A Message from the Chair of the Task Force on Antisemitism

November 17, 2023

To the Penn Community,

Yesterday, President Magill convened and charged our University Task Force on Antisemitism, a key component of Penn’s Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism. A full listing of task force membership can be found here. I am writing today as chair of the task force to share a few important messages.

First, I join the President in reemphasizing the urgency of our work and Penn’s shared commitment to counter antisemitism on our campus and more broadly in our nation and throughout the world.

Second, I am grateful to the faculty, students, staff, and alumni who have stepped forward to serve as task force members, and I look forward to working with them. Many others volunteered their time and commitment as well, which does them and this University enormous credit.

Third, the President has charged the task force to engage broadly and deeply, identify best practices for countering antisemitism, and recommend programmatic strategies. As we pursue these goals, I encourage and welcome your participation. You can submit your ideas, experiences, and perspectives to antisemitism-taskforce@upenn.edu. We will keep the Penn community updated on other opportunities to engage.

Please keep in mind that this task force does not serve a bias reporting or public safety function, nor does it adjudicate disciplinary issues. If any Penn affiliates experience an act of bias or discrimination, including antisemitism or Islamophobia, please report it through Penn’s Bias Incident Reporting process. If there is any threat to your physical safety, or you are being harassed online, please contact the 24/7 PennComm Emergency Call Center at (215) 573-3333 immediately. Additional information on University resources for safety and support can also be found on Penn’s website.

Among leading universities, Penn is distinguished by our proud history as a welcoming place for all communities. So, it is even more incumbent upon Penn that we take a leadership role in combatting antisemitism on our own campus and campuses everywhere. With this action plan and this task force—which I am proud to lead with the combined expertise of our entire community, students, faculty, staff, and alumni—I believe we will succeed.

—Mark S. Wolff
Morton Amsterdam Dean, School of Dental Medicine

Office of the Vice Provost for Research: 2023 Discovering the Future and Accelerating From Lab to Market Research Grant Recipients

The Office of the Vice Provost for Research has provided nearly $1 million in funding to support research through Discovering the Future and Accelerating From Lab to Market research grants. Both funding opportunities are financially supported and overseen by the OVPR.

The Discovering the Future Grant Program aims to fund exciting research that traditional funding sources may find too high risk. The aim is to strike a balance between what more conservative funders might avoid with supporting research that has the potential to be transformative and offer a high reward. The Discovering the Future Grant Program will continue to award funds to Penn faculty for targeted, creative, outside-the-box ideas with the potential to alter the trajectory of research across many fields.

The Accelerating From Lab to Market Grant Program provides pre-seed funding for research with commercialization potential. Penn makes significant commitments to academic research one of its core missions, including investment in faculty research programs. In some disciplines, discovery makes an impact on society through commercialization. Pre-seed grants are often the limiting step for new ideas to cross the “valley of death” between federal research funding and commercial success. Accelerating From Lab to Market pre-seed grants are awarded to Penn faculty for promising inventions disclosed to Penn Center for Innovation (PCI) and to Penn faculty with existing Penn spinout companies based on Penn-owned intellectual property.

2023 Awards

Discovering the Future
George M. Barstlem
Assistant Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics
Perelman School of Medicine
Intracellular Protein Editing
Joshua B. Plotkin
Walter H. and Leonore C. Annenberg Professor of the Natural Sciences, Department of Biology
School of Arts and Sciences
Studying Language Evolution with GPT3: A New Frontier

Accelerating From Lab to Market
Chinedum Osuji
Eduardo D. Glandt Presidential Professor, Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
School of Engineering and Applied Science
Large Area Fabrication of Precise Self-Assembled Membranes
Andrew Tsurukas
Professor

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Sarah Kavanagh: Director of the Collaboratory for Teaching and Teacher Education

Sarah Kavanagh, an associate professor in the learning, teaching, and literacies division of the Graduate School of Education, has been appointed director of the Collaboratory for Teaching and Teacher Education. The collaboratory is committed to advancing teacher education and supporting the K-12 educator community. As a center and a lab, it provides hands-on training, relevant research, and teacher education programs.

Dr. Kavanagh’s new position aligns well with her commitment to educators, research, and continuing education. “I have always strongly advocated for partnerships that bring together educators, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners,” she said. “I saw this role as an opportunity to foster meaningful partnerships that can amplify our impact.”

As educators face new pressures in the classroom and their field, they need more training and support than ever. The collaboratory, Dr. Kavanagh noted, provides essential resources, including teacher training, related research, events, and conferences.

“The collaboratory’s commitment to conducting meaningful research and fostering public discourse means that our work has the potential to influence policies and practices that shape the future of education,” Dr. Kavanagh said.

Dr. Kavanagh hopes to expand the collaboratory’s lineup of events, including the biannual Research Exchange event, focused on pressing issues in teaching and educator learning, and December’s Research Designs & Measurement for Teacher Education conference, a partnership with several universities, to explore improving research methodologies in teaching and teacher education.

The center’s mission comports with Dr. Kavanagh’s view that long-term strategies are essential to address teacher shortages and nurture educators. “Investing in teacher professionalism is key to the lasting improvement of education systems,” she said.

Call for Programs for the 2024 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium on Social Change

We invite your organization/department to plan a program in conjunction with this year’s symposium. Programs can include reflection, action, and response on/to contemporary issues and should raise issues of social change and social justice while incorporating Dr. King’s challenging visions to end racism and poverty, to strengthen and embrace diversity, and to support free expression.

For date availability, visit aarc.upenn.edu/events.

If you are interested, contact the African-American Resource Center no later than December 15, 2023 with your program idea. Email Colleen Winn at cowinn@upenn.edu or call (215) 898-0104.

—African-American Resource Center

Office of the Vice Provost for Research: 2023 Discovering the Future and Accelerating from Lab to Market Research Grant Recipients

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Agenda of the University Council
Wednesday, November 29, 2023
Hall of Flags, Houston Hall
4–6 p.m.

1. Welcome.
2. Approval of the minutes of October 18, 2023.
3. Follow up comments or questions on Status Reports.
4. Response to the New Business topic raised at the October 18, 2023 University Council meeting.
5. Focus Issue: AI and Machine Learning.
8. Adjournment.

