

Friday, October 25, 2024

Penn State Faculty Digest

The Faculty Digest provides faculty and instructors with relevant news and information about programs and resources that promote faculty success. Watch for these emails on the last Friday of every month (or earlier when there is a campus closure).

LATEST NEWS

SEEQs to Open on Monday, November 18 for Full-Semester Courses

Response rates to the SEEQ are higher when faculty tell students why their participation matters to you. Rumors abound, so be sure to note that the SEEQs are anonymous and that you will see summarized results after final grades are submitted. More importantly, assure them that you read the results and tell them about a few changes you've made based on student feedback.

For more suggestions, see [Talking to Students about SEEQs](#).

Academic Portfolio and Program Review (APPR) Update

Work with the external consultant, Hanover Research, began in October and APPR project tri-chairs formed a new Workstream group to identify the priority research projects, or 'workstreams' for Hanover. Learn more about the first two workstreams [online](#).

APPR leaders will host the next Insight Session for the Penn State community on Thursday, October 31, from noon to 1:30 p.m. on [Zoom](#). As part of the agenda, the tri-chairs will:

- provide a status update on APPR,
- review a high-level process design, and
- review the first two workstreams that have been created.

More information and the latest updates can be found at the [APPR website](#), and individuals can [sign up for the APPR newsletter online](#). Email questions to appr@psu.edu.

Financial Literacy Webinars for Faculty and Staff

On November 18, join the Sokolov Miller Family Financial and Life Skills Center for an exclusive screening of the award-winning documentary, THIS IS NOT FINANCIAL ADVICE, followed by a panel with the film's directors and representatives from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA). The film follows Glauber Contessoto as he gambles his life savings on a joke cryptocurrency. Two months later, he becomes "The Dogecoin Millionaire" and a hero to his growing YouTube following. THIS IS NOT FINANCIAL ADVICE exposes the startling risks and rewards of today's market through expert commentary and the anxiety-inducing stories of real people trying to make millions.

There are two free options to join this film screening: attend in person on November 18 at 6 p.m. at University Park (W201 Westgate Building) or join remotely via a link sent a week in advance of the screening. Please RSVP to select your preferred option. Space is limited. RSVP [here](#).

2025 Benefits Open Enrollment Period Begins November 1

When Penn State's [2025 benefits open enrollment period opens on Nov. 1](#), benefits-eligible faculty and staff will continue to have access to the same high-quality health care coverage, plus several new benefits, including a third health plan option and pet insurance, legal insurance and identity protection insurance.

Benefits open enrollment will run Nov. 1-15, and employees will receive an email on Nov. 1 with instructions on how to make their 2025 benefits elections. To help employees make informed decisions about their 2025 benefits, the Penn State Employee Benefits team will conduct live educational webinars throughout October and November to review all benefits options and answer any open enrollment questions from employees. The webinar schedule is available on the [2025 benefits open enrollment website](#). Faculty must submit their 2025 benefits elections by November 15, 2025.

Faculty Senate Extends Test-Optional Admissions

The Faculty Senate [voted during its October 15 meeting](#) to extend test-optional admissions to fall 2026, while delaying a vote to revise the admissions policy to the November meeting. It also passed a resolution advocating for the restoration of multi-year contracts for non-tenure-line faculty at the Commonwealth Campuses.

The Letters of Excellence Program from the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowship Mentoring

Do you know a high-achieving undergraduate student who could benefit from learning more about competitive funding and fellowship opportunities? Consider recommending them for *the Letters of Excellence Program*. URFM is enlisting faculty and staff to identify students who excel academically, demonstrate leadership, and contribute to their communities—qualities that competitive programs and funding opportunities such as the Goldwater, Fulbright, and NSF-GRFP seek. With encouragement from a trusted faculty or staff mentor, we believe many more students could be inspired to pursue and succeed in applying for these prestigious opportunities. This is how it works:

- **Identify students who are excelling:** Interested faculty and staff can identify their top 1st, 2nd and 3rd year undergraduate students who exhibit qualities of academic excellence, depth of engagement and leadership potential
- **Acknowledge their work and send them an invite:** Use the [template letter found on the URFM website](#) that includes an invite to a specialized zoom information session that will introduce them to competitive fellowships opportunities

The deadline to invite students to the **fall 2024 session is November 18, 2024**.

For more information on the program and how to identify students, visit the URFM website. Questions? Email urfm@psu.edu.

Recently Promoted Faculty Celebrated

Recently promoted teaching, clinical, research, and libraries faculty were joined by their families and colleagues for a [celebration of their accomplishments](#) on September 13 at the Bryce Jordan Center.

Academic Advising Seminar open to all faculty

All faculty are invited to the first [academic advising seminar](#) of the year on Thursday, October 31 at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom (<https://psu.zoom.us/j/97744424443>). The first seminar will address, “How your work as an academic adviser matters: Creating a shared understanding of the value of academic advising” presented by Dr. David R. Smith, associate dean for advising and executive director in the Division of Undergraduate Studies, and Dr. Janet Schulenberg, senior director in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. This session will focus on a shared understanding of the value and importance of academic advising and will set the context for future seminars on academic advising practice. All faculty and staff, especially those with a responsibility for advising undergraduate students, are encouraged to attend. The full schedule is available on the [academic advising seminar website](#). For questions about the academic advising seminar series, contact Dr. Hilleary Himes (hxs220@psu.edu).

