

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

September 27, 2024

The Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees held its quarterly business meeting Friday, September 27, 2024, in the Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center and via Zoom conferencing. Chair Angèle Stoebener called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting materials for this meeting can be found on the SRU Council webpage:
<https://www.livebinders.com/b/3607206>

Recording of Attendance

Trustees present: Dr. Alfonso Angelucci, Mr. Domenic Ionta, Mr. Dan Lavalley, Mr. William McCarrier, Ms. Elsie Michaux, Ms. Charli Severo, Mr. Jeffrey Smith, Ms. Angèle Stoebener, Mr. Robert Taylor, Mr. Joshua Young

Trustees absent: Mr. Matt Lautman

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

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Trustee McCarrier moved, second by Trustee Michaux, approval of the September 27, 2024, meeting agenda. Motion carries (TAB 6, Appendix A)

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Michaux moved, second by Trustee Young, approval of the quarterly business meeting minutes of Friday, June 14, 2024. Motion carries. (TAB 7, Appendix B)

Public Comments

Ms. Ella Bloom, SRSGA President

Ella provided updates to the following topics in her presentation to the Council.

- Aramark meeting about the waiting period between meal swipes.
- Weekend Shopping Trips for students.
- SRSGA Senate has almost every seat filled.
- Campus Crawl occurred September 20th.
- Fundraising requirement added to Finance Policy.
- Changes to the SRSGA Constitution regarding position descriptions and dismissal policy.
- Turf project update.
- Native Vegetation Prairie project is up and running.

Commendations

None

Presentations

Campus Spotlight

- Keystone Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation
 - Dr. Evan Guiney, associate provost, Biology
- The Jump Start Transition Program
 - Ms. Kristin Black, assistant director, Student Transitions, Inclusive Excellence

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Karen S. Riley, Ph.D.

Slippery Rock University

President's Report

September 27, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center

Welcome Back Video: As is customary we shared a Welcome Back video with the campus. The goal was to start the Town Hall with a celebratory video, depicting the events of the first few weeks of the semester.

Enrollment: Enrollment has increased by .4% compared to last year. There were 8394 students enrolled as of the 15th day of classes in the Fall 2024 semester, which is 32 more students compared to the same day last year. These numbers are subject to change as Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education will verify and report enrollments by Oct. 4. Census data for each school is taken on the 15th day of the semester for national and state reporting purposes. There were slight declines in transfer students as well as graduate students. The new VP for Enrollment Management is working with his team to ensure that this does not happen next year. He is also working on plans to increase Spring enrollment, particularly in these two areas.

HEADCOUNT	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	+/-	%
Undergraduate	6,815	6,853	+38	+0.6%
Graduate	1,547	1,541	-6	-0.4%
Total	8,362	8,394	+32	+0.4%

COHORTS	Total Cohort	Retention	++/-/	URM	+/-
	2023 FR	84.1%*	+2.6%	86.7%	+13.6%
	2022	81.5%	73.1%		
	2022 SO	75.7%*	+1.9%	69.4%	+4.4%
	2021	73.8%	65.0%		
	2021 JR	67.3%	-1.1%	59.3%	+4.6%
	2020	68.4%	54.7%		

Financial Picture/Budget Scenarios: According to the data provided by the Budget and Finance committee the FY 24 budget has closed with a balance of \$806,971. Approximately \$700k was a result of the OneSIS revenue from PASSHE which will be transferred to reserves to be used to implement the project. The additional funds will be transferred to the reserve accounts within the President's Account to support initiatives to advance the Strategic Plan. The FY 25 budget has been completed. The CPP was submitted to PASSHE on September 20, 2024.

The PASSHE system has created a four-factor system for assessing the financial sustainability. The graphic below illustrates the financial sustainability and health of the university and provides the information for the other PASSHE schools. SRU meets or exceeds all of the metrics resulting in an "all green" rating. Although the financial situation of the University remains positive, we continue to move forward with an eye towards the future. New positions are very carefully considered within the context of the national projections of an enrollment cliff. All open positions are carefully considered prior to them being refilled.

Construction Projects: The summary of construction projects reflects activities within Pillar #2, addressing initiatives - Enhance the quality, functionality, and aesthetic appeal of campus environment, and Provide state of the art facilities and technology.