Topics Submitted for November 29, 2023 Open Forum

1. Business Brilliance, Shane Gardner, C’26
2. Free Access to Menstrual Products, Stephanie Schreiner, PSOM’28
3. Supporting Teaching and Research Assistants, Taja Mazaj, C’24
4. Topics Regarding University Administration, Karen Redrobe, SAS/Cinema and New Media Studies, Professor
5. State of the Penn Jewish Community, Noah Rubin, ENG’25 and W’25
6. Combating Anti-Semitism on Campus, Eyal Yakoby, C’24
7. Penn Jewish Community, Sydney Freedman, W’25
8. Penn’s Communications Regarding the Israel/Hamas War, Jacob Brooks, Penn Residential Services, Business Administrator
9. Penn Middle East Center’s Response to Recent Events, Harun Küçük, Middle East Center, Faculty Director
10. Penn’s Communications Regarding the Israel/Hamas War, Asia Kopcsandy, Penn Vet, Administrative Assistant
11. Combating Islamophobia, Anne Norton, SAS/Political Science and Comparative Literature, Professor
12. Supporting Muslim and Arab Students, Nahrain Ahmed, PSOM, Regulatory Affairs Specialist
13. Safety of the Jewish Community, Beave Bernstein, C’26
14. Effect of Campus Protests, Kayla Bleier, ENG’26
15. Penn Chavurah and Other Opportunities for Jewish Students, Henry Planet, C’27

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.
Deaths

Edgar Luzete Monteiro, School of Arts and Sciences

Edgar Luzete Monteiro, a graduate student in department of biology in the School of Arts and Sciences, died on October 29.

Mr. Monteiro was born in Brazil and graduated from the University of Brasilia, where he earned a bachelor’s degree and teaching degree in biological sciences. During his time at the University of Brasilia, Mr. Monteiro received a Science Without Borders scholarship, which brought him to Penn for a year of academic research.

As a graduate student in the School of Arts and Sciences’ department of biology, Mr. Monteiro conducted research in the Perelman School of Medicine’s Institute for Regenerative Medicine, focusing on identifying pioneer transcription factors’ domains responsible for chromatin interaction. His research played an integral role in the gene regulatory research of Kenneth Zaret, the Joseph Leidy Professor and director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

“Edgar was creative and diligent on his projects, which revealed fundamental new insights into gene regulation and biology,” Dr. Zaret said. “He selflessly helped others in the lab. He successfully managed collaborations with other labs. He wrote a published review article virtually all on his own and was highly appreciated by all who knew him. His main thesis project was near completion. Our hearts go out to him, his family, and his friends.”

Penn’s biology department held a gathering for community support on November 1.

University Task Force on Antisemitism Membership

(continued from page 1)

community know they are valued, respected, safe, and secure.”

In addition to the work of the task force, President Magill will soon convene and charge a Presidential Commission that will examine the interconnectedness of antisemitism and other forms of hate, including Islamophobia.

“It is critical,” said task force member Charles L. Howard, University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity and Community, “that we educate our community on antisemitism and how it relates to other forms of hate and bias so that we can combat it together and make Penn a safer and more inclusive place for everyone.”

The full membership of the task force is:

Chair
Mark S. Wolff, Morton Amsterdam Dean of the School of Dental Medicine

Faculty Representatives
Eric A. Feldman, Heimbold Chair in International Law and professor of law; professor of medical ethics and health policy; chair-elect, University Faculty Senate
Karen Glanz, George A. Weiss University Professor, School of Nursing and Perelman School of Medicine

Student Representatives
Maya Harpaz, ’C25
Michael Krone, C’19, L’24, WG’24

Rev. Charles (Chaz) Lattimore Howard, University Chaplain and Vice President for Social Equity and Community
Susanna Lachs, C’74, ASC’76, Former Trustee
Rev. Marshall H. Mitchell, Commonwealth Trustee
Joann Mitchell, Senior Vice President for Institutional Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer

Ex-Officio
Vijay Kumar, Professor and Nemirovsky Family Dean, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Katharine O. Strunk, dean of the Graduate School of Education and the George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education
Wendy S. White, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

Staff to the Committee
Seth Zweifler, Office of the President

To read Penn’s Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism in its entirety, visit https://antisemitism-action-plan.upenn.edu/.

Joshua Teplitsky, Joseph Meyerhoff Associate Professor of Modern Jewish History; director of the Jewish Studies Program
Steven Weitzman, Abraham M. Ellis Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages and Literatures; Ella Darivoff Director of the Katz Center of Advanced Judaic Studies
Beth S. Wenger, Moritz and Josephine Berg Professor of History; associate dean of graduate studies, School of Arts & Sciences
Beth A. Winkelstein, deputy provost; Eduardo D. Glantd President’s Distinguished Professor, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Abraham J. Wyner, professor of statistics and data science, Wharton School

Student Representatives
Brett H. Barth, W’93, Alumni Trustee
Rabbi Gabe Greenberg, executive director of Penn Hillel

Penn Nursing Fall 2023 Awards and Honors

Throughout the fall semester, the following Penn Nursing faculty have been honored with national awards and appointments.

Kathryn H. Bowles, a professor of nursing and the van Ameringen Chair in Nursing Excellence in the department of biobehavioral health sciences, received the Welch/Weinner Path-Payer Award from the Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research. The award is given to a mid-to-late career nurse scientist who has achieved one or more breakthroughs in theory development, research methods, instruments, or subject matter that has paved the way for other scientists and who has influenced and mentored the next generation of nurse researchers.

Kenrick Cato, a member of the standing faculty on the clinician-educator track in the department of family and community health and a professor of informatics at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics. Fellows represent excellence from academia, government, and industry, demonstrating thought leadership, stellar experience, and established scholarship.

Charlene W. Compher, a professor of nutrition science in the department of biobehavioral health sciences, received the 20th Annual Elaine R. Monsen Award for Outstanding Research Literature by The Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Sara F. Jacoby, an associate professor of nursing in the department of family and community health and the Calvin Bland Fellow, was honored with the Trustees Council of Penn Women Award for Undergraduate Advising. This award recognizes faculty advisors who have distinguished themselves in providing assistance and advice to their undergraduates and who have made a significant impact on the academic experience of these students.

Laura Starbird, an assistant professor in the department of family and community health, was awarded the 2023 Marianne Marcus Award by the Association for Multidisciplinary Education and Research in Substance Use and Addiction (AMERSA). This award is given to a registered nurse who is a first-time AMERSA conference attendee and who is committed to clinical practice, research, policy development, and/or education related to substance use disorders.

Colleen Tewksbury, an assistant professor of nutrition science in the department of biobehavioral health sciences, was inducted as a fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This designation recognizes academy members who have distinguished themselves among their colleagues and in their communities with their service to the dietetics profession and by optimizing the nation’s health through food and nutrition.

