	5:35 PM	3900 Locust Walk	Warrant for offender/Arrest
Retail Theft	08/26/24	11:46 PM	231 S 34th St	Male wanted on warrant/Arrest
	08/27/24	12:09 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft
	08/28/24	12:03 PM	4233 Chestnut St	Retail theft
	08/29/24	8:13 AM	3401 Walnut St	Retail theft of medication
	08/31/24	11:44 AM	3744 Spruce St	Retail theft
Robbery-Retail Theft from Building	08/31/24	7:28 PM	3744 Spruce St	Retail theft of consumable goods
	08/30/24	4:44 PM	4026 Market St	Strong-arm robbery
	08/26/24	1:21 PM	3417 Spruce St	Audio speakers taken
	08/28/24	5:13 PM	3400 Civic Center Blvd	Currency taken from wallet
	08/28/24	8:03 PM	4042-4044 Chestnut St	Packages taken from lobby
	08/29/24	11:17 AM	3731 Walnut St	Backpack containing two laptops taken
	08/29/24	1:48 PM	3400 Spruce St	Pocketbook taken
	08/29/24	3:30 PM	3400 Civic Center Blvd	Credit card taken from wallet and used without authorization
	08/29/24	8:35 PM	4042-4044 Chestnut St	Package taken
	08/30/24	5:17 PM	3701 Chestnut St	Unknown offender took multiple items from an unsecured apartment
Theft from Vehicle	08/30/24	8:39 PM	3201 Chestnut St	Theft from building
	08/30/24	12:20 PM	3737 Market St	Theft from building
	09/01/24	5:59 PM	3300 Market St	Vehicle registration plate taken from vehicle
Theft Other	08/26/24	7:24 PM	3816 Chestnut St	Theft of a wallet
	08/27/24	9:33 AM	4001-4003 Pine St	Package taken
	08/29/24	9:38 AM	15 S 33rd St	Report of a theft
	08/30/24	5:53 PM	4052 Irving St	Contents of a package left on the front step were taken

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 **August 26-September 1, 2024** by the 18th District, covering the Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue.

Crime Category	Date	Time	Location
Assault	08/28/24	9:57 AM	3141 Chestnut St
	08/29/24	1:23 PM	4806 Market St
	08/30/24	2:20 AM	1 Convention Ave
	08/30/24	12:32 PM	3900 Walnut St
	08/30/24	1:59 PM	S 30th & Market Sts
	09/01/24	4:29 PM	3901 Walnut St
Aggravated Assault	08/29/24	10:41 PM	315 S 45th St
Robbery with weapon	08/30/24	4:45 PM	4026 Market St
Terroristic Threats	08/30/24	8:32 AM	1318 S May 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](#).

Update

September AT PENN

CONFERENCES

12 *Transnational Feminist Networks Symposium*; a symposium examining the development, maintenance, and challenges of feminist solidarities in our globalized and networked world; 4:30 p.m.; room 109 and Forum, Annenberg School; register: <https://tinyurl.com/annenberg-conf-sept-12> (Annenberg Center for Collaborative Communication, Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication, Center on Digital Culture and Society). *Also September 13*, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

EXHIBITS

16 *Research at Weitzman*; highlights more than 30 funded research projects from across the Weitzman School to illustrate the opportunities for architects, landscape architects, planners, preservationists, and data scientists to bring new strategies and new tools to the built environment professions; Meyerson Hall. *Through September 20*.

FILMS

11 *African Narratives Film Series: Pray the Devil Back to Hell*; chronicles the remarkable story of the Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country; 5:30 p.m.; room G50, Huntsman Hall; register: <https://tinyurl.com/pray-the-devil-sept-11> (Lauder Institute of Management & International Studies, Africana Studies).

FITNESS & LEARNING

12 *Penn Women's Center Undergraduate Open House*; visit and learn about this invaluable resource to every member of the Penn community; 2-4 p.m.; Penn Women's Center (Penn Women's Center).

Makuu Open House 2024; open house to welcome students to the Makuu community, featuring food and friends; 4-6 p.m.; ARCH (Makuu: The Black Cultural Center).

Teacher Talks Pillars of Wellness; Alex Orr, Penn Campus Recreation, will discuss the eight pillars that make up a well-rounded healthy lifestyle, and how teachers can contribute to all eight pillars each day to make students' days brighter and healthier; 4:30 p.m.; Penn Museum; register: <https://tinyurl.com/museum-teacher-talk-sept-12> (Penn Museum).