ARC E-Sports Lab – AUX Funds

ARC Roof Replacement – AUX Funds

Asphalt – Repaved portions of Campus Loop, Stadium Drive, Rock Pride Drive – E&G Facilities

ATSH Auditorium Roof Refurbishment – E&G Facilities

ATSH Fume Hood Controls Replacement Phase 2 – E&G Facilities

Boozel Basement Floor Drain Installation and Hot Water Heater Replacement – AUX Funds

Buildings A, B, and Watson Hallway Carpet Replacement – Foundation

Building B Condensate Line Replacement - Foundation

Building E Replace Cooling Tower - Foundation

Carruth Rizza Stormwater Improvements – E&G Facilities

Concrete replacement between Spotts/Vincent Science – E&G Facilities

Critchfield Park Install Additional Foul Ball Netting – E&G Facilities

ECB Replace Emergency Generator and Transfer Switch – E&G Facilities

Morrow Field House Natatorium Lighting Replacement – E&G Facilities

Morrow Field House Men's Pool Locker Room Structural Repair – E&G Facilities

Morrow Field House Scoreboard and Sound System Replacement – E&G Facilities

Morrow Field House Shower Room Refurbishment – E&G Facilities

Old Main South Entrance Step Refurbishment – E&G Facilities
 Stoner West Roof Replacement – E&G Facilities
 Strain Mechanical Room Ventilation – E&G Facilities
 Tennis Court Asbestos Abatement - E&G Facilities

The Governor’s Blueprint for Higher Education: The Governor’s Higher Education Advisory Board has been formed and announced. The announcement of the Advisory Board was shared with the Council of Trustees. There are currently no individuals serving on the Advisory Board who represent or have a known affiliation with Slippery Rock University.

Strategic Plan: The Strategic Plan is in its implementation phase. Many of the activities, outcomes and documents of evidence were shared with the COT by cabinet members. A small sampling of activities not covered by the cabinet are provided. We have moved into the phase of the plan that involves broad reaching goals. As such we have constituted pillar leads and working groups. The chairs are working with their groups and have been assigned specific goals within their respective pillars.

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. Embed the development of cultural competencies across the university through the integration of the diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging strategies and initiatives across curricular and co-curricular experiences, training and programming opportunities for faculty, staff, and students. With the departure of Dr. Jones in June 2024 the university took the opportunity to review the current role of the Chief Diversity Officer, including the job responsibilities as well as the current and future needs of the organization. This approach is consistent with the approach taken to review the IATS department. A continual improvement process often requires a step back to assess the current situation as well as future needs before moving forward. A part of the assessment process was listening sessions with various constituent groups. The following list of the listening sessions and the accompanying dates that they were held. I also had several discussions with Keshia Booker, our Interim CDO. We sent out a survey to faculty and staff asking for input on the needs of the university. We hired a search firm to help with drafting the job description, as we wanted information from a national perspective. We will post the position in October.

- DEIB Advisory Board - 7/12
- APSCUF Social Justice Committee - 7/18
- DEIB Task Force - 6/22
- DEI Designation Committee - 7/23
- DEI Assessment Committee - 7/18
- Office of Global Engagement staff -8/26
- Interim Chief Diversity Officer
- PASSHE CDO – 8/12

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.

The provost provided the COT with an overview of the request to approve several new programs including nursing, construction management, and electrical engineering during a special summer session.

Provide appropriate resources to support and sustain high-quality scholarship and creative activities.

Providing faculty with the appropriate resources to advance their scholarship and creative works is crucial to the success of the university. With those additional resources and support it is important to set high expectations and to institute accountability across all ranks. Individual faculty productivity is very important to the health of the collective faculty, the health of the university, and by extension the student experience. We had an exceptional year with an increase of 98% in scholarship and creative works.

SRU Chart of Publication Trends – 98% Increase

Category	2023-2024	2022-2023
Books	7	1
Edited Books	2	1
Book Chapters	22	13
Journal Articles	63	47
Book Reviews	3	0
Published Conference Proceedings	7	2
Artistic Commissions and Performances	13	18
Conference Presentations	49	3
Total	169	85

Provide premier student experience.

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

Please see Construction Projects.

Improve retention and graduation rates.

Increase FR first-to-second year retention by 0.5% annually to attain a goal of 85%.

Increase each upper-division FR cohort persistence by 0.5% annually to attain a second to third year goal of 78% and a third to fourth year goal of 72%.

The stated goal for retention within the Strategic Plan was an increase of .5% year over year for the next five years. This year's performance illustrates a 2.6% gain in one year. This is extraordinary and a result of a multipronged approach to increased retention. We also set a goal of decreasing the retention gap between our white students and our URM students. It is clear that these targeted efforts have resulted in an extraordinary increase in retention for our URM students and although the gap has not been fully eradicated, we have made significant

progress in this area. This is one of the achievements that we are most proud of as a university. An 84.1% retention rate is a record for SRU as is the persistence rate for Sophomore's to Juniors at 75.7%. The current levels of persistence across cohorts have outpaced the targeted annual improvement of .5%. Please see the enrollment section for the table with additional data.

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.

During the past couple of months, I have prioritized engagement with elected officials. I had a meeting with State Senator Hutchinson, and although we had met throughout the previous year, we are planning to increase our engagement. I met with our US elected officials in September 2024, including Representative Kelly, and Senators Casey and Fetterman. These types of meetings are very important and have not occurred at Slippery Rock for at least the past 12 years. I realize as president that I need to ensure that our elected officials are aware of our accomplishments as well as our needs and I hope to make this an annual activity.

Engage in environmentally sustainable practices.

Recycling during WOW. During move-in 2024, we provided a receptacle for all the cardboard used by students to move into student housing.