Erin Purvis: 2023 Next Generation Award

Erin Purvis was named the predoctoral recipient of the 2023 Next Generation Award by the Society for Neuroscience. She received the award on November 14 at the Society for Neuroscience (SfN)’s annual international meeting.

The Next Generation Award recognizes SfN chapter members who have made outstanding contributions to public communication, outreach, and education about neuroscience through activities such as classroom engagement, social media campaigns, etc., typically at the high school level or below.

Ms. Purvis is a doctoral candidate in the neuroscience graduate group, specifically in the Cullen Neural Engineering and Neurotrauma Lab in the Perelman School of Medicine. She is also a 2022-2024 Provost’s Graduate Academic Engagement Fellow (GPAEF) at the Netter Center for Community Partnerships.

Through GPAEF, Ms. Purvis has worked with Loretta Flanagan-Cato to launch a graduate certificate in community-engaged STEM and also developed an academically based community service course for graduate students called biomedical science in the urban curriculum.

SP2: Third Cohort of Social Justice Scholars

This fall, Penn’s School of Social Policy and Practice (SP2) welcomed its third cohort of Social Justice Scholars, a competitive scholarship program that aims to enhance SP2’s ongoing commitment to the recruitment and retention of students with a particular interest in, and demonstrated capacity for, social justice leadership in their field.

Social Justice Scholars receive full tuition benefits, are supported through an enriched structure of mentorship and additional training opportunities, and are part of a dynamic cohort of scholars. SP2 associate professor Yoosun Park is the faculty director of the program and Jessie Harper is the director of the program.

SP2 welcomed the first cohort of three Social Justice Scholars in the fall of 2021, and the program has since experienced tremendous growth, with nine students in the 2023-2024 cohort. Scholars’ social justice leadership interests range from socioeconomic inequality to anti-racism to community development.

To be eligible for consideration for the Social Justice Scholars program, a student must apply by the priority deadline to one of SP2’s three master’s degree programs, demonstrate financial need, and demonstrate an interest in and capacity for social justice leadership. The priority deadline in 2023 is December 1 for all three master’s programs.

New Scholars

Myles Browne
MSW Program
Interests: civic engagement, LGBTQ+ youth, and community organizing
Education: Hampton University, international relations and minor in Spanish

Marcel Edokwe
MSW Program
Interests: criminal justice reform and racial equity
Education: Middlebury College, BA in sociology and minor in education studies

Matthew Encarnación
MSW Program
Interests: economic inequality, guaranteed income, and affordable housing
Education: Mercer University, BS in psychology

Hallela Hinton-William
MSW Program
Interests: educational justice, anti-racism, and community development
Education: Grinnell College, BA in Spanish and religious studies with a concentration in American studies

Shug Miller
MSW Program
Interests: abolitionist social work
Education: University of Chicago, BA in sociology, University of Miami, MSEd in education and social change

Aisene Russell Hopkins
MSW Program
Interests: women’s reproductive rights, socioeconomic equity, and anti-racism
Education: Rutgers University-New Brunswick, BS in public health with a concentration in medical ethics and Africana studies

Davina Scott
MSW Program
Interests: mass incarceration, school-to-prison pipeline, urban poverty, and trauma
Education: Howard University, BA in political science and minor in criminology

Breanna Sheehan
MSW and NPL Programs
Interests: Tribal sovereignty, community development, and cross-cultural engagement
Education: Dartmouth College, BA in anthropology and Native American studies

Tamara Sonora Serrano
MSW Program
Interests: Education equity and accessibility, community organizing, and anti-racism research
Education: Florida State University, BSW and minor in psychology and education

Returning Scholars

Mayowa Fageyinbo
MSW Program
Interests: education policy, economic justice, anti-racism, international education, and public health
Education: Howard University, BS in psychology and minor in sociology

Sparsh Maheshwari
NPL and MSSP+DA Programs
Interests: socioeconomic inequality
Education: Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, bachelor of engineering; Indian School of Development Management, MBA

Joelle Lingat
MSW and NPL Programs
Interests: immigration, health access, transformative justice, and community care
Education: Oberlin College, BA in environmental studies and comparative American studies and minor in gender, sexuality and feminist studies with a concentration in peace and conflict studies; CUNY School of Law, JD

Tamara Sonora Serrano
MSW Program
Interests: tribal sovereignty, community development, and cross-cultural engagement
Education: Dartmouth College, BA in anthropology and Native American studies

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Mayowa Fageyinbo
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**ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

- **November 11**: Last day of classes.
- **November 12**: Reading Days. Through December 13.
- **November 14**: Final Examinations. Through December 21.
- **December 21**: Fall Term ends.

**EXHIBITS**

- **Upcoming**
  - **6**: 12 @ 12 with the Curators; talk about an item in the exhibit *Goya: Prints from the Arthur Ross Collection* with curators Lynn Marsden-Atlass and Emily Zimmerman; noon; Arthur Ross Gallery, Fisher Fine Arts Library (Arthur Ross Gallery).

**CHILDREN’S EVENTS**

- **Penn Museum**
  - Unless noted, online webinars. Info and to register: [https://www.penn.museum/calendar](https://www.penn.museum/calendar).
  - **1**: At-Home Anthro Live: *Ludus Duodecim Scripta: Make and Play an Ancient Roman Game*; similar to backgammon, ludus duodecim involves moving pieces across a board while trying to capture the opponent’s pieces; 1 p.m.
  - **8**: At-Home Anthro Live: *Coins from Around the World*; students will learn about the history of coins around the world, including the materials, symbols, and process of making coins and the messages they carry; 1 p.m.
  - **15**: At-Home Anthro Live: Celebrate Winter With Light; students will learn about the ancient pagan Festival of Lights and how parts of this tradition continue today to mark the Winter Solstice; 1 p.m.
  - **26**: Winter Break: a multi-day festival that takes place around the Penn Museum’s various galleries, including arts and crafts, board games, and engaging tours of the museum’s most storied artifacts; 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Penn Museum. Through December 28.
  - **29**: 40th Annual Kwanzaa Children’s Festival; celebrate the magic of Kwanzaa in-person with holiday activities for the whole family, including a traditional Kinara of Kwanzaa candle ceremony, still ballet performances, games, and food; noon-5 p.m.