Graduate School of Education

Online webinars. Info: <https://www.gse.upenn.edu/news/events-calendar?date=2024-09>.

17 *Executive Doctorate in Higher Education Management Virtual Information Session*; noon.

ON STAGE

17 *The Blues of Achilles*; experience ancient Greek epic poetry through a creative reception by American singer/songwriter Joe Goodkin; a discussion will follow; 5 p.m.; room 402, Cohen Hall (Classical Studies).

TALKS

10 *Unlocking Brain Insights: Machine Learning for Neuroimaging Studies*; Aristeidis

Sotiras, Washington University in St. Louis; 10:30 a.m.; room 225, Towne Building (Center for Biomedical Image Computing & Analytics).

11 *Machine Learning and Brain Imaging: Contributions to Diagnostics, Prognostication, and Treatment Guidance*; Christos Davatzikos, radiology; noon; room 225, Towne Building, and Zoom webinar; register: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92905415705> (ASSET Center).

Matters of Proximity: Defamiliarizing the Humanitarian Scene in the Mediterranean Sea; Anat Dan, comparative literature; noon; room 330, Fisher-Bennett Hall (Cinema & Media Studies).

The Tamil Historical Novel of World War II: Nation and Realist Form in Pa. Cinkaram's Novels; Vasugi Kailasam, University of California, Berkeley; 4:30 p.m.; room 402, Cohen Hall (South Asia Center).

12 *Asian Americans in the U.S.*; Sreedevi Sripathy, South Asian American Digital Archive; noon; room 473, McNeil Building, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92412475707> (Asian American Studies).

The World Today: A Panel on Recent Global Events; Sarah Banet-Weiser, Annenberg School for Communication; Michael Horowitz, Perry World House; Michael Weisberg, Perry World House; noon; World Forum, Perry World House, and Zoom webinar; register: <https://tinyurl.com/pwh-panel-sept-12> (Perry World House).

Uncovering the Role of Cytokines During Brain Development; Yeong Shin Yim, pharmacology; 3 p.m.; room 251, BRB (Center of Excellence in Environmental Toxicology).

Perilous Intimacies: Debating Hindu-Muslim Friendship After Empire; SherAli Tareen, Franklin & Marshall College; 3:30 p.m.; room 204, Cohen Hall (Religious Studies).

The People of the United States: The Lost Constitution of National Popular Sovereignty; Jonathan Gienapp, Stanford University; 3:30 p.m.; room 145, Tanenbaum Hall, and Zoom webinar; register: <https://tinyurl.com/gienapp-talk-sept-12> (Carey Law School).

Trustworthy Forecasting Algorithms; Robert Kleinberg, Cornell University; 3:30 p.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://tinyurl.com/cis-talks-sept-2024> (Computer & Information Science).

Early life—A Window of Susceptibility or a Window of Opportunity?; Hitesh Deshmukh, Cincinnati Children's Hospital; 4 p.m.; room 11-146, Smilow Center (Penn-CHOP Lung Biology Institute).

Intertextuality Outside the Canon; Joseph Farrell, classical studies; 4:45 p.m.; room 402, Cohen Hall (Classical Studies).

13 *In Practice*; Aislinn Pentecost-Farren, artist; noon; room B3, Meyerson Hall; register: <https://tinyurl.com/pentecost-farren-talk-sept-13> (Historic Preservation).

A Global Tour of Iron Speciation in Deep-Sea Hydrothermal Plumes; Brandy Toner, University of Minnesota; 3 p.m.; room 358, Hayden Hall (Earth & Environmental Science).

16 *Discord in American Academia: An Italian Perspective*; panel of speakers; noon; room 543, Williams Hall (Italian Studies).

If You Rise, I Fall: A Group Status Account of the Misperception That Equality Harms Advantaged Groups; Drew Jacoby-Senghor, Berkeley Haas; 3:30 p.m.; Tedori Auditorium, Levin Building (Psychology).

CRISPR Immunity in Marine Archaeal Hyperthermophiles; Michael P. Terns, Universi-

ty of Georgia; 4 p.m.; room 209, Johnson Pavilion (Microbiology).

The Librarynth; Randall McLeod, University of Toronto; 5:15 p.m.; Class of 1978 Orrery Pavilion, Van Pelt Library (Workshop in the History of Material Texts).

17 *Natural Structural Materials: Lessons on Toughening Mechanisms, Weight Reduction, and Multifunctionality*; Ling Li, materials science & engineering; 10:15 a.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall (Materials Science & Engineering).

Big AI for Small Devices; Yiran Chen, Duke University; 11 a.m.; room 225, Towne Building (Electrical & Systems Engineering).

Recent Advances in Spatial Generative AI; Gordon Wetzstein, Stanford University; 3:30 p.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: <https://tinyurl.com/cis-talks-sept-2024> (Computer & Information Science).

Economics

In-person events. Info: <https://economics.sas.upenn.edu/events>.

10 *The Geography of Homelessness*; Ji Hwan Kim, economics; noon; room 101, PCPSE.

11 *Market Power and Merger Efficiencies in the U.S. Hospital Industry*; Jonathan Arnold, economics; 3:30 p.m.; room 100, PCPSE.

12 *Public vs. Private: School Quality and Competition in Mexico*; Kristen Beamer Shure, economics; 3:30 p.m.; room 101, PCPSE.

16 *Serial Experimentation with Career Concerns*; Byunghoon Kim, economics; noon; room 203, PCPSE.

17 *Examining Principal Pay Incentives: The Effects on Principal Effort and Student Outcomes*; Ashley Schwanebeck, economics; noon;

This is an update to the [September AT PENN calendar](#), which is online now. To submit an event for a future AT PENN calendar or weekly update, email almanac@upenn.edu.

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Penn Libraries' Research Data and Digital Scholarship Exchange Supports Innovative Research

The Penn Libraries system and its 19 individual library locations are always growing and changing to meet the evolving needs of the Penn community. One of the latest developments is a new collaborative space in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center: the Research Data and Digital Scholarship Exchange (RDDSx).

Over the course of an experimental first year, RDDSx has reshaped an open space on the first floor into a vibrant hub for programming and a meeting place for library staff that supports the development of innovative research and scholarship. With events ranging from regular group meetings for programmers and workshops on data management tools to data meme contests and discussions of the computer science concepts underpinning popular board games, RDDSx offers many avenues for learning and exploration, and has swiftly built a community of scholars and researchers who visit regularly.

RDDSx is the name for the physical space attached to the Research Data and Digital Scholarship (RDDS) team, led by Lynda Kellam, director of research data and digital scholarship. The vision for developing the RDDSx space was to “provide a centrally located, welcoming, and accessible place in Van Pelt that is inclusive of everyone to discover and apply digital methods for conducting research and creating scholarship,” Dr. Kellam explained.

“RDDS reached its full complement of staff in 2022 and they set about building relationships around campus and refining the way we offer services to be both responsive to user needs and scalable to the demand we see,” added Emily Morton-Owens, associate vice provost for technology and digital initiatives. “Creating RDDSx as a public space for their work was the next step.”

This nontraditional library space is an open area that does not require silence; in fact, presentations, group meetings, and “office hours” for RDDS staff all occur there regularly. The dynamic space comprises a “data wall” on which visitors are invited to map data using thread; a bookshelf with select titles on topics like digital preservation, podcasting, and mapping information; two whiteboards to showcase ongoing and completed projects; tables for coworking; and a large screen for visualizing data, mapping, and digital projects. The space also contains a semi-private nook that Dr. Kellam says is used for “deep learning, [like] when our statistical software consultants are meeting with patrons or our staff consult with people.” She added, “We love having the nook there, to be able to work with individuals and small groups.”

A recent addition to RDDSx is the display of historical photographs showing the early days of women in tech (such as those working as computers in the 1960s) and people operating the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC), the first general-purpose electronic computer, which was created at Penn.

“The idea is to create a vibrant interactive, collaborative space that campus partners can come into and where we can do our work,” Dr. Kellam said.

Expert Staff to Guide Projects

Dr. Kellam is the second director to lead RDDS, a relatively new team at the Penn Libraries. Her background includes experience as a data librarian, with responsibilities overseeing both digital projects and collections related to political science, sociology, and history. She also has a master's in political science from the University of Wisconsin in addition to her library science degree, and most recently she completed her PhD in history.

“RDDS was launched in 2020 as a part of the technology and digital initiatives division's reorganized portfolio of programs, systems, and services,” Ms. Morton-Owens said. “It is a little unorthodox for a library to unite digital scholarship and research data services in one department, but we saw a commonality of purpose—in both areas, we have staff who specialize in certain scholarly approaches, offering deep technical expertise and hands-on collaboration. This focus on methods is one of the most important ways the libraries can boost interdisciplinary scholarship at Penn.”

Dr. Kellam was attracted to the RDDS director position because of its unique placement straddling two fields: the research data side supports mainly scientists and social scientists, while the digital scholarship side tends to focus more on the humanities.

“It merged those two things that I've spent most of my career on, which is helping people with their research data but also thinking deeply about digital humanities and how those the ideas we research in the humanities can be made accessible through digital scholarship, whatever form that might take,” she said.

Dr. Kellam's team helps people throughout the research cycle, from planning projects to collecting and analyzing data to publishing and disseminating findings. Although librarians have traditionally assisted with research through books and articles, the RDDS team has expanded that role to include contemporary research needs, such as AI and data literacy,

mapping and data visualization, qualitative data and statistical software support, data management and sharing, and digital project development and new forms of publishing. “We tend to work primarily with faculty and graduate students. But we support anybody who comes to us with a need,” Dr. Kellam said.

Each team member specializes in a specific area: on the research data side, specialists can help with data management, analysis, mapping, and visualization as well as assist those interested in statistical software and other tools, while on the digital scholarship side, the team has experts in digital humanities, open access publishing, and new methods of scholarly communication. The team collaborates with researchers on projects such as the development of databases, websites, interactive maps, and journals; offers tutorials on a variety of processes and tools via the RDDS blog and training hub; and offers consultations and workshops on request.

Working as a team that carries out such broad and deeply technical work has its own unique challenges. Dr. Kellam said bringing the team together regularly to share their work and to find commonalities has been important as they continue to grow and add new roles and areas of expertise.

“One of the big things the team focuses on is sharing across our fields, and trying to make sure we emphasize how we share that information and de-jargonizing when we talk to each other,” she said, noting that those in research data roles are typically scientists or social scientists, whereas those on the digital scholarship side have experience with research in the humanities. For example, a term like “codebook” has a specific meaning for someone doing qualitative work in the social sciences and another specific meaning for someone with a computer science background. While this can make communication among different areas of the team a challenge, the multiplicity of perspectives also provides benefits. “Our team provides an interdisciplinary perspective in our collaboration with and support of researchers and students at Penn.”

In addition to building connections within the team, RDDS has reached across campus for its collaborations. Campus partners include those with clearly overlapping missions and work, such as the Price Lab for Digital Humanities and the Data Driven Discovery Initiative. The Price Lab, DDDI, and RDDS often co-sponsor events, such as last year's Speed Networking social and the AI Literary Interest Group events. In addition, RDDS has worked with the *International Journal for Water Equity and Justice*, which contemporary publishing fellow Cosette Bruhns Alonso helped migrate to Manifold, a platform for open access journals.

Events, Programming, and Opportunities

Since the area was renovated and the space launched, RDDSx has hosted a variety of programs, with the team learning from each iterative use of the space and adjusting as needed. A favorite event of Dr. Kellam's in the first year was a pop-up event for New Student Orientation with interactive stations for students to practice different uses for AI, learn about creating effective passwords, and more. The space has also hosted three different speed networking events, an experience that Dr. Kellam hopes to refine in the upcoming academic year. “I'd like to keep doing these and figure out ways to make them more targeted. Next year's goal would be to have a post-doc event, a grad student one, and undergrad one.”

Dr. Kellam noted that while some RDDS events are not new to the Libraries, the new space offered a chance to experiment: “GIS Day is an event our GIS librarian has been hosting for a few years. Putting the event in that space allowed us to test the limits of the RDDSx. We had over 70 people in attendance and considered it a great success!”

“I love when library visitors are passing by the space and get curious about what's going on,” Ms. Morton-Owens said. “The openness can be inviting ... and I'd like to find ways to encourage that as we further develop the space.”

Plenty of events are already in the works for the fall semester, including a series celebrating International Open Access Week in October and, of course, GIS Day on November 20. People with less experience in research data and digital scholarship are welcome to attend these and other beginner-friendly events, such as the regularly occurring Computational Thinking and Board Games event, hosted by computer science and engineering librarian Stephen Hall (planned for September and October), as well as events hosted in the space by other entities, like the Career Services Resume Lab.

Ms. Morton-Owens said, “The approaches shared by RDDS have the potential to enrich all kinds of projects. Even if you've never used these tools before or your assignment doesn't require them, you're always welcome to visit and learn with RDDS.”

Adapted from a Penn Libraries news story by Amanda Alexander, August 28, 2024.