Pillar #4 Commitment to Financial Sustainability and Resource Stewardship

Structure the University for success.

We continue to explore options for our student health center and will be providing updates when appropriate.

Ensure alignment and efficiency between and within the affiliated entities.

The group continues to meet and has drafted a vision statement.

“Through an aligned approach, the SRU Affiliate Alliance will assist the University’s efforts to develop and maintain pathways that reach the proper constituent (Corporations/Foundations/Community/Alumni) in support of furthering its goals of sustainability, academic excellence, and financial independence.”

The group is working to explore how each entity will support the comprehensive campaign and is turning its attention to action versus sharing of information.

Diversify revenue streams.

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

We launched the Letterman’s Club within the Alumni Association. We have approximately 30 members to date. The response has been positive with slow but steady enrollment and engagement.

Fund raising goal - \$5,000,000 towards campaign goal. I set the fund-raising goal at \$5,000,000 when I arrived. We raised \$10,969,010 this year. This amount represented a significant increase

over previous years. We received the largest bequest in the university's history with a \$2,000,000 documented irrevocable bequest for the RockTEACH Program. We received a \$1,800,000 documented irrevocable bequest for Storm Harbor and a gift of software licenses for our engineering programs which totaled \$3,800,000. The cash donations exceeded the previous year's total by over 23%. This was an extraordinary year for fundraising for SRU. We look forward to good progress in this area moving forward.

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

SRU ACCOLADES:

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

SRU climbs U.S. News' rankings of Best Regional Universities for 2025

SRU continues to climb the rankings published in the U.S. News & World Report's annual Best Colleges guidebook. In the 2024-25 rankings released Sept. 24, SRU ranked 44th on the "Best Regional Universities North" list, up six spots after cracking the Top 50 for the first time last year. SRU was also recognized in its region on the following lists: Top Public School (#16), Best College for Veterans (#18), Best Value (#31) — and new this year, Most Innovative (#8) and Best Undergraduate Teaching (#9).

SRU cited by Washington Monthly in its 2024 national rankings and as a "Best Bang for the Buck" college

Washington Monthly released its 2024 College Guide and Rankings and SRU placed in the top 20% of institutions ranked in its category. SRU was also named one of the "Best Bang for the Buck" colleges for affordability.

SRU named one of Money's Best Colleges in America for 2024

Money.com has named SRU one of America's Best Colleges for 2024. Money evaluated more than 2,400 four-year colleges in the country and selected SRU to its list of 745 Best Colleges based on quality, affordability and student outcomes.

SRU named a College of Distinction for 2024-25

SRU has been named a College of Distinction for the 2024-25 academic year. This honor recognizes schools for their commitment to providing a high-quality undergraduate education focused on hands-on learning, strong student-teacher relationships, a vibrant campus life and successful outcomes. Colleges of Distinction is an online resource that provides college profiles and resources for students, parents and high school counselors.

SRU's online master's in data analytics ranked one of best in the country by TechGuide

SRU's online master's degree in data analytics has been ranked as one of the top 25 best data analytics degree programs in the country by TechGuide for 2024.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS AND SERVICE

Kazemi receives distinguished faculty achievement award from the Society of Petroleum Engineers

Mohammad Kazemi, an SRU associate professor of engineering, received the Regional Distinguished Achievement Award for Petroleum Engineering Faculty from the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

McGinty named a finalist in Washington Monthly's Kukula Awards

Patrick McGinty, an SRU assistant professor of language, literatures, cultures and writing, was a finalist in the 2024 Kukula Awards.

SRU Theatre receives numerous commendations for 'Grecian Burns' production

The SRU Theatre Department's production of "Grecian Burns" recently received multiple commendations at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival National Awards Conference, Aug. 21, at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Swauger and Zarit host the Black Male and Female Summer Leadership Institutes at SRU

Melissa Swauger and Matthew Zarit, SRU professors of nonprofit management, empowerment and diversity studies, recently hosted the Black Male and Black Female Summer Leadership Institute at SRU.

Holl and Nichols receive grant to continue statewide teacher training

Hannah Holl and Randy Nichols, SRU professors of physical and health education, received a grant award of \$100,000 from the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit and the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the Preventive Health and Health Service to provide professional development for certified teachers across Pennsylvania.

White selected as president-elect of the PACAC

Michael White, SRU associate director of enrollment management, was recently selected as the president-elect of the Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling.

SRU students provide health care to low-income communities in Costa Rica

A group of SRU students that traveled to Costa Rica recently is evidence of the mutual benefits of service learning. Thirty-one students from the MEDLIFE chapter at SRU provided free health care to low-income communities in Costa Rica, May 11-19, by staffing several mobile clinics.

Skobieranda Dau receives Butler collaboration award, appointed to Dress for Success board

Josette Skobieranda Dau, the SRU associate director for place-based engagement and civic leadership, was recently awarded the Butler Collaborative for Families "Spirit of Collaboration" award for community outreach.

RESEARCH/PERFORMANCES

SRU dance professor Melissa Teodoro receives Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award

Melissa Teodoro, an SRU dance professor, received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award for the 2024-25 academic year from the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Limon's 3D bioprinting research presented at conferences

Shah Limon, an SRU assistant professor of physics and engineering, recently co-wrote two articles that were published and presented in a pair of conference proceedings.

SRU engineering student conducts research to improve wearable sensors used in motion capture technology

"Hands-on research" is a term often used to describe how college students learn through active participation in laboratory experiments, but one SRU student is taking on a project that is even more literal when it comes to the touch of fingertips. Janey Parks, a sophomore mechanical engineering major from New Brighton, is working in the Advanced Manufacturing Lab in SRU's Vincent Science Center this summer to find ways to improve upon the wearable sensors that respond to touch and capture motion.

Innes' play 'The Singer of Shanghai' performed in Germany

Kari-Anne Innes, an SRU assistant professor of theatre, recently co-wrote a play titled "The Singer of Shanghai," that was performed at the Textile and Industry Museum, July 18-22, in Augsburg, Germany.

PROGRAM UPDATES

SRU's civil and mechanical engineering programs earn ABET accreditation

SRU's Bachelor of Science in civil engineering and Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering programs have been accredited by ABET, the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, which is the global accreditor of college and university programs in applied and natural science, computing, engineering and engineering technology.

SRU launching work-based learning program

SRU has launched a new program to enhance students' preparedness for the workforce earlier in their college careers. SRU's Early College Work-Based Learning program was created for the 2024 fall semester after SRU received a \$100,000 grant from Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education Foundation and the Strada Education Foundation.

SRU offering more than 36 travel abroad opportunities this year

There is a great big world outside of SRU, one that SRU offers students the ability to see. With more than 36 programs and destinations available to visit, opportunities abound for students to travel abroad.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen S. Riley, Ph.D.
President

Committee Reports

Academic and Student Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix C)

Dr. Alfonso Angelucci chairs the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

Dr. Zieg provided an update on our Nursing 1+2+1 program. The nursing faculty and dean of health professions are finalizing partnership agreements with Community College of Beaver County and Allegheny Health Network to provide clinical nursing training leading to RN licensure, while SRU provides general education, prerequisite, and BSN coursework.

In response to questions from Trustees, Dr. Zieg explained that BOG policy requires new program proposals to be approved by the university's COT before the Chancellor can approve, but that the PASSHE peer review process and Council approval can proceed in parallel. Because the Council tabled the proposal until the September meeting and indicated that their concerns were unrelated to the merits of the proposal, the Provost submitted the Electrical and Computer Engineering proposal to the Vice Chancellor to initiate peer review. This preserved the timeline so that, if Council approves the proposal, the Chancellor would be able to approve the program in time to recruit an incoming class for Fall 2025.

Michael May provided a Fall 2024 census enrollment update. Overall enrollment increased 0.4% over Fall 2024. The new first-year class of 1,547 represents the largest incoming class since Fall 2019, prior to COVID. Preliminary persistence rates for first year-to-second year and second year-to-third year were the highest on record at 84.1% and 75.7% respectively. Persistence rates for all three cohorts of underrepresented students increased over last year as well.

Dr. Wilmes provided a summary of on-campus move-in and Week of Welcome. He also shared photos of the new e-sports lab located in the Aebersold Recreation Center. Finally, he provided an update on campus occupancy in the residence halls.

Chair Stoebener, this concludes my report.

Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix D)

Trustee Jeffrey Smith chairs the Finance and Administrative Committee who provided this report.

The Finance Committee met on September 26th at 3:30 p.m.

The meeting was fairly brief with the only agenda item, although an extremely important one, being the Fiscal 2024- 2025 Budget Presentation by Carrie Birckbichler, the VP for Finance and Administration.

The presentation showed that the University's performance in the past year very closely matched last year's budget and was quite positive.

As indicated during the presentation, the Slippery Rock financial position is very dependent on student enrollment. Thanks to our current and anticipated student population, the 2024 – 2025 budget, while challenging, is expected to be achievable and will permit the University to use its reserves for growth opportunities and not to simply keep the doors open.

The committee voted to forward the 2024-2025 budget to the full COT for approval.

The highlight of the presentation was an update on the PASSHE scorecard. Slippery Rock is currently one of only two universities in the System that are all in the Green. This is a performance of which we can all be extremely proud.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:25 p.m.

Chair Stoebener this concludes my report.

University Advancement Committee (Agenda, Appendix E)

Trustee Joshua Young, committee chairperson, provided the following report. The University Advancement Committee met at 9:15 this morning.

Troy Miller, vice president, University Advancement, reported on total cash received from the prior fiscal year as represented in the Gift Income Report. The total cash giving was \$3,103,379.34, which represented an increase over the prior year. He also explained that, in the future, he would present a more complete picture of total giving in a campaign bucket report. In the first quarter of FY 25, monies were collected for the new Letterman's Club (\$24,000), Rock Athletics Club (\$40,150), Alumni Golf Tournament and the Men's Basketball Golf Tournament (\$25,000). In addition, a list of gifts more than \$2,500 is included in the binder. There was a discussion on a new bequest that will be realized in the 2025 Fiscal Year.

The comprehensive campaign plan, including the case for support, will be completed by the spring of 2025. Additionally, a campaign cabinet will be recruited in that same time frame. Campaign frequently asked questions were discussed, and a copy of a document answering these questions is included in the binder. A new campaign bucket report was presented that demonstrates total giving from FY24 which includes \$10,969,010.40 towards the quiet phase of the campaign, and a new gift acceptance policy and counting policy which will govern what is counted in the campaign will be included in the campaign plan. These plans will be based on CASE and AFP guidelines.

Finally, a resolution to name Room 203 on the second floor of the Strain Safety Building was presented and acted upon.

The SRU Alumni Association reported on their summer activities, which included the annual Alumni Board retreat and meeting and the third annual Green and White Society retreat. Both events were structured to provide opportunities for conversation and planning for the year ahead.

Kelly Bailey, director, Alumni Engagement, also shared the results of the annual SRU Alumni & Friends Golf Outing, held on August 5, which raised \$22,000 in scholarship support for the SRU Alumni Association Scholarship Fund.

The fall semester is in full swing, with plans underway for Homecoming 2024, to be celebrated Oct 11-12. Additional plans for the semester include a variety of events in the Carolinas, the annual Backpacks to

Briefcases student/alumni networking night and a 50th anniversary celebration of the '72, '73 and '74 Football PSAC Championships.

The Slippery Rock University Foundation provided an update on activities, investments, and audited financials. Board Chair Mark Palmer, SRU Foundation Inc., reviewed the balance sheet summaries from both the Foundation and SRUF Student Housing, citing their recently completed annual audit. He also presented the detailed asset allocation for the Foundation's investment portfolio and discussed the Foundation's contributions to student scholarships over the last several years.

Mark shared an update on the development of Technology Park and the progress of the Cozy Home active adult community. The University Advancement Office and the Foundation are working together to develop a prospect portfolio for Dave Hollenbaugh, executive director, SRU Foundation, Inc., to more formally assist in direct fundraising efforts with potential donors. The Foundation and the University are also focusing on approaches to addressing the long-term capital projects associated with the Residential Suites.

Chair Stuebener, this concludes my report.

Governance Committee (Agenda, Appendix F)

Trustee Elise Michaux, chair of the Governance Committee, provided the following report.

There were no presentations, two items for discussion and one action item.

Discussion:

1. **President Riley's first year, informal evaluation:** Governance Chair Michaux asked for two volunteers from the Council to serve on the evaluation committee. Trustee Ionta volunteered to serve on the committee. If you are interested in serving, please reach out to Trustee Michaux directly.
2. **Board Mini-Retreat:** Council Chair Stuebener
Chair Stuebener shared with Council that there is a Mini-Retreat being scheduled as part of the December meeting with PASSHE Deputy Chancellor Dr. Randy Goin joining us at the December meeting to talk through board member responsibilities and the role of the trustee. We look forward to this opportunity with Dr. Goin and hope we have trustees engaged in the conversation.

Action:

1. **Certifying Resolution: Order of Succession**
Trustee Jeffrey Smith moved, second by Trustee Stuebener, the Certifying Resolution: Order of Succession in accordance with BOG Policy 1983-14-A to move forward for consideration by the full council.
2. **Review and revision of COT meeting legal advertisement language**
For over three decades, language in the legal advertisement read: A trustee will be available at XX (time) on XX (date) in XX (location) to meet with anyone who wishes to discuss university-related matters, and who has scheduled an appointment either in writing or by calling the President's Office.
*Trustee Smith shared this language should be removed. As one member of Council should not be representing the full council in addressing matters from the public. Committee members agreed that this specific language will be removed from future legal notices. Public comment is the appropriate opportunity to address Council.

3. Added Item: Trustee Young currently serves as the trustee liaison to the SRSGA advisory group. However, his term has expired. Wendy Leitera asked that Trustee Young continue to serve in this capacity – will send an email. Trustees agreed with the request. A resolution will be prepared for review/approval at the December meeting to confirm this action officially by Council for public record.
4. There was a request by Trustee Smith to revise COT Bylaws as follows:
 - Revise the COT bylaws as follows:
Old Language:
ARTICLE IV Section 6. Voting. Voting by proxy is prohibited. One or more members of the Council may participate in any meeting of the Council of Trustees by means of conference telephone or similar communication equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, with all rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities as if such member were present in person for such meeting.
 - **New Language:**
ARTICLE IV Section 6. Voting. Voting by proxy is prohibited. One or more members of the Council may participate in any meeting of the Council of Trustees by means of conference telephone or similar communication equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, with all rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities as if such member were present in person for such meeting. **Trustees may only vote on a motion by phone if they are continuously present from the introduction of a motion until the vote.**

ACTION: It was decided in committee that a Governance Committee meeting will be scheduled prior to the December 5-6 quarterly business meeting. A meeting notification will be sent to Council in accordance with Sunshine Law.

Information Items

- SRU COT Committee Assignments
- Calendar Mentions
- ByLaws – Council of Trustees

Chair Stoebener, 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

Resolution: Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering ECSE (TAB 11, Appendix H)

Trustee McCarrier moved, Trustee Michaux seconded, approval of the slate of the Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Roll Call vote: 8 Y, 1 N, 1 Abstention, Motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Domenic Ionta	Yes
Dan Lavallo	Yes	William McCarrier	Yes
Elise Michaux	Yes	Charli Severo	Yes
Jeffrey Smith	Abstention	Angèle Stoebener	Yes
Bob Taylor	No	Joshua Young	Yes

Trustee Smith provided comment to clarify his abstention from this vote.

Trustee Smith: “Over the past couple of months, we've discussed the Electrical and Computer Engineering Program.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to compare the expected performance of this program to the other engineering programs. We've not been able to do so because PASSHE Council has indicated this information is part of litigation and cannot be reviewed. While I may not necessarily agree with that assessment, I certainly accept it. Without this information, I believe this really comes down to working with the president who would like to have it added to the portfolio. I think we can all agree that the president has been a star for the past year and we probably all want to support her. I totally understand voting in favor of the program, in support. Unfortunately for me, I will have to abstain from this vote. As the PASSE Council has indicated, the information related to this vote is protected due to litigation, and as PASSHE outside counsel is acting as my counsel in the same litigation, I do not feel that it's appropriate for me to vote on this item, so I will be abstaining. This is the rationale for my abstention, which is necessary to provide under Robert’s Rules of Order and should not be interpreted as a lack of support.”

Chair Stoebener: Thank you. Trustee Smith.

Chair Stoebener: Trustee Taylor?

Trustee Taylor: “Yeah. First, let me commend Trustee Smith for recognizing a potential conflict of interest and, and doing what he's doing here. I think that's the first magnanimous gesture by a voting trustee that I've seen in a long time, given that there are conflicts of interest all over this board. I'm going to vote no on this, Madam Chairwoman, not because of the merits of the program, but this program is the centerpiece of some serious federal litigation, which could end up costing us, depending on the outcome, millions and millions of dollars. I don't think we should be investing \$7M without knowing the outcome of that litigation. And I think “7” is the requested amount over the full implementation of these programs. And I just don't feel with that “7M” dollar price tag hanging over us and an uncertain amount of money that we may have to pay to the plaintiffs in the federal litigation. That as a fiduciary, watching our students and their families hard earn dollars as part of our budget, that we should be expanding and voting on this program until that litigation has completed. I also believe that the transparency in this process has been terrible. I think that the behaviors been sinister and has been a little bit shady. I don't believe that my questions were ever answered. There are always excuses for that, but I don't accept any of the excuses that were provided. We asked for some simple comparison information on revenues versus expenses. We didn't get it.”

Trustee Taylor: “And, and so I, I just, I don't think that we have anywhere near the full amount of information that we would need in order to spend \$7M dollars on a program, especially a program where the former Vice president of finance, and this didn't come from somebody on campus. This was the vice president who ran our books, where the vice president is telling us that this program is both mismanaged and also is, is also got some financial improprieties in it. So, I don't, I don't appreciate the fact that we're being forced to have this vote. I think it could have been delayed until this litigation was completed and then we had a full flavor for what was going on both financially and with, with the outcome of the litigation. So, I just, I think all of you have to look in your hearts and determine whether you're going to be a fiduciary for the students' money or whether you're simply going to rubber stamp what the president brings to your table.”

Trustee Taylor: “And I will give Karen all the credit in the world. She's whipped her votes very well on this vote. She's got everybody standing where they need to stand. And I'd ask you to look at your conflict of interest as you support her in this matter. And then we can go from there. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.”

Trustee McCarrier: Madam Chair, could I speak?

Trustee Stoebener: Yes. Trustee McCarrier.

Trustee McCarrier: “Our former vice president of finance, argued for a long time when we talked about starting engineering programs that we couldn't do it for less than \$50 million. Well, he was proven wrong. We started engineering programs and they have been successful. And that can be attested to by the fact that we received our accreditation for our engineering programs and also for the fact that the students are finding good internships and good jobs. So, our engineering program is a success.”

Trustee McCarrier: “Now we look at other schools, whether an engineer or somebody who wants to become an engineer in electrical and computer science engineering, they don't have a lot of choices. They can go to Penn State, or Carnegie Mellon, or West Virginia, and spend anywhere from \$60,000 - \$80,000 a year for those programs. So, somebody who look at that and they say I can't afford that, they look at Slippery Rock and say I can afford that for \$20, some thousand dollars a year. So, we're giving a tremendous opportunity for the students in the area to become engineers, which otherwise they could not afford to do so.”

Trustee McCarrier: “When they graduate, they might have a total cost of somewhere between \$80, \$90,000. If they graduate from Carnegie Mellon, they're going to have a debt of \$300,000 and some. We say we're here for the students. Well, let's be here for the students. Let's give them these programs that will enable them to get good jobs. Thank you.”

Chair Stoebener: Trustee Michaux

Trustee Michaux: “It is my honor to support with a resounding yes and moving forward with this proposal for the BS Electrical and Computer Engineering program at Slippery Rock University. This program has overwhelming support across the University and has gone through all the proper channels to obtain approval. The demand for electrical and computer engineers is projected to grow by 8% from 2024 to 2034 in the 150-mile region around SRU, driven by the robotics and tech boom in the Pittsburgh area. With other institutions currently unable to offer similarly affordable programs as just was noted here, SRUSECSE program will help bridge the gap. Additionally, we received our A Bet accreditation notice for our civil and mechanical engineering programs. The programs are accredited to September 30, 2028. Let me emphasize 2028. Not only did we receive accreditation, but we achieved a remarkable accomplishment from the reviewers.”

Trustee Michaux: “Reviewers noting no deficiencies, weaknesses or concerns, also signaling our laboratory facilities as particular strengths of the program. We have an outstanding, dedicated faculty and a Dean who is ready and able to lead them. They have demonstrated success in their last initiative, and they deserve our support in this next one. Dr. Riley has said from day one that she would work to ensure that we would be forward thinking to keep SRU on an upward trajectory. This program, coming before the council less than a year into her tenure, is making good on a promise that will not be her last. SRU is in the position it is today regionally in the PASSHE system and the country because of the dedication our leadership has demonstrated over the years. This program will only help to strengthen our position as a first-choice institution. Madam Chair, thank you.”

Chair Stoebener: Are there any other questions?

Trustee Severo: Madam Chair, [I have a comment].

Chair Stoebener: Yes, Charli.

Trustee Severo: “So, coming from the student perspective, I think that having electrical and computer engineering is something that we should have. I think it's a great investment for the school and for the students. I did some research on it too, and I see on social media a lot as well that this is growing and that so many people are interested in this. And I think that if we were to have [the program] this year, it's not going to be like there would be empty classrooms or anything like that or there wouldn't be students that are interested in it. The job market for it is growing. And I think that a lot of students would be interested, and we would have way more students coming in. So, thank you.”

Trustee Stoebener: Thank you, Trustee Severo. Having heard from everyone, Tina, may we move forward with a roll call vote, please.”

*roll call vote recorded above.

Naming Resolution: Holder Construction Classroom (Strain Safety Building)
(TAB 19, Appendix I)

Trustee Angelucci moved, Trustee Young seconded, approval of the Naming Resolution: Holder Construction Classroom. Motion carries unanimously.

Certifying Resolution: Order of Succession (BOG Policy 1983-14-A)
(TAB 18), Appendix J

Trustee Michaux moved, seconded by Trustee Young, with approval of Certifying Resolution: Order of Succession (BOG Policy 1983-14-A). Trustee Taylor’s negative vote to this motion is recorded for public record. Motion carries.

FY 24-25 Budget Request
(Tab 13), Appendix K

Trustee Smith moved, seconded by Trustee Michaux, with approval of the FY 24-25 Budget Request. Roll Call vote: 9 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstention. Motion carries.

Alfonso Angelucci	Yes	Domenic Ionta	Yes
Dan Lavalley	Yes	William McCarrier	Yes
Elise Michaux	Yes	Charli Severo	Yes
Jeffrey Smith	Yes	Angèle Stoebener	Yes
Bob Taylor	No	Joshua Young	Yes

Trustee Taylor: Madam Chair, I'd like to have discussion on this.

Chair Stoebener: Yes, Trustee Taylor for discussion. Yes, please proceed.

Trustee Taylor: "So, yeah, I'm going to talk further about this budget, which again is premised upon what could very well be false information. We were provided with plenty of information in February of 2022 that there were financial improprieties, particularly in the engineering program, and that the numbers we were being presented with were not, were not accurate. Every budget since 2022, quite frankly, is premised on 2022 numbers and numbers prior to that. The fact that this budget is built upon those numbers and that they may in fact not be accurate numbers suggests that we, we can't have any confidence in this administration that they're bringing us a budget with numbers that are accurate, honest and truthful. Not because they did anything wrong, but because their predecessors have been engaged in what could be some financial mismanagement. And that's really the sole and core to the federal litigation which challenged the engineering program and thereby challenged the budget. So again, as a fiduciary and I'm really impressed that Bill [Trustee McCarrier] is concerned about the students because again we're using the students money and the students money is what funds a large majority of this, not a large majority, but a majority of this budget. And I, I think that until we get clarification on whether the numbers that premise to this budget are even close to being accurate and there were not financial mismanagement activities taking place two years ago. I don't think we can trust any of these numbers. We've asked the state system, but opposing counsel from the OGC's office and the chancellor have continually interfered with and denied us the opportunity to have transparency in this discussion. So, we really don't know what's going on. All we know is that our auditor, who will never say anything negative about the work they did, has a report out there that we haven't seen again, it's been a cover up from the state system and from the chancellor. It doesn't allow us the full transparency of knowing exactly what the numbers should be. So, I think we all ought to be voting no on this until we get some kind of resolution to transparency out of this administration on this budget. And we don't have it here. So, I'm going to be a no vote. And I, you know, again, you have a fiduciary responsibility and I again, programs are wonderful. We do a great job at Slippery Rock. Everybody works hard, we're very much a success. Part of the reason we're a success is we don't let the administration roll over on us with things like bogus numbers. And I'm afraid these could be bogus depending on the outcome of that litigation.

Chair Stoebener: Okay. Is there any other discussion or comments?

Trustee Ionta: Yeah, I think we, our numbers have been very good. We're on top of the PASSHE system in terms of, you know, our finances. I think our administration has done an excellent job in the years that I've been here in putting together the numbers, the budgets, the reports, worrying about everything from teacher pupil ratio to just all of the expenditures. So that I'm very confident in what's been presented by our administration. And I'm going to be a yes vote.

*roll call vote recorded above.

Next Quarterly Business Meeting Date:

December 5-6, 2024

Contracts: (TAB 15) (Appendix L)

Facilities & Planning Active Project List (TAB 16) (Appendix M)

HR Personnel Items (Tab 17) (Appendix N)

- Instructional Appointments: Effective Summer 2023-2024
- Instructional Appointments: Effective Academic Year 2023-2024
- Administrator Appointments
- Non-Faculty Athletics Coach Appointments
- Management Appointments
- Support Staff Appointments
- Retirements
- Resignations
- Sabbaticals AY 2025-2026
- Emeritus Status

Monthly Financial Report (TAB 12) (Appendix O)

Comprehensive Planning Process Update (TAB 12) (Appendix P)

Committee Presentations (TAB 10)

Divisional Reports (TAB 9)

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Trustee Michaux: “I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to acknowledge the leadership of Dr. Riley during the Good of the Order here. Based on what has been presented to this council over the past year, and especially after what we have seen over the last two days, there should be no doubt that she is leading Slippery Rock University with honesty and integrity. I personally witnessed her navigate the tragic loss of a team member with grace and kindness, ensuring the well-being of not just her team, but the entire campus community affected by this loss. This situation would challenge any president, but to see her poise and strength while managing such a crisis, having only been in the role for five months, speaks volumes. Her actions have consistently demonstrated that Slippery Rock, its people, and its mission are her highest priority.

While I cannot speak for others, I can say with confidence that Dr. Riley's leadership over the past year has been nothing short of exemplary. Madam Chair, thank you.”

Trustee Joshua Young: “Yes, I have four quick things. First, I want to congratulate and welcome to the Rock family Troy Miller, VP for Advancement, looking forward to working with you over the next several years. Second, I want to thank Trustee Smith for his budget workshop. It is very helpful in making a decision moving forward and we can get information prior to the council meeting so we don't feel like we we're under a gun for time. Third, I'm going to probably mess this up, but I was sent a TikTok by somebody and I'm not a gamer. I'm going to promise you that. I think it's EA Sports came out with a new college football game, and they made it as real as possible. And that includes when Michigan, if you choose Michigan University, they have a little banner saying the Slippery Rock University score on the stadium. I think the Alumni Association posted the TikTok. So you could go to the Alumni Association Facebook page and watch that TikTok. Fourth, Dr. Riley, if you can extend our thanks to the grounds crew. This university is one of the most beautiful in the state system, but it takes an immense amount of time and an immense amount of effort to make it look nice. So, if you could extend on behalf of the Council to the grounds crew, you know what a beautiful campus this is. That's all.”

Dr. Riley: It would be my pleasure. Thank you.

Trustee Smith: “This quarter we have 6 retirees representing 112 years of service to Slippery Rock and at least 132 within the PASSHE System. Because I think the prestige should celebrate everyone who reaches this milestone in their career. I want to take my time to recognize the following individuals and wish them all the best as they enter the next chapter of their lives. I apologize if I mispronounce anyone’s name.

Dr. Donald Zapien	Professor	Chemistry	20 years
Brenda Baughman	Custodian	Facilities and Planning	20 years
Rebecca Cress	Fiscal Assistant	Accounts Payable	25 years.
Kelly Kahle-Simonette	Fiscal Technician	Student Accounts	2 years; 22
years in the System at Edinboro and Clarion			
Michael McGuire	Maintenance Repairman 2	Facilities and Planning	20 years
Jeffrey Ward	Info Technology Tech	Facilities and Planning	25 1/2

So, thanks to all of you.”

With no further business, Chair Stoebener called for adjournment. Trustee Young moved, Trustee Michaux seconded, to adjourn the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees business meeting. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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