**CONFERENCES**

- **1**: When Media Put Social Justice at Risk; a symposium examining what happens when media practices, values, infrastructures or ownership pose risks to social justice; 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; info: [https://tinyurl.com/annenberg-conf-nov-30](https://tinyurl.com/annenberg-conf-nov-30) (Center for Media at Risk, Annenberg Center for Collaborative Communication).
- **2**: Penn Vet Shelter Medicine Symposium 2023; will provide continuing education while facilitating connections and community collaboration among animal shelter leadership, staff, volunteers, and veterinarians in the Philadelphia area sheltering community; 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Hill Pavilion; register: [https://tinyurl.com/penn-vet-conf-dec-2](https://tinyurl.com/penn-vet-conf-dec-2) (Penn Vet). Also December 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

**FILMS**

- **1**: Day Without Art 2023: Everyone I Know Is Sick; program of five videos connecting HIV with other forms of illness and disability; 6 p.m.; Institute of Contemporary Art; register: [https://tinyurl.com/ica-day-without-art](https://tinyurl.com/ica-day-without-art) (ICA).
- **4**: Sweet Bean; a 2015 Japanese drama film directed by Naomi Kawase; 6:30 p.m.; room 401, Fisher-Bennett Hall; register: [https://tinyurl.com/sweet-bean-dec-4](https://tinyurl.com/sweet-bean-dec-4) (Cinema & Media Studies).

**NEW ITALIAN CINEMA, 2023 Edition**

- **1**: La Prima Regola (The First Rule); noon. La Cena Perfetta (An Italian Gourmet Crime Story); 3 p.m. Scordato; 7 p.m.
- **2**: Acqua e A Vince (Olimpia’s Way); noon. Stranizza d’Amuri (Fireworks); 3 p.m. Il Sol dell’Avventre (A Brighter Tomorrow); 7 p.m.
- **3**: La Lunga Corsa (Jailbird); noon. La Sranexa (Strangeness); 3 p.m. Amandri; 7 p.m.

**FITNESS & LEARNING**

- **6**: Exploring Living Options in Retirement; a panel of speakers will discuss key issues to consider when making residential choices following retirement by comparing a wide range of arrangements; 3:30 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: [https://tinyurl.com/rasef-workshop-dec-6](https://tinyurl.com/rasef-workshop-dec-6) (Penn Association for Senior & Emeritus Faculty).
Mind & Mood Recharge Powered by Penn Medicine: an uplifting array of health-centric happenings, including a botanical bar, wellness marketplace, and a monthly rotation of all-levels wellness activities from local practitioners of yoga, meditation, expressive arts, and more; 5-8 p.m.; Penn Museum; included with museum admission; register: https://tinyurl.com/museum-recharge-dec-6 (Penn Medicine).

7 Master of Professional Nursing Information Session; learn about Penn Nursing’s new program, the Master of Professional Nursing (MPN), including application requirements, admissions timeline, and graduate program options; 6 p.m.; online webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/mpn-info-session-dec-7 (Penn Nursing).

The Deep Dig: Pachacamac, The Oracle of the Ancient Andes; in-depth 4-week course that covers the history of the site of Pachacamac, from its heritage as an important ancient Andean pilgrimage center to a Spanish occupation in the 16th century to an invaluable Penn Museum excavation site in the late 19th century; 6:30 p.m.; online webinar; price for 4 sessions: $175/general, $125/public; register: https://tinyurl.com/museum-deep-dig-dec-7 (Penn Museum).

Also

College of Liberal & Professional Studies
Online webinars. Info and to register: https://www.cis.upenn.edu/about/events.
5 Master of Environmental Studies Virtual Café; noon.
6 Master of Behavioral and Decision Sciences Virtual Information Session; 5 p.m.
7 Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences Virtual Information Session; 6 p.m.
7 Fels Institute of Government Virtual Information Session; noon.
7 Master of Science in Applied Geosciences Virtual Café; noon.

Human Resources
Unless noted, online events are for Penn faculty and staff only. Info and to register: https://www.hr.upenn.edu/.
12 30-Minute Guided Meditation; noon. Also December 8, 15.
12 30-Minute Chair Yoga Plus Core; noon. Also December 11, 18.
5 How to Make Yourself Indispensable; 12:30 p.m.

Smart Money Moves in Your 40s 50s 60s Beyond with MetLife; 12:30 p.m.
6 Virgin Pulse Wellness Platform Demo; noon.
7 Health Advocate Presents: Your Holiday Game Plan - Handling Holiday Stress; 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
5 Self Compassion: Being Your Own Best Caregiver for the Holidays; noon.
8 Your Career at Penn; 12:30 p.m.
13 Simple Breath: Secrets for Holiday Joy and Stress Reduction; noon.
13 Bright Horizons Care Benefit - A Marketplace for Discounted Family Supports; noon.
13 Chair Yoga; noon.
13 Deskercize; noon.
13 The Gift of Feedback; 12:30 p.m.
14 Guided Mindful Meditation; noon.
14 Creating and Maintaining Your LinkedIn Profile; 12:30 p.m.
19 Bright Horizons Care Benefit - Quality Care for Your Family; noon.

Penn Libraries
Online webinars. Info and to register: https://www.library.upenn.edu/events.
Workshop Series: Support for Publishing; learn the ins and outs of the publishing process through a series of workshops covering citation management, impact metrics, promoting your work, selecting the right publishing venue, fair use, and more; Sessions all month.

Coffee With A Codex; Kislik Center curator Dot Porter hosts an informal Zoom meeting to present a manuscript from Penn’s collections, followed by questions and conversation. Thursdays at noon.

1 How to Transcribe a Million Manuscripts with Escriptorium; learn about the possibilities and challenges of applying machine-learning technologies to transcription of potentially millions of images of digitized premodern manuscripts; noon.

Weitzman School of Design
Online webinars. Info and to register: https://www.design.upenn.edu/.
1 Admissions Web Chat; 8 a.m.
5 Financial Aid Webinar; 6:30 p.m. Also December 13, noon.
6 Virtual Alumni Panel; 6 p.m.

Music
2 Penn Glee Club Sings Holiday Classics; bring the whole family for some holiday cheer; 1 p.m.; Sugarman Sculpture, Morris Arboretum &
Music Department
In-person events. Info: https://music.sas.upenn.edu/events.

1 Penn Chamber Winter Concert: small ensemble performances of works by Beethoven, Bartok, Schoenberg, Ravel, and Shostakovich, among others; 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; room 419, Fisher-Bennett Hall. Also December 2, 3 p.m.

2 Penn Wind Ensemble Fall Concert: ensemble comprised of musicians from the entire Penn community performs a wide range of repertoire drawing on newly composed works for wind band and on the core wind repertoire; 8 p.m.; Irvine Auditorium.