Nominations Accepted for Rosemary Schraer Mentoring Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the [Rosemary Schraer Mentoring Award](#), which is presented annually to a Penn State employee who exemplifies Schraer’s giving of herself as a mentor and who has voluntarily, over a breadth of time, helped others recognize and achieve their potential. The nomination form is available [here](#).

Nominations Sought for Penn State Laureate

The University is seeking nominees for the role of [2025-26 Penn State Laureate](#). Nominations are [due by Friday, December 6](#). The Penn State Laureate is a full-time faculty member who is assigned half-time to this role for one academic year. The Laureate has opportunities throughout the year to bring his or her artistic perspectives to a variety of audiences, including visits to Commonwealth Campuses and communities statewide.

Nominations Sought for Faculty Scholar Medal

The Office of the President has opened the call for nominations for individuals eligible to receive the [Faculty Scholar Medal](#). Deans and chancellors must submit recommendations to the senior vice president for research via [InfoReady](#) by Dec. 3.

Nominations Accepted for President’s Award for Excellence in Academic Integration

Nominations are being accepted for the [2025 President’s Award for Excellence in Academic Integration](#), an honor recognizing faculty members at the rank of professor who have exhibited extraordinary achievement in the integration of teaching, research

or creative accomplishments, and service. The [nomination submission](#) deadline is January 6, 2025.

Researchers Encouraged to Apply for CTSI Affiliate Status

Penn State Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is now accepting applications for its [affiliate researcher program](#). Applications will remain open indefinitely and can be [submitted online](#).

OPAIR Names Assessment Champions

Penn State's Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (OPAIR) has designated its inaugural cohort of [Assessment Champions for 2024-25](#). The six faculty members who were selected for this role will partner with OPAIR to advance their assessment efforts, share their unique expertise with the University community, and establish procedures for future cohorts. The Assessment Champions are:

- Janelle Gruber, lecturer in corporate communication, Penn State Schuylkill; Northeast Corporate Communication Consortium coordinator.
- Erin Hanes, assistant teaching professor of classics and ancient Mediterranean studies, and of women's, gender, and sexuality studies, Penn State University Park.
- Glenna Malcolm, associate teaching professor of biology, Penn State University Park.
- Gina Pazzaglia, teaching professor and director of the master of professional studies in nutritional sciences, Penn State University Park.
- Cecil Shelton, instructor in statistics; course coordinator for STAT 200, Penn State University Park and World Campus.
- Karin Sprow Forté, associate teaching professor and chair of teacher education, Penn State Harrisburg.

TLT Faculty Fellows Named

Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) has welcomed five University instructors across three campuses into its [Faculty Fellows cohort for 2024-26](#). Fellows will work with a team of TLT staff on their projects. The new Faculty Fellows, and their projects, are:

- Andjela Kaur, assistant professor of biobehavioral health, Penn State Lehigh Valley; and Samantha Beebe, associate teaching professor of biobehavioral health, Penn State Lehigh Valley: *Adventures in Disability Culture*.
- Kyle Chalupczynski, lecturer in management information systems, Penn State Behrend: *IMPACT-AI: Innovative Methods for Personalized and Adaptive Classroom Teaching with AI*.
- Mariah Kupfner, assistant professor of American studies and public heritage, Penn State Harrisburg: *Making Virtual Space and Expanding the VR World: 3D Scanning, Virtual Museums and Design Thinking*.
- Tiffany Petricini, associate teaching professor of communication, Penn State Behrend: *Embedding AI Literacy within the Communication Basic Course*.

EVENTS AND OTHER FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Talking about Teaching Series

The Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence (SITE) will host conversations with Penn State experts about teaching topics that are top-of-mind for instructors and academic administrators. Each session will include introductory remarks, questions from the moderator for guests, and additional questions from attendees, but specific formats may vary.

- **Talking about Course Disruptions**
Panelists will address how instructors can prepare and respond to course disruptions and answer questions from participants.
Thursday, 10/31, 12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. [Register](#)
- **Talking about Teaching after the Election**
Faculty from the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence will talk with participants about their questions or concerns about teaching after the election.
Thursday, 11/6, 1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. [Register](#)
- **Talking about the SEEQs**
Bring your questions about Penn State's Student Educational Experience Questionnaire (SEEQ) which is administered during Weeks 13 & 14 of the semester.
Wednesday, 11/13/2024, 1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. [Register](#)
- **Talking about Artificial Intelligence**
Panelists will discuss current information on using Generative AI at Penn State and address questions and concerns from participants.
Wednesday, 11/20/2024, 12:20 p.m. - 1:05 p.m. [Register](#)

Faculty Pathway Workