

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

March 22, 2024

The Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees held its quarterly business meeting Friday, March 22, 2024, in the Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center and via ZOOM conferencing. Chair Domenic Ionta called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The video recording of this meeting in its entirety can be found on the SRU Council webpage, <https://www.sru.edu/about/administration/council-of-trustees/video-recordings>

Meeting materials for this meeting can be found on the SRU Council webpage: <https://www.livebinders.com/b/3569384>

Recording of Attendance

Trustees present: Dr. Alfonso Angelucci, Mr. Domenic Ionta, Mr. Matt Lautman, Mr. Dan Lavalley, Ms. Elise Michaux, Mr. William McCarrier, Ms. Cierra Mitchell, Mr. Jeffrey Smith, Ms. Angèle Stoebener, Mr. Robert Taylor, Mr. Joshua Young

Dr. Danette DiMarco, faculty liaison to the Council of Trustees, was also present.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Trustee Angelucci moved, second by Trustee Young, approval of the March 22, 2024 meeting agenda. Motion carries (TAB 6, Appendix A)

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Angelucci moved, second by Trustee Young, approval of the quarterly business meeting minutes of Friday, December 8, 2023. Motion carries. (TAB 7, Appendix B)

Public Comments

Ms. Ella Bloom, SRSGA President
Hello everyone.

I am so excited to be here. The last time I was here was in June. So, I'm excited to come before you all again and present the really great and exciting work that we've done so far this year. I think you're all going to be very excited at everything that we've accomplished and our future projects.

So, for those of you who don't know me, I'm Ella Bloom. I'm a junior political science, free law major and philosophy. I am also the current SRSGA President.

So, to give you a little bit of an update, I'm going to go through based on where our vice presidents are and where they can sit in their communities just to kind of give you a road map of how I'm going to break it down.

First, is our external affairs committee. We are preparing to kind of close out the year and getting things set in place to transition over to the new Senate after elections coming up soon.

And then we also have the SGA and the banquet coming up. I think that most of you or some of you have gotten an invite to this, so it should be really exciting and fun. It's a 1920s theme. Our internal affairs committee has been working super hard to make it really, really, awesome, and exciting. So, I'm very proud of them. I'm very excited.

And then in terms of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is our VPN committee. On Monday, the group engaged in a wheelchair experience. They got some wheelchairs and went around and broke down into groups. Everybody took a wheelchair and went to different areas on campus and operated wheelchairs through buildings, different sections of pavement to create an accessibility experience and kind of breakdown where on campus students need the most help to be able to access these areas. She is also working with her committee to try to find out if we can add more lactation rooms to campus and areas like that. There are already two on campus, but that's definitely not enough. So, we are looking into expanding that program and making sure that we have adequate areas for everyone.

On top of that, our parliamentarian is part of our Policy Committee. He leads the group working on the election, so you'll see it in the upcoming weeks.

If you ever come to campus again after this meeting, you will see chalking [on the sidewalks] everywhere as students are going to be campaigning. There will be events in the quad to help encourage people to vote. It is looking to be a very exciting election this year. There is a strong pool of great applicants, and I am super excited to see everybody campaign and really want to take part in this organization as it is super important to the student body. So, I think it's great that we have a lot of interest.

Our student and academic affairs is working on the student life survey. The survey includes a series of questions to kind of gauge student's happiness on campus and [asks for insight] into what areas they think we need to improve on. We've been lucky to be able to work with Dr. McCarthy's department in executing the survey and reviewing the questions. And a bunch of departments on campus work together to create a survey that will help us really learn information about the students and that as an organization we can review and say, Next year, okay, here are the problem areas, how can we make it better? This is the evidence we have that students know strongly about this. How can we make it better? So it's going to be really exciting. The survey will be released March 25. So, if you see a SRU student, please tell them to complete the student life survey, which comes out on Monday. It's super important that we get feedback on it and we really get to see where the student body leads us.

Additionally, in our students and academic affairs section, we are doing a second campus crawl. So, if you are unsure as to what the campus crawl is, it's basically where we walk around campus, and much like the wheelchair experience, look at different areas that could cause issues for students or things that should be considered for improvement. So, for example, this could be potholes, blue lights, different things like that. We're doing a second one in April, so that's going to be very exciting. If you're interested in participating, please let me know. It's a cool way to look at a new perspective of campus.

And then, I know you guys heard from Sydney, our Finance VP, yesterday. I just wanted to comment about her work as well.

Sydney does really, really great work for us and without her we would be lost. She executes everything perfectly and is a great asset to us. If you aren't aware or it wasn't mentioned, we are in our budgeting season. So, this is a big season for us when student organizations request money for various projects and initiatives for next year. It's a very long and tedious process because we have over 200 clubs and organizations. So, making sure that everybody is submitting their budget and then going through it and saying well, what can we afford here, what can we afford there? It's a very long and complicated process. Sydney has been diligently working on it and her committee and our senators have worked non-stop and are making sure that we are doing the best for students. So that's very, very exciting.

And then to me and the things that I do, I've been working in Sydney a lot as well. We are putting in an application for the Green Fund, working with the biology department to create a pollination area with native vegetation and plants over by the Robert M. Student Center. It's a really, really exciting project and hopefully if we get it, it'll be a really great asset for SRU. It will be something we can market and advertise to the region. Penn State has a lot of areas like this and it's a big marketing tool for them and makes us one step closer to an even greater campus. So, this is exciting. This is a great collaboration with the biology department, and they are happy to work with us.

Another project in the works, we (SGA) are still discussing it with Dr. Riley, is turfing the intermural fields. We've had a lot of interest from students saying yes, I would love to do this and it's an area of our campus that is super heavily utilized by students. Students love this area. It's where all the intermural students hang out and where different sports go to practice. It's a really great area for us to utilize and I think that this is a great example of the kind of projects SGA can get involved with. This directly shows how SGA is benefiting them. But being able to talk about and potentially move forward with this project is super exciting and it's going to benefit so many students, but also us to show them we really care and advocate for them.

So, that's my big, long speech about all the different things that we're doing. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Trustee Taylor: So, I'm intrigued by the campus crawl. You are going around campus, identifying maybe some issues that need attention. Is there a mechanism where that actually gets fed back to the facilities people and are those improvements included in the capital budget or how does that work? Do you actually see changes from your recommendations being addressed, you know, repaired the pothole, getting something fixed, whatever?

President Bloom: Yes, I have actually had discussions with Dr. Riley about this. We had another campus crawl in the fall and we talked about different problem areas that we've seen and different accessibility issues. So, we do share that information back to the person and discuss that with SGA and our executive counterparts. So, depending on your position, you meet with a cabinet member. So, for example, I meet with Dr. Riley, and our Student Affairs Vice President meets with Provost Zieg. So, between all of our connections, they're pretty regularly hearing back from us about these types of recommendations.

Trustee Taylor: Great. I have one other question for you. What's the general student population's opinion of the quality of the food served in the dining halls?

President Bloom: So, this is definitely an interesting question. From what I have understood and heard feedback on, I'm also a community assistant in Watson Hall. I've been a community assistant for the last two years, so between that and my involvement in SGA, but also my involvement in other clubs, I have not heard the greatest things. There is a general sense that the quality isn't the best, but also that the food selection isn't conducive to a lot of student's religions or dietary restrictions. So there are definitely some improvements that can be made and I think that students would be excited to see them and be a voice in the process.

Trustee Taylor: Well, we are happy to help in any way in that regard. Many, many years ago, Slippery Rock was the only university system that had its own kitchen. So, if you didn't go to Slippery Rock, you didn't get kitchen-made food on campus. They always brought in food from the other campuses in a truck and then warmed it up. The food was pretty crummy at those other campuses. Slippery Rock's Weisenfluh [Dining Hall] had the best food. So, we want to keep that reputation. So, anything we can do at all, let us know.

With no further questions, this concluded Ms. Bloom's report to the Council.

Commendations

<https://www.livebinders.com/b/3569384>

- Honoring the Service of Dr. Amanda Yale, chief enrollment officer, EM (Appendix B1)
- Honoring the Service of Trustee Cierra Mitchell (Appendix B2)
- Honoring the Service of Trustee Suzanne Vessella (Appendix B3)

Presentations

<https://www.livebinders.com/b/3569384>

Athletics Update: Name, Image, and Likeness/Athletics Aid

- Dr. Roberta Page, director, Athletics and
- Ms. Andrea Gracy, assistant director & Sr. Women's Administrator, Athletics

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT **Karen S. Riley, Ph.D.**

President's Report

March 22, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center

The focus of the past three months has been on evaluating the systems that undergird the university operations, while putting the final touches on the Strategic Plan.

Enrollment:

We continue to focus on enrollment for fall of 2024, while diligently attending to the retention and persistence activities that support our current students. The information provided is as of

March 5, 2023. These numbers change slightly and as such the numbers presented in the presentations may vary from those listed below.

Currently, we are up domestically by 81 domestic deposits, and it is important to note that we are up 90 deposits in Western PA. If this holds, the demands on course registration and housing will be increased. Provost Zieg is working with the deans to ensure that we have enough sections for all of our courses. Faculty contracts and obligations have been set with an understanding that things could change. Students signing up for orientation are up by 139 (2024-848 as compared to 2023-709) students, which represents a 7% increase in yield for deposit to orientation. Both spring orientation programs are closed. We will offer additional sessions in the summer to ensure that we are meeting the demand of our incoming students.

As compared to the same time last year, total FR applications are up by +339 and FR offers are up by +17. FR deposits are up by +73. Freshman domestic applications are up by +273 (domestic deposits +81). Domestic applications in our primary market are up by +201 (primary market deposits +90). Domestic out-of-state applications are up by +42 (OOS deposits -11). Eastern PA applications are up by +40 (Eastern PA deposits +2). URM applications are down by -45 (mostly Eastern PA & OOS) (URM deposits are down -4). International FR applications are up by 66 and deposits are down by -8.

Transfer total applications are down by -71 AND deposits are down by -40 (-79 Domestic applications and -35 domestic deposits/@ 84 deposits International – Mostly China program - Fall 2024). Although we have added several transfer articulation agreements the decline in community college enrollment has had a significant impact on this transfer pool.

Graduate Summer Applications and Deposits are a small number and reflect the national landscape. Summer Applications are up by +7 and deposits are up by 2. Graduate fall applications are down by -81 and deposits are down by -9. The decrease is primarily in Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. This again reflects the trend nationally in these programs. We are exploring ideas to increase the enrollment, including but not limited to offering a modified tuition rate to those students who are from out of state, who complete their undergraduate degrees at SRU and want to pursue graduate degrees at SRU. For example, we are losing students who go back to Ohio for grad school. They would rather stay at SRU, but the tuition stick price continues to be a barrier.

Financial Picture/Budget Scenarios: Updates on the budget and the CPP planning will be covered in executive session. We are currently engaging in various scenario planning and will complete a budget when all of the Collective Bargaining Agreements have been signed. Currently we have reached a tentative agreement with APSCUF regarding faculty, but that is not the case for coaches. The budget must balance, and we are engaged in activities now to ensure that this occurs. It too will be amended once additional compensation information is available.

Construction Projects: There are several projects that have been completed and/or are in various stages of completion. Planning has been completed for the renovation of the Women's

Softball Field, and it is clear that the \$3 million budget will not cover the entire project. We are exploring philanthropic options to complete the project, including a press box and lights. The lights are essential to extend the use of the fields and create a revenue generator for the softball program and the athletic department. Please find the additional information on the back log of deferred maintenance for athletic facilities. Reportedly, the previous CFO instructed our facilities group to treat athletic facilities as an auxiliary and that they were responsible for their own deferred maintenance. This has created a significant backlog of projects that require immediate attention. The table provided lists the current priorities and the estimated costs.

The renovations to the Student Union/Student Success Center are progressing with an estimated occupancy date of July 1, 2024. This is ahead of schedule, which is a positive for everyone involved. We continue with subsequent discussions regarding the cascading impact of moving units to the renovated facility. There is ample space and as such requests and goals regarding relocation of various units are in the active planning stages.

We will be moving the Police Station into the renovated space. We are currently drafting blueprints for the space. There will be an additional cost for this, however it is very necessary given the conditions of the current Police Station.

The Governor's Blueprint for Higher Education: The Governor's Blueprint was shared with the COT and has been shared broadly across the SRU community. I am pleased to be a part of these discussions, and it is important to reiterate that we are in the very early stages of discussions. We are very happy that the Governor and his team want to invest in higher education. The implications for SRU or any of the universities and community colleges are currently not clear. During our meetings I ask questions and share my suggestions and concerns as the President of SRU and as a member of this community. I have had several conversations with my PASSHE colleagues and have had discussions with my community college colleagues as well. Dr. Nick Neupauer and I continue to have a very good working relationship and will continue to collaborate effectively to serve the students and families within Butler County. As I have shared on several occasions, it is very early in the process, and I will continue to update all of you as more information becomes available.

Strategic Plan: The work to complete the narrative and implementation structure for the Strategic Plan has been completed. The matrix has been presented to each of you, and the overall narrative will be sent to you once the formatting has been completed. The graphic representation of the plan was created by our students in Dr. Doris Clark's advanced graphic design course.

Pillar #1 Commitment to a Robust, Supportive, and Inclusive Culture

Ensure that all faculty, staff, and students have the support and resources necessary to thrive. Investing in our leaders and emerging leaders is an important step in ensuring the overall success of the university, now and in the future. We have had two meetings for the Administrative Council comprised of 200 level managers and above. This group will be involved in communications training with BCW. The training will involve best practices in leadership

communication as well as training to ensure that our managers are aware of current issues and risks associated with various forms of communication. The deans and the Athletic Director will complete a fund-raising training course with our consultants from BFW. If we are going to reach the goals for our comprehensive campaign, we will need to ensure that this group has the skills necessary to be effective fund raisers.

Use marketing and communication to advance the university.

We have launched the plan to move to a digital format for The Rock magazine. In the spring of 2024, we will provide the print version to all SRU alumni. This edition will include more invitations to consume digital content, like QR codes linking to videos that accompany stories. We will inform readers that future print editions will only be sent to those who opt in. In the fall of 2024, we will launch the digital version for online stories and a temporary landing page. We will also include an announcement in the print issue that the digital version is available, and will inform readers that future print editions will only be sent if they opt in. The spring of 2025 will be the first issue that is mailed only to those who opted in and other key audiences, such as Alumni Association members. The fall of 2025 will make the first issue of The Rock using a permanent vendor solution. In subsequent years we will continue publishing reduced print issues twice per year and evaluate reader preferences each year. The new format will allow us to publish content with a flexible schedule, which will drive more viewers to the website. We will publish long-form articles, videos, and other content under a “stories” section of the website that could essentially replace what is known as a “digital magazine”. We will start with a short-term vendor option while we prepare ourselves for a longer-term vendor. We currently do not have the infrastructure necessary for the long-term option and as such this is a more economical and strategic approach. Moving to a digital format will not only increase the engagement of our readers with dynamic content; it will also save the university approximately \$484,000 over a five-year period. These cost savings do not account for inflation and as such are considered a low estimation of savings.

Pillar #2 Commitment to Academic Discovery and Human Growth

Support the expectation of excellence and goal attainment.

Offer a mission-driven and market responsive mix of academic programs.

A feasibility study was completed which suggests that adding an MA to our Occupational Therapy program would not be prudent at this time. As such we will wait to add this additional program and will explore other related areas of study.

The nursing accreditation visit was completed, and the exit interview did not provide any areas of concern. As such we are focusing on adding additional pathways and degree offerings in nursing. UPMC is exploring a large partnership with PASSHE to increase their workforce pipeline. We are one of four universities who will be involved in this partnership. Engineering is exploring several additional programs including but not limited to electrical engineering. They are pursuing partnerships with our business school and more detail will be provided as these programs are solidified. Within the business school we are putting together a proposal for a certificate program in project management that can be completed within a baccalaureate degree program or as part of a post-baccalaureate program.

The Office of the Provost is also continually monitoring those programs that have low enrollments and will be working with deans on solutions. Once these solutions have been formalized, we will present the approach to the COT.

Provide premier student experience.

Provide state-of-the-art facilities and technology.

We are in the final stages of approving a project to turf the intermural fields. This is a project that has been of interest to many across the campus for several years, however the cost has always been prohibitive, given the other deferred maintenance projects. This project, as proposed, will be initially funded by SGA. SGA is part of the newly formed Affiliates Work Group that is tasked with bringing together all aspects of the university in order to take SRU to the next level. This collaboration is also designed to ensure that we use our resources in the most effective and strategic way. The project will provide an additional space for students who engage in intramural sports and club sports. Athletics will also be able to use the field, but this will not be its primary usage. The addition of a second turfed field will take some of the pressure off the stadium, thus decreasing maintenance costs. We also think that we can rent out the space to outside sports organizations to generate revenue. The ARC will assume responsibility for maintenance and management of the space. The SGA board will hold a final vote before the end of April. The estimated cost of turfing the fields is approximately \$2.5 million. More information will be provided once the project has been fully approved by SGA.

Expand learning experiences and opportunities to meet the needs of varied learners and groups.

We are currently exploring the options of creating partnerships with a couple of local school districts to offer concurrent enrollment. These discussions are in the early stages and would require a deep discussion with APSCUF. We are also exploring ways in which this can be funded. One possibility is to access EITC (Education Improvement Tax Credit). This fund was accessed in the past; however, we had allowed our application to lapse several years ago. Dave Hollenbaugh is working with the various university partners to reinstate this funding opportunity. This is clearly an additional revenue stream that we want to continue to explore and could also be captured within Pillar #4.

Pillar #3 Commitment to Community Impact and Collaboration

Expand educational learning and growth opportunities that add value to external constituencies.

Increase engagement, partnerships, and reciprocal relationships with K-12 schools, health care facilities, government, and business and industry at the local and state levels.

On January 24th we hosted a reception at Fogo de Chao in Pittsburgh. In 2020 University Advancement had planned an event with this establishment and had paid a non-refundable deposit. The managers of Fogo de Chao allowed us to carry this balance forward for several years but let us know that if we did not use it, we would lose the deposit. As such, we scheduled a meet 'n greet event with the additional sponsorship of the SRU Foundation. From this event we have had follow-up conversations and have hosted campus visits or have them scheduled with several potential partners including but not limited to the Pittsburgh Chamber

of Commerce, Caterpillar – Pittsburgh Automation Center, SteelBridge Labs, Carlow University, and the Pittsburgh River Hounds. We have also hosted campus visits with MSA, who is considering a new gift to the university, Westinghouse, who is also considering various partnerships and are scheduled to host Zurn in the next couple of weeks. We are also working with UPMC as previously mentioned on new nursing pathways and are in early discussions with West Penn Energy on possible areas for collaboration.

Patrick Joyal, who is regional director, from Governor Shapiro's office, will be on campus April 1, 2024 to meet with me and to take a campus tour. There is some discussion of a campus visit by the Governor and we should know more about this possibility after the April 1 visit.

Pillar #4 Commitment to Financial Sustainability and Resource Stewardship

Structure the University for success.

Implement policies and practices to optimize unit-level performance, including the acquisition and allocation of technological, financial, and physical resources.

Athletics now reports to the President. Accounting and procedural practices within the unit currently present significant risk to the university. As such a small task force is working to create new practices and procedures to ensure financial compliance with the reporting and accounting practices as well as within the travel procedures. It is clear that the managing of the business aspect of the athletics department is very complicated, and as such, requires additional staff support. We will be adding an additional staff member to the Budget and Finance group to set up the new systems and to ensure compliance. This will save money and time in the long run and will allow the coaches to have a clear understanding of their budgets so that they can make good decisions for their teams.

Ensure alignment and efficiency between and within the affiliated entities.

One of the initiatives that will have a huge impact on the university as a whole is the Affiliated Entities Work Group. We continue to meet and to work on creating a deeper understanding of the individual roles of each entity as well as their roles in advancing the collective goals of SRU. One outcome of this collaboration appears to be the funding of the IM fields. SGA funding something of this magnitude is a huge step forward in strategic collaboration. We will hold our third meeting in the next couple of weeks, as we continue to learn more about how each group operates.

Diversify revenue streams.

Increase revenue streams through sponsored programs, grant awards, fundraising efforts, and other endeavors.

We are in the process of re-launching a comprehensive campaign. We are currently working with BWF on the foundational structure. We are listening to our constituent groups on the opportunities within our community as well as the prioritization of our needs. They have interviewed cabinet and will be on campus April 3-5 to conduct additional listening sessions. COT members will be invited to participate in these sessions. Bob Taylor has graciously offered to serve on the leadership team for the campaign. The initial campaign priorities are focused

on these broad areas; general scholarships, endowed athletic scholarships, endowed chairs for each college, naming opportunities across campus, athletic facilities including but not limited to improvements to the stadium, as well as enhanced academic facilities like a new sim lab to expand our nursing programs.

We have brought together a small workgroup to begin a mini-campaign to improve the Mihalik-Thompson Stadium. The group is exploring design options as well as funding possibilities. The group is comprised of alumni led by two former coaches, Drs. George Mihalik and Stan Kendzierski. We will continue to update you on the progress of the workgroup.

We are also submitting appropriations requests to Senators Casey and Fetterman. We are early in the process and will reach out to members of the COT once we have had our formal conversations with the representatives from the senators' offices. As previously mentioned, we are also seeking funds through the EITC. We will continue to explore every avenue to increase funding to SRU.

As is customary, I'll leave you with a sampling of news about our university, students, faculty, staff, and alumni:

PUBLICATIONS

Eshak co-authors study published in the National Library of Medicine

Tarek Eshak, an SRU professor of public health, recently co-authored an article that was published in the National Library of Medicine titled "Syndemic of Substance Abuse, Depression, and Type 2 Diabetes and Their Association with Retention in Care Among People Living with HIV."

Zullo publishes book about sports administration

Robert Zullo, an SRU instructor of sport management, hospitality and tourism, recently co-authored the second edition of a textbook titled "Administration of Intercollegiate Athletics."

Lengyel and Maltman co-author article about new bacterial species

George Lengyel, a Slippery Rock University professor of chemistry, and Christopher Maltman, an SRU assistant professor of biology, co-authored an article titled, "Gordonia metallireducens sp. nov., a tellurite- and selenite-resistant bacterium isolated from the sediment of an acid mine drainage stream."

PERFORMANCES

SRU theatre recognized at Kennedy Center regional festival

The Slippery Rock University Theatre Department's production of "Grecian Burns" was one of five invited productions selected to be performed at the Region 2 Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, Jan. 27, at the Byham Theater in Pittsburgh. The play, performed at SRU in October, was directed by Aaron Galligan-Stierle, assistant professor of theater.

Galligan-Stierle and Goldsmith performing in Pittsburgh CLO's 'A Musical Christmas Carol'

Aaron Galligan-Stierle, a Slippery Rock University assistant professor of theatre, and Lisa Ann Goldsmith, an instructor of theatre, played the roles of Bob Cratchit and Mrs. Cratchit in the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera's production of "A Musical Christmas Carol."

SRU marching band performs at London's New Year's Day Parade

Slippery Rock University's marching band performed in London's New Year's Day Parade on Jan. 1. More than 140 members of the Marching Pride and staff traveled to England's capital city, Dec. 28 to Jan. 3, after SRU's band was selected to perform in one of world's largest New Year's Day parades. (Photo gallery)

GIFTS AND GRANTS

SRU receives record \$2 million estate gift to support RockTEACH program

SRU has received its largest-ever planned estate gift. Dave and Judy Phillips, '66, pledged a \$2 million bequest that will fund scholarships and programming through RockTEACH, a program at SRU founded in 2018 that promotes teacher education as a career path for underrepresented minority students.

SRU receives state grant to recruit campus police officers

Slippery Rock University is one of 93 nonprofit organizations in the state to receive funding through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. The PCCD, chaired by Lt. Gov. Austin Davis, recently approved \$19 million in funding that includes a \$21,000 grant to SRU for recruiting police officers on campus.

Zanin-Yost receives grant for research on phytomedicine

Alessia Zanin-Yost, an SRU assistant professor of library systems, received a grant of \$2,000 from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Medical Library Association Research and Assessment Committee to investigate the knowledge, consumption and perceptions of phytomedicine of consumers living in the United States and Italy. Phytomedicines are herbal medicines with therapeutic and healing properties.

Bui and Jirasakuldech receive grant for research on elderly housing in rural Pennsylvania

Thuy Bui and Benjamas Jirasakuldech, SRU professors of accounting, economics and finance, received a grant of \$15,000 from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania to provide a comprehensive analysis of supply and demand for senior citizen housing in rural Pennsylvania.

AWARDS AND RANKINGS

SRU recognized among nation's best online programs in U.S. News & World Report's 2024 rankings

Slippery Rock University was recognized by U.S. News & World Report on its 2024 Best Online Programs rankings. SRU ranked 138th on the list for Best Online Bachelor's Programs.

Hamidi named Professor of Year by ASCE Pittsburgh Section

Sajad Hamidi, an SRU associate professor of physics and engineering, was named 2023 Professor of the Year Award by the American Society of Civil Engineers, Pittsburgh Section, at an awards ceremony, Feb. 17, in Pittsburgh.

Tsai earns RCRA Excellence in Research award

Frank Tsai, a Slippery Rock University assistant professor of sport management, hospitality and tourism, was recently selected for an award by the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association. Tsai was selected for the Excellence in Research award because of his valuable contribution to selected pieces of research that were presented at the RCRA Research Symposium at the National Conference.

Four SRU students win Society of Illustrator awards

Four Slippery Rock University students had their artwork recognized in the 2023 Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators' Student Scholarship Awards competition.

Pastore wins Butler County Symphony competition

Taylor Pastore, a Slippery Rock University junior music education major from Canonsburg, was the 2024 winner of the Collegiate Concerto Competition, sponsored by the Butler County Symphony Association.

APPOINTMENTS

SRU appoints Erin Bryer as interim vice president for university advancement

Slippery Rock University announced Feb. 13 that Erin Bryer has been appointed interim vice president for university advancement. Bryer has worked at SRU since 2011 and most recently as director of advancement services and donor communication.

Preston named president-elect of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators

James Preston, a Slippery Rock University associate professor of elementary education and early childhood development, was recently named the president-elect of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

SRU sport management students reflect on their experience working at the Super Bowl

Fifteen Slippery Rock University students worked at Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas after the NFL selected the SRU sport management program to work at the league's marquee event. SRU students are staffing the Bart Starr Awards Breakfast, engaging with fans at the NFL Fan Experience, and providing hospitality at Allegiant Stadium during the game. SRU was one of only a handful of schools in the country invited by the NFL to staff the event with college students. Twelve sport management majors were selected by department faculty based on an application process for limited spots.

SRU partners with Hill District organization to share Pittsburgh's history

The history and culture of Pittsburgh's Hill District neighborhood is being preserved and shared with a wider audience thanks to a recent partnership with Slippery Rock University's History Department. Aaron Cowan, an SRU professor of history, and graduate students from his Public History course, recently helped the Hill Community Development Corporation launch the Hill District Digital History Project, available online at hillhistory.org.

SRU business students place 10th in global business simulation competition

A team of students from Slippery Rock University placed 10th in the MikesBikes Advanced global business strategy simulation competition hosted by Smartsims. The semester-long competition challenged student teams to run a public-listed bicycle company and make decisions concerning marketing, production and supply chain. More than 500 universities and several thousand teams compete across the globe. The SRU team achieved the Hall of Fame listing and was invited to the Championship Rounds, an achievement only given to fewer than 50 teams.

ATHLETICS UPDATES

Roxanne Dunn wins 2024 NCAA Inspiration Award

Former SRU pole vaulter Roxanne Dunn, '20, was presented with the 2024 NCAA Inspiration Award during the NCAA Convention in Phoenix. The Inspiration Award is presented to a coach or administrator currently associated with intercollegiate athletics or to a current or former varsity letter winner at an NCAA school. It honors those who used perseverance, dedication and determination to overcome a life-altering situation and become role models, giving hope and inspiration to others.

Lewandowski named head coach of USA 3x3 Olympic Team

SRU alumnus Joe Lewandowski '99 was named as head coach of the 2024 USA Men's Basketball 3x3 Olympic Team for the upcoming summer games in Paris. Lewandowski, who has been coaching and advising the USA Basketball 3x3 program since 2014, will lead a team of men making its 3x3 Olympic debut as the sport prepares for its second appearance in the Olympics.

Men's Basketball 2023-24 Season Recap

The SRU men's basketball team concluded its 2023-24 season with a 16-14 overall record that included a 13-9 mark in PSAC competition. The Rock qualified for the PSAC Tournament as the No. 3 seed in the Western Division and snapped a five-year postseason winless drought by defeating Seton Hill in the first round of the conference tournament. This year's Rock team also posted a 13-1 record inside Morrow Field House, which is tied for the third highest single-game win total at Morrow Field House in program history. SRU has now recorded six consecutive winning seasons, five of which have come under the direction of head coach Ian Grady. Maceo Austin and Jomo Goings were named to All-PSAC honors.

Women's Basketball 2023-24 Season Recap

The SRU women's basketball team finished with a 2-23 overall record and a 2-20 mark in the PSAC under first-year head coach Ryenn Micaletti. Regan Atkins was named the PSAC West Freshman of the Year after voting by the league's head coaches.

Men's Indoor Track & Field 2023-24 Season Recap

The SRU men's indoor track and field team finished second at the 2024 Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Indoor Championships. The runner-up finish marks the 13th straight year The Rock have finished inside the top three in the final team standings at the indoor championships. SRU won four events with Kanye Thompson winning the 60-meter dash, AJ Virata winning the 200-meter dash, Matthew Crow winning the 60-meter hurdles and Bryan Dworek winning the long jump. Virata was named the Most Outstanding Track Athlete of the meet and Joshua Gose was named the PSAC Champion Scholar Award winner for owning the highest GPA among all men competing at the championship. SRU had eight individual men earn All-Region honors for posting one of the top five marks in the Atlantic Region in their respective events.

Women's Indoor Track & Field 2023-24 Season Recap

The SRU women's track and field team won its seventh indoor PSAC title in 2024 and completed a calendar sweep of PSAC titles in the process. The Rock women won the 2023 PSAC outdoor title, the 2023 PSAC cross country title and the 2023-24 PSAC indoor title. Regan Johnson was recognized as the PSAC Champion Scholar for owning the highest GPA of all female athletes competing at the meet. Anna Igims won the mile, the 3,000-meter run, the 5,000-meter run and anchored the distance medley relay to a win. She was named the Most Outstanding Track Athlete and the Most Outstanding Overall Athlete at the meet. Sarah Corrie won the shot put and Kendall Grossman won the pole vault to give SRU wins in six different events. Grossman went on to earn All-America honors in the pole vault while representing SRU at the 2024 NCAA Division II Indoor Track & Field National Championships in Kansas. SRU has eight individual women earn All-Region honors for posting one of the top five marks in the Atlantic Region in their respective events.

Committee Reports

Academic and Student Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix C)

Trustee Elise Michaux chairs the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and provided the following report.

Dr. Zieg provided updates on revisions to the Academic Integrity Policy, which focuses on making due process steps explicit, consideration of intentionality when reviewing allegations, and inclusion of artificial intelligence standards. He also previewed forthcoming academic proposals, including new degree programs in Nursing, Electrical Engineering, and Construction Management, along with an expansion of the MBA program. He also reviewed changes to PASSHE's program review process, which will expand participation in program reviews and will involve annual summary reports to the Council.

Dr. Jones delivered a comprehensive update on our DEIB initiatives. He discussed the progress made in DEIB programming, outreach efforts, collaborative projects, and training initiatives. Additionally, Dr. Jones unveiled the 2023-2027 DEIB Strategic Plan, detailing its strategies and action items. He elaborated on the plan's implementation process, emphasizing how it will be tracked and shared with the community on a semesterly basis to ensure transparency and accountability.

Dr. Yale provided an enrollment update for winter, spring, summer and fall student enrollment. Winter session credit hours were up by +11.7%. Undergraduate credit hours were up by 11.3% and graduate credit hours generated were up by +12.7%. Total Spring term credit hours were up by 1.1%. Undergraduate credit hours were up by 1.2% and graduate credit hours were up by .8%. Freshman deposits for fall are up by 73, +90 in the primary market. Currently, deposits are over 1200, Orientation sign-ups are over 1000, and over 900 new freshmen are already registered for the fall term. Transfer deposits for fall are down by 40. Applications from community colleges comprise the majority of the decline. New graduate student deposits for summer and fall are similar to last year.

With the federal delay in FAFSA, financial aid packages, including the addition of need-based aid, are anticipated to be sent out to new students mid-April. Continuing students will receive them at the same time as previous years.

Student retention for all three FR cohorts increased from the fall to spring term. Additionally, fall to spring student persistence for the fall 2023 cohort increased for on-campus students, high-need students, first-generation, PELL-eligible, and Western PA students.

Dr. Wilmes provided updates on the Rock the Weekend program, changes to the Dean of Students office, and housing occupancy for 2024-25. He also previewed a potential partnership between SRU and the Slippery Rock Student Government Association to turf the McFarland Intramural Fields. This project will expand recreational options for club sports, student organizations, athletics, and the greater community.

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix D)

The Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee met yesterday afternoon at 3:30 PM

The meeting began with an opportunity for public comment. Sydney Rezzetano, the president of finance for SGA took the opportunity to speak. Ms Rezzetano gave the committee an update on the process that SGA undertook to discuss the fees which they support.

Carrie Birckbichler, vice president for finance and administration provided an update on the university's financial position at the mid-point of the financial year. While salary negotiations have not been finalized it appears that Slippery Rock will remain in a positive financial position once those talks are finalized and the statements are adjusted.

Ms. Birckbichler also provided information concerning the capital budget projects.

The remainder of the session was spent reviewing the four fee increases that will be considered at the formal COT meeting. These fees were previously reviewed at a Finance Committee workshop on February 23rd. These fees are:

Campus Recreation Fee	\$220 to \$260 per year
Student Center Fee	\$421 to \$442 per year
Dining Fee (14 meal plan)	\$3,392 to \$3,532 per year
Traditional Housing	\$3,488 to \$3,558 per year

The meeting concluded at 4:45 PM. Chairman Ionta, this concludes my report.

University Advancement Committee (Agenda, Appendix E)

Trustee Joshua Young, committee chairperson, provided the following report. The University Advancement Committee met this morning at 8:30 this morning.

Interim Vice President Erin Bryer presented the advancement update. As of December 31, 2023, \$1,603,784 was raised – a 29% increase over 2022 December totals. There were 325 Founders' Society members – those who give \$1,000 or more annually to SRU. Development activity highlights reported include \$67,360 in charitable gift annuities received in response to increased planned giving outreach, \$385,000 in cash donations received in total from our top three donors, and a documented \$2M bequest. Erin reviewed the Comprehensive Campaign timeline and campaign activity relating to the pre-campaign planning and feasibility study work being conducted currently. Comprehensive campaign fundraising totals for FY2024 currently stand at \$7,403,785. Erin reminded us that SRU Giving Day is right around the corner and will held March 26, 2024.

Kelly Bailey, director of Alumni Engagement, provided an update of Alumni Engagement and Alumni Association activities. She shared the four metrics being used to chart engagement: Experiential, Volunteer, Communications and Philanthropy and how activities fit into that model. In addition to hosting events in Florida, plans are underway for Countdown to Cap and Gown in March, a Student Leadership Trip to DC and Awards and Recognition Event in April, as well as Alumni Weekend in June.

Chair of the SRU Foundation, Inc. Board, Mark Palmer, and Executive Director, Dave Hollenbaugh, presented an update for the SRU Foundation, Inc. They described the financial report for the Foundation with a new series of slides that showed the financial summary graphs, including percentages and dollar amounts for the financial components. They discussed the Foundation's investment performance as well as the policies that govern the management and use of funds. They detailed the financials for SRUF Student Housing and answered questions regarding revenue and expenses such as rent, loan balance, maintenance and the Facilities Management Agreement. They reported on the Foundation's historical real estate assets and the potential and progress in development. They shared updates on the Scholarship Stewardship Dinner (on April 13th) and the Petroleum Engineering software license.

Chairman Ionta, this concludes my report.

Governance Committee (Agenda, Appendix F)

Trustee Alfonso Angelucci, chair of the Governance Committee, provided the following report. Items addressed for action, discussion, and information were:

- Election of Officers: Trustees will select the 2024-2025 Council officers at the June meeting.

- Meeting dates will be set for September '24 – June '25 at the June meeting.
- Moving forward, PACT Update, is removed from the agenda as a quarterly topic for discussion.
- Calendar mentions (spring/summer 2024)
- SRU Council bylaws were included in the materials as information.

Trustee Angelucci: Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Executive Session (Agenda, Appendix G)

Council met this morning in executive session with President Riley and University Legal Counsel. No report; closed session.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Capital Budget Request (24-25) (TAB 8) (Appendix H)

Trustee Young moved, seconded by Trustee Angelucci, approval of the Capital Budget (24-25). Roll Call Vote: 11 yes, 0, no. Motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Elsie Michaux	Yes	Joshua Young	Yes
Domenic Ionta	Yes	Ciera Mitchell	Yes		
Matt Lautman	Yes	Jeffrey Smith	Yes		
Dan Lavallee	Yes	Angele Stoebener	Yes		
William McCarrier	Yes	Bob Taylor	Yes		

Naming Resolution: Samantha Swift Memorial Golf Outing (TAB 9) (Appendix I)

Trustee Young moved, seconded by Trustee Taylor, approval of the Naming Resolution: Samantha Swift Memorial Golf Outing. Motion carries unanimously.

Auxiliary Fees Proposal (Increase Student Fees) (TAB 14 Appendix J)

Recreation Complex (\$20 increase per semester)

Trustee Smith moved, seconded by Trustee Stoebener, approval of the Recreation Complex fee increase of \$20 per semester. Roll Call Vote: 9 yes, 2 no, motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Elsie Michaux	Yes	Joshua Young	Yes
Domenic Ionta	Yes	Ciera Mitchell	Yes		
Matt Lautman	No	Jeffrey Smith	Yes		
Dan Lavallee	Yes	Angele Stoebener	Yes		
William McCarrier	Yes	Bob Taylor	No		

Trustee Taylor asked for clarification to the increased. Are any of these fee requests contractually required? The food service is the only request that is contractually obligated in accordance with CPI of 5.22%. ARAMARK has asked for an additional 5% above the CPI. This request is for the 5.22%.

Student Center (\$10.50 per semester)

Trustee Smith moved, seconded by Trustee Angelucci, approval of the Student Center fee increase of \$10.50 per semester. Roll Call Vote: 9 yes, 2 no, motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Elsie Michaux	Yes	Joshua Young	Yes
Domenic Ionta	Yes	Ciera Mitchell	Yes		
Matt Lautman	No	Jeffrey Smith	Yes		
Dan Lavallee	Yes	Angele Stoebener	Yes		
William McCarrier	Yes	Bob Taylor	No		

Dining Services Meal Plans (\$70 per semester, 14-meal plan)

Trustee Smith moved, second by Trustee Angelucci, approval of the dining services meal plans. This is under contract with ARAMARK with the request to increase \$70 per semester, 14-meal plan) Roll Call Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Elsie Michaux	Yes	Joshua Young	Yes
Domenic Ionta	Yes	Ciera Mitchell	Yes		
Matt Lautman	Yes	Jeffrey Smith	Yes		
Dan Lavallee	Yes	Angele Stoebener	Yes		
William McCarrier	Yes	Bob Taylor	Yes		

Traditional Housing Room Rates (\$35 per semester, 2% increase)

Trustee Smith moved, seconded by Trustee Angelucci, approval to increase traditional housing room rates, \$35 per semester, 2% increase). Roll Call Vote: 10 yes, 1 no. Motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Elsie Michaux	Yes	Joshua Young	Yes
Domenic Ionta	Yes	Ciera Mitchell	Yes		
Matt Lautman	Yes	Jeffrey Smith	Yes		
Dan Lavallee	Yes	Angele Stoebener	Yes		
William McCarrier	Yes	Bob Taylor	No		

INFORMATION ITEMS

Meeting Dates:

June 13-14, 2024

Contracts: (TAB 10) (Appendix K)

Facilities & Planning Active Project List (TAB 11) (Appendix L)

HR Personnel Items (Tab 12) (Appendix M)

- Instructional Appointments: Effective Academic Year 2023-2024
- Administrator Appointments
- Non-Faculty Athletics Coach Appointments
- Management Appointments
- Support Staff Appointments
- Retirements
- Resignations
- Emeritus Status

Budget/Financial Update (TAB 13) (Appendix N)**Committee Presentations (TAB 15)****Divisional Reports (TAB 16)****FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Trustee Michaux: I would be remiss if I did not thank Dr. Amanda Yale for her service to SRU. As a student who watched her throughout her career, and now to a professional who appreciates her mentorship. Thank you for your diligence and service to this institution. To Cierra, it has been my pleasure getting to know you. I can't wait to see what you do next. And to the group overall, the Cabinet and the work you do is not lost on me. You do not bring these things to us lightly. Thank you all for your continued leadership and dedication as well. See you in June.

Trustee Young: I echo Elise's comments. Thank you, Dr. Yale, for your leadership and best wishes to you, Cierra. I also want to share that Trustee Suzanne Vessella joined the Council in 2003 – the same time that I joined the Council as a student trustee. She led the Council through some difficult times and transitions. These positions are voluntary, and Suzanne volunteered her time and I want to thank her for her work as well as her mentorship when I was a student trustee. I appreciate her time and volunteerism.


Trustee Smith: Earlier we recognized Amanda for her work and for her service to SRU, a well-deserved recognition. I would also like to recognize the following faculty and staff for their service: Dr. Lang Smith, Dr. Linda Zane, Dr. Catriona Higgs, Brenda Beatty, Randy Cole and Richard Maire. While we might not have interacted with them, we acknowledge and thank them for their service to the students and to Slippery Rock University. (round of applause). We all receive the invitation to the Spring Choral Concert, directed by Dr. Timothy Little Tran, 3:00 p.m., Saturday, April 13. This is an excellent opportunity to attend a campus event. Attending these events is noticed and appreciated by the campus community. If you live in the area, mark your calendars.

Trustee Lautman: Also, the Scholarship Dinner on April 13, 5:00 p.m., SSC Ballroom.

Trustee Angelucci: Thank you, Dr. Yale, Fantastic work! You always came to every meeting well prepared, shared incredible data, always very positive. Cierra – thank you for your service to this Council. Best wishes! Thanks to Ella and Cierra for their leadership and we heard some items for follow-up. I'm sure Dr. Riley and her team are listening and following up accordingly. Thank you.

Trustee Ionta: I've said this many times, and I will say it again. We meet four times per year. This university is at the top. I know we all realize it is not because of us meeting four times per year. It's because of the outstanding staff, faculty, and administrators grinding it out each day. We have a great student body. On behalf of the Council, thank you to everyone, we appreciate it. Thank you all very much.

With no further business, Chair Ionta called for adjournment. Trustee Young moved, Trustee Lautman seconded, to adjourn the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees business meeting. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted: 

Tina L. Moser, Administrative Liaison to the SRU Council of Trustees