3 Penn Chorale Fall Concert: performance by an ensemble that sings a variety of choral music, concentrating on music composed in the 21st and late 20th centuries; 3 p.m.; St. Mary’s Church, 3916 Locust Walk.

4 Penn Collegium Musicum Fall Performance: performance by a student-only chamber choir that specializes in music from the Medieval, Renaissance, and early Baroque periods; 7:30 p.m.; St. Mary’s Church, 3916 Locust Walk.

5 Penn Chamber: Music in the Stacks Series; Penn’s premiere chamber ensemble gives a study break performance; 7 p.m.; main lobby, Van Pelt Library.

6 Penn Arab Music Ensemble Fall Concert; ensemble of traditional Arab music played by students and local professional musicians; 8 p.m.; Bodek Lounge, Houston Hall.

7 Penn Flutes Holiday Concert; Music in the Stacks Series; one of the largest active flute choirs in the United States gives a special study break performance; 1:30 p.m.; Museum Library, Level 1, Penn Museum.

8 Penn Symphony Orchestra Fall Concert; an illustrious ensemble, founded in 1878 and comprised of musicians from throughout the Penn community, performs a diverse range of repertoire drawn from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries; 8 p.m.; Irvine Auditorium.

9 Penn Arab Music Ensemble Fall Concert; the 100-strong ensemble performs a wide variety of rhythms from many different regions of Brazil; 7 p.m.; Hall of Flags, Houston Hall.

Penn Live Arts
In-person events. Info and tickets: https://pennlivearts.org/events/calendar.php.

3 Christian McBride’s New Jawn; award-winning jazz bassist Christian McBride returns to his hometown, backed by his all-star quartet of Josh Evans (trumpet), Marcus Strickland (tenor sax) and Nasheet Waits (drums); 7 p.m.; Zellerbach Theater, Annenberg Center; tickets: $70-$80.

10 Aoife O’Donovan; Grammy-winning folk singer plays Bruce Springsteen’s Nebraska album in its entirety, featuring special guest Yasmin Williams; Zellerbach Theatre, 7 p.m., Annenberg Center; tickets: $59-$69.

15 The Crossing @ Christmas; new music choir the Crossing performs the world premiere of poor hymnal by David Lang; 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.; Iron Gate Theatre; tickets: $42.

ON STAGE

8 Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite; virtuoso dancer Michelle Dorrance brings together jazz and holiday tradition in a deep dive into Duke Ellington’s intoxicating interpretation of the Tchaikovsky classic; 8 p.m.; Zellerbach Theater, Annenberg Center; tickets: $70-$80; register: https://pennlivearts.org/event/dorrancedancenutcracker (Penn Live Arts). Also December 9, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

READINGS & SIGNINGS


SPECIAL EVENTS

4 Edible Books Party; anyone is welcome to make, bake, or build an (edible) book for our annual Edible Books Party, held in memory of Blaze Bernstein; prizes will be awarded in several categories; 5:30 p.m.; Arts Café, Kelly Writers House; register: https://tinyurl.com/kwh-edible-books-party (Kelly Writers House).

11 December Graduate Recognition Ceremony; come together to celebrate Penn Nursing’s 2023 December Graduates; 10 a.m.; Zellerbach Theatre, Annenberg Center (Penn Nursing).

SPORTS

Home games only. Info and tickets: https://pennathletics.com/.

1 Wrestling vs. Iowa; 7 p.m.; the Palestra.

2 Men’s Basketball at Big 5 Classic; time TBA; Wells Fargo Center.

3 Men’s/Women’s Squash vs. Williams; noon; Penn Squash Center.

6 Men’s Basketball vs. FDU-Florham; 6 p.m.; the Palestra.

9 Men’s Basketball vs. Kentucky; noon; Wells Fargo Center.

11 Men’s Basketball vs. Howard; 7 p.m.; the Palestra.

30 Women’s Basketball vs. Maine; 1 p.m.; the Palestra.

31 Women’s Basketball vs. Gwynedd Mercy; 1 p.m.; the Palestra.

A number of Penn music department groups will give fall semester recitals in December. The Wind Ensemble (above), will perform in Irvine Auditorium on December 2. Also on December 2, the Penn Glee Club (below) brings its unique brand of holiday cheer to the Morris Arboretum & Gardens. See Music.
TALKS

1 Protecting Health Care & Cyberphysical Systems - Wicked Bizarre Semiciconductor Physics of Sensor Security; Kevin Fu, Northeastern University; 10 a.m.; room 307, Levine Hall (PRECISE Center).

Sampling-Based Task and Motion Planning: From Robotic Manipulators to Intelligent CAD to Analyzing Proteins; Nancy Amato, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; 10:30 a.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall, and Zoom webinar; join: https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92506655697 (GRASP Lab).

It’s (Another) Christmas Story! Colonel Thomas W.E. Christmas and Penn Libraries’ Hidden Collections; Samantha Dodd, Penn Libraries; noon; online webinar; register: https://www.library.upenn.edu/events/kislak-stacks-colonel-christmas (Penn Libraries).

What Happened to the Nursing Workforce? David Benton, National Council of State Boards of Nursing; Bianca Frogner, University of Washington; Gopi Shah Goda, Stanford University; Karen Lasater, Penn Nursing; noon; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/ldt-talk-dec-1 (Leonard Davis Institute).

“Love Happens for a Reason in This World. So Does Hatred” – Affective Spaces as an Analytical Framework for the Study of Contemporary China; Shih-Diang Liu, University of Macau; 12:30 p.m.; room 418, PCPSE (Center for the Study of Contemporary China).

Exploring Earth’s Ice to Imagine Extraterrestrial Worlds; Jill Mikucki, University of Tennessee; 1:30 p.m.; room 358, Hayden Hall (Earth & Environmental Science).

Inventing a Pictorial Miscellany for the US: Gleason’s Pictorial Drawing Room Companion; Michael Leja, history of art; 3 p.m.; room B3, Meyerson Hall (History of Art).

Exploring Stem Cell and Germ Cell Niches in the Tapeworm Hymenolepis Diminuta; Tania Rozario, University of Georgia; noon; room 132, Hill Pavilion, and Zoom webinar; join: http://upenn.zoom.us/j/91485597704 (Penn Vet).


Precision Estimation of Large-Scale Network Organization in the Human Brain; Randy L. Buckner, Harvard University; 3:30 p.m.; auditorium, Levin Building (Psychology).


Pediatric Dentistry and CAD/CAM: Is There a Place For It? Philip Slonkosky, Minster Dental Care; 6:30 p.m.; online webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/slonskossy-talk-dec-2 (Penn Dental Medicine).

Revisiting Primary Care Payment and Delivery; Ishani Ganguli, Brigham and Women’s Hospital; noon; auditorium, Colonial Penn Center; register: https://share.hsforms.com/1AT7aQkP9vWpeLP-2G-vm-A5wpL (Leonard Davis Institute).

6 Antibody Responses to SARS-CoV-2 Infection and Vaccination; Florian Kramer, Icahn School of Medicine; noon; Austrian Auditorium, CRB (Microbiology).

On December 8, the Penn Museum’s, At Home Anthro Live, webinar series will feature a program for children about the history of coins and include opportunities for them to view objects in its collection. See Children’s Activities.

Robust Machine Learning with Foundation Models; Aditi Raghunathan, Carnegie Mellon University; noon; room 307, Levine Hall (ASSET Center).

Fabrication and Long-term Reliability of High Efficiency Monocrystalline Silicon Solar Cells; Sumit Agarwal, Colorado School of Mines; 3:30 p.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall (Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering).

Rittenhouse Lecture: An Imperfect View of the Universe; Alan Heavens, Imperial College London; 3:30 p.m.; room A4, DRL (Physics & Astronomy).

Queer Women’s Feminist Spaces: Restaurants, Cafés, and Coffeehouses; Alex Ketchum, McGill University; 4 p.m.; suite 345, Fisher-Bennett Hall (Gender, Sexuality & Women’s Studies).

Archaeology in Action: Excavating the Royal City of Mizdas; C. Brian Rose, classical studies; 7 p.m.; online webinar; tickets: $15 general, $7/member; register: https://tinyurl.com/rose-talk-dec-6 (Penn Museum).

Quantum Simulations for Quantum Technologies; Giulia Galli, University of Chicago; 10 a.m.; room 330, Fisher-Bennett Hall; RSVP: elombard@as.upenn.edu (English).

Cultural Rights, Heritage Destruction, and the Future of Ukraine; panel of speakers; 5:30 p.m.; online webinar and Penn Museum; tickets: pay what you wish; register: https://tinyurl.com/museum-talk-dec-7 (Penn Museum).

Holomorphic Floer Theory; Saul Hilsenrath, mathematics; 10 a.m.; room 3N6, DRL (Mathematics).

Muddy Waters: Reimagining Futures in Wet Asia; Nikhil Anand, anthropology; Prasenjit Doval, Columbia University; 4 p.m.; room 101, PCPSE.

Film Under Fire: The Climate Crisis and the 2023 Writers Guild of America Strike; Olivia González, Annenberg School for Communication; 12:15 p.m.; room 500, Annenberg School (Gerbner Fellow Lecture).

The Modern Politics of Ancient Greek Visual Culture; C. Brian Rose, classical studies; 3 p.m.; room B3, Meyerson Hall (History of Art).

The Shape-Shifting Mitochondrion of Toxoplasma Gondii; Gustavo Arribalzaga, Indiana University; noon; room 132, Hill Pavilion, and Zoom webinar; join: https://upenn.zoom.us/j/91485597704 (Penn Vet).

Engineering Posttranslational Regulation of Ion Channels: Basic Mechanisms to Translation; Henry M. Colecraft, Columbia University; 3 p.m.; Austrian Auditorium, CRB (Physiology).

Women and Sexual Beings Under Socialism; Kateřina Lišková, Masaryk University, Czech Republic; 5:30 p.m.; room 200, PCPSE (Russian & East European Studies).

Seeing the Unseen: How AI Redefines Bioengineering; Dorin Comaniciu, Siemens Healthineers; 1 p.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall (Bioengineering Herman P. Schwan Distinguished Lecture).

The Electron-Ion Collider; Bernd Surrow, Temple University; 3:30 p.m.; room 2C8, DRL (Physics & Astronomy).

Patient-Provider Communication and Potential Inequities in the Current Era of HIV Biomedical Prevention; Sarah Calabrese, George Washington University; noon; Class of ’62 Auditorium, John Morgan Building (Center for AIDS Research).

Crustaceans as a Trojan Horse for Vibrio Infection of Hosts; Hyuntae Byun, microbiology; 4 p.m.; room 209, Johnson Pavilion (Microbiology).

Economics

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

Understanding Gender Disparities in STEM Major and Occupation Choices: A Structural Model Approach; Shasha Wang, economics; noon; room 100, PCPSE.

The Core of Bayesian Persuasion; Laura Doval, Columbia University; 4 p.m.; room 101, PCPSE.

On-The-Job Search and the Gender Wage Gap; Aysegul Sahin, University of Texas, Austin; 4 p.m.; room 101, PCPSE.

The Effects of the Legal Minimum Working Time on Workers, Firms and the Labor Market; Pauline Carley, University of Chicago; 3:30 p.m.; room 101, PCPSE.

Price Heterogeneity as a Source of Heterogenous Demand; Gereht Tserenjigmid, University of California, Santa Cruz; noon; room 101, PCPSE.
# 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 **November 6-12, 2023**. The Crime Reports are available at: [https://almanac.upenn.edu/sections/crimes](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 **November 6-12, 2023**. 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](https://www.upenn.edu/almanac). **Penn Police Patrol Zone**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Category</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>11:31 PM</td>
<td>1 Convention Ave</td>
<td>Hospital Security Officer assaulted by guest/Arrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>11/7/23</td>
<td>2:58 AM</td>
<td>100 S 40th St</td>
<td>Unknown offender spat on complainant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Theft</td>
<td>11/7/23</td>
<td>6:30 AM</td>
<td>3700 Spruce St</td>
<td>Unknown offender assaulted multiple staff members and fled the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Theft</td>
<td>11/8/23</td>
<td>11:31 PM</td>
<td>3700 Walnut St</td>
<td>Automobile left running, stolen from highway and recovered in 12th district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>11/8/23</td>
<td>2:58 AM</td>
<td>3700 Spruce St</td>
<td>Commercial burglary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>11/8/23</td>
<td>6:30 AM</td>
<td>3600 Sansom St</td>
<td>Antisemitic writing found at location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assault</td>
<td>11/9/23</td>
<td>2:58 AM</td>
<td>3700 Walnut St</td>
<td>Harassing voicemail left by an unknown offender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Offense</td>
<td>11/9/23</td>
<td>12:21 PM</td>
<td>3400 Civic Center Blvd</td>
<td>Threatening emails sent to complainant by unknown offender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Theft</td>
<td>11/9/23</td>
<td>12:21 PM</td>
<td>3400 Civic Center Blvd</td>
<td>Offender threatened complainant and displayed a firearm during a verbal altercation; offender identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>11/9/23</td>
<td>8:40 PM</td>
<td>4233 Chestnut St</td>
<td>Complainant received threatening emails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery/Gun</td>
<td>11/10/23</td>
<td>1:41 AM</td>
<td>4200 Walnut St</td>
<td>Retail robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft from Building</td>
<td>11/10/23</td>
<td>5:51 AM</td>
<td>3901 Locust Walk</td>
<td>Retail theft of alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft Other</td>
<td>11/10/23</td>
<td>12:20 PM</td>
<td>3900 Locust Walk</td>
<td>Retail theft of alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>11/10/23</td>
<td>8:42 PM</td>
<td>3000 Walnut St</td>
<td>Unknown offenders spray painted on SEPTA overpass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Philadelphia Police 18th District**

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

Below are the Crimes Against Persons from the 18th District: 11 incidents were reported for **November 6-12, 2023** by the 18th District, covering the Schuylkill River to 49th Street & Market Street to Woodland Avenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Category</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>12:48 PM</td>
<td>3909 Spruce St</td>
<td>Unknown offender attempted to take secured scooter from bike rack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>7:06 PM</td>
<td>3400 Spruce St</td>
<td>Secured scooter taken from bike rack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft from Building</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>6:30 AM</td>
<td>3100 Market St</td>
<td>Theft of a secured scooter from bike rack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft from Vehicle</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>8:02 AM</td>
<td>3451 Walnut St</td>
<td>60 U.S. flags stolen from lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>11/6/23</td>
<td>8:34 PM</td>
<td>3000 Walnut St</td>
<td>Unknown offenders spray painted on SEPTA overpass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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](https://www.upenn.edu/almanac) available to you free of charge.
- Take a moment to update your cell phone information for the [UPenn Alert Emergency Notification System](https://www.upenn.edu/almanac). Download the [Penn Guardian App](https://www.upenn.edu/almanac), which can help police better find your location when you call in an emergency.
- Access free [self-empowerment and defense courses](https://www.upenn.edu/almanac) through Penn DPS.

ALMANAC November 21, 2023
Update
November AT PENN
FITNESS AND LEARNING

28 T32 Best Practices Discussion; special session on training grants and the SCOTUS decision on Students For Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College AND SFFA v. University of North Carolina; 3:30 p.m.; Zoom webinar; register: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3FWLBRN (Perelman School of Medicine).
29 Behind the CV: Stories from Faculty; Rakesh Vohra, economics and electrical & systems engineering, share his stories, with a focus on the unspoken challenges of a life in academia; 5 p.m.; Café 58, Irvine Auditorium (Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowships).
30 You Do-Nut Have to Be in STEM; join humanitites & social science.RPAs to discuss opportunities and enjoy donuts; 7-9 p.m.; RDDSx, first floor, Van Pelt Library (Center for Undergraduate Research & Fellowships).

Graduate School of Education

30 Mid-Career Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership Virtual Information Session; 7 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

26 Family Game Day: learn more about games played around the world: Challenge the family to a friendly game of mancala, learn how to play the ancient games of knucklebones (Greece/Rome) and Senet (Egypt), and design your own board game to take home; 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Penn Museum; included with admission (Penn Museum).

TALKS

27 Dawn of the Anthropocene: How Humans in a Warming Climate Drove Pleistocene Mammal Extinctions and Re-shaped California’s Landscapes; Emily Lindsey, La Brea Tar Pits andMuseum; noon; room 345, Penn Museum (Anthropology).
Increasing Human Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Rattle and Smell Science; Patricia Hubert, Monell Chemical Senses Center; 3 p.m.; room 302, CRB, and Zoom webinar; join: https:// pennmedicine.zoom.us/j/98960742348 (Global Health).
28 Advancing Bioadhesive Technologies with Mechanical Principles; Jianyu Li, McGill University, 10 a.m.; Wu & Chen Auditorium, Levine Hall (Mechanical Engineering & Applied Mechanics).
29 How Design Can Make a Positive Impact on Health, the Environment, and Education; Raja Schara, Drexel University; noon; Zoom webinar; register: https://tinyurl.com/schara-talk-nov-29 (Nursing).
Inherent Interpretability via Language Model Guided Bottleneck Design; Mark Yatskar, computer & information science; noon; room 307, Levine Hall (ASSET Center).
Adventures at the Nexus of Synthetic, Analytical and Biological Chemistry With an Enzymatic Sub-Theme; David Berkowitz, National Cancer Institute Science Foundation; noon; Chemistry Complex (Chemistry).

To submit events for a future AT PENN calendar or update, send details to almanac@upenn.edu.

No Almanac Next Week
The next issue of Almanac will be published on Tuesday, December 5.

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

Enjoy the Holidays Without Scams

In November, we kick off the holiday season with giving Tuesdays: Thanksgiving travel, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday. While you are busy planning and celebrating the holidays with family and friends, hackers are crafting scams to trick you into disclosing your sensitive financial and personal information. Some of the active seasonal scams include:

A change to your direct deposit:
You receive an email claiming to come from the University that tells you to click on a link to confirm a change in your direct deposit. Once you click, you are directed to a fake webpage that mimics the Penn Web Login page, luring you to enter your direct deposit. Once you click, you are directed to a fake page that mimics the Penn Web Login page, luring you into sharing your PennKey username and password.

Online shopping:
You are directed to a webpage, usually via social media, that mimics a well-known site—but with prices that are too good to be true.

Package tracking:
An email or text tells you that your package is delayed and asks you to click a link to resolve the issue.

Gift card prize winner:
You receive an email or a text message that says you won a high-value gift card.

Online invitations to holiday parties:
When clicking the invite, you may download malware.

You can protect yourself from such scams. Read the message carefully and avoid taking immediate action, such as clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

Double check the sender’s email address and make sure University messages asking you to take action are sent from a legitimate Penn email domain.

Hover over links to see if they point to a supposed company’s domain and pay attention to the webpage URL to verify its authenticity. (You can train yourself to recognize phishing URLs by taking “URL Training” in Workday, if it is available to you.)

Do not reply to unsolicited emails. If you have questions or want to report a scam, talk to your IT (Information Technology) support staff, or email security@isc.upenn.edu.

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.

Visit https://pennsway.upenn.edu for more information. Online participation must be completed by midnight on Sunday for inclusion in a given week’s drawing that Monday morning.

Week Seven—Drawing November 20

Final Drawing—December 4

WXPN Board Meeting: December 6
An open session of the WXPN Policy Board will meet Wednesday, December 6 at noon at WXPN. For more information, email abby@xpn.org or call (215) 898-0628 during business hours.

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talent-whether from students and readers and contributors are available on request and online.

The University of Pennsylvania’s journal of record, opinion and news is published Tuesdays during the academic year, and as needed during summer and holiday breaks. Its electronic editions on the internet (accessible through the Penn website) include HTML, Acrobat and mobile versions of the print edition, and interim information may be posted in electronic-only form. Guidelines for readers are available on request and online.

Almanac Advisory Board: For the Faculty Senate: Sunday Akintoye, Christine Brands, David Cohen, Al Filreis, Cary Mazzer, Martin Preg, For the Administration: Stephen MacCurthy. For the Staffs: Members: Jon Shaw, PPSA; Marcia Dotson, WPPSA; Rachelle R. Nelson, Librarians Assembly.

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University administered programs or services. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to Sam Starkes, Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, 421 Franklin Building, 3461 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6205; or (215) 898-6993 (Voice).
Over the years, I have spent many enjoyable hours as an immunology professor working to make complex information more accessible to students. Because the immune system is confoundingly complex, with hundreds of different types of cells traveling through all corners of the body and making thousands of different contacts with proteins and pathogens, this is an important challenge for me and my students. The study of the immune system, immunology, reflects this complexity and, with its daunting vocabulary and array of abbreviations that describe these cells and their contacts, can be impenetrable.

A basic understanding of the immune system, however, is as important to the public as it is to the undergraduates I teach. As my students go on to careers as scientists and clinicians, they will be responsible for communicating this information to audiences outside of Penn. Misinformation about vaccines is particularly harmful and this danger underscores the importance of helping immunology students to share their understanding as clearly as possible to the broadest of audiences—peers, family, and the public.

The remarkable development of the mRNA vaccine during the COVID-19 pandemic presented me with a wonderful opportunity to highlight the importance of communication in my advanced undergraduate immunology course (BIOL3008). Remote teaching during the pandemic also inspired me to experiment with the use of video assignments as one way to enhance students’ abilities to articulate their understanding in ways that were accessible to a wide range of audiences.

After spending the first weeks of the semester introducing students to basic cells, tissues, and events that initiate an immune response, I gave them the following assignment:

Please upload a no more than 5 minute video (.mp4 file, preferably) that describes how a vaccine works to an audience of your choice. This assignment is designed to allow you to synthesize and communicate some of what you have learned—and to help inform and even entertain and excite your audience about how vaccines take advantage of our own immune systems.

1. This project can be done individually or in pairs. If you work with a partner, try to creatively incorporate your collaboration in the video. For example, the video could highlight a conversation between two people where the two people take on distinct roles (e.g. talk show host-style).
2. You may choose to use slides (best to use no more than five, but this is not required).
3. Select an audience and identify it for us at the beginning of your presentation. Your audience can be almost anyone, ranging from elementary school students, CDC specialists, biology undergraduates, etc.
4. Be accurate, but tailor your vocabulary to the audience. e.g. An elementary school student will not understand the same range of knowledge as an undergrad.
5. Use your imagination and your own judgment about format. We look forward to seeing your ideas.

I was very curious about their choices of audience and couldn’t have been happier with the results. Their projects revealed an enviable fluency with multi-media technologies. Students chose a wide range of audiences—from elementary students, to ‘worried parents,’ to senior citizens, to ‘YouTube viewers,’ to peers not majoring in biology. Their presentations also ranged from formal PowerPoint presentations to mock interviews with scientists who had developed vaccines, to town hall-like events. Some of their videos were accompanied by music, with podcast-like features, and one pair created a very engaging presentation aimed from the perspective of a virus itself.

Assessing such a variety of formats can be challenging. However, I found that a rubric I originally generated for written work could be useful with some modifications. I refer to this rubric as the “CARIE” system, where (briefly) “C” refers to clarity and organization, “A” to accuracy, “R” to research and referencing, “I” to insight and “E” to engagement of audience. I have now used this system relatively successfully for oral, written, and recorded assignments, weighing each category differently, depending on the emphasis I have shared with the students.

To make this approach more transparent to the class, I also preceded this assignment by asking the class to apply the same rubric to “grade” a short video themselves—in this particular case, a TED talk with Penn’s own Carl June about CAR-T cells. Students seemed to have fun with this task, which, most importantly, took some of the mystery out of the assessment criteria. To help them consider how they could critically evaluate their own efforts, I also gave them time in small groups to review a short podcast (on oral vaccinations) and share thoughts about what might be missing and what could be improved.

My wonderful TA, a senior Penn undergraduate, and I both commented on each video—focusing not just on how accurately the students conveyed information, but on how effectively they might have reached their audience. Perhaps one of the most gratifying outcomes of this assignment was the opportunity it gave to less talkative students to shine—and the opportunity it gave us to discover their talents. I admit that I was once exceptionally quiet and would have enjoyed a chance to share ideas without some of the social pressures that arise in the classroom; my own experiences have certainly motivated me to offer students multiple ways to participate and video assignments have now become a part of this repertoire.

I’ve also learned from my colleagues how important it is to design assignments that allow students to practice skills that they need to succeed on larger stake assessments. This vaccine video assignment was the foundation for the final project, where I asked students to develop a longer, more scholarly podcast or video on a topic of interest. They shared their topic ideas with the class for feedback in a mini-presentation seminar set-up. This event also had the advantage of giving peers the opportunity to learn from and about each other and I hope allowed students to recognize each others’ strengths.

These video and podcast-based projects have struck me as a powerful way to inspire students to gain the all-important intellectual ownership of a topic. Knowing something and being able to answer exam questions about that ‘something’ is important, but being able to articulate your knowledge with clarity to a range of audiences forces you to recognize and confront the gaps in your knowledge and enhances your confidence in your knowledge. It also prepares students to share what they have learned with others who need this information. These assignments also put me in the enviable position of being a student—one of the deep pleasures of being a professor at Penn.

Jennifer Punt is a professor of immunology and associate dean for One Health at Penn’s School of Veterinary Medicine.

This essay continues the series that began in the fall of 1994 as the joint creation of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Lindback Society for Distinguished Teaching. See https://almanac.upenn.edu/talk-about-teaching-and-learning-archive for previous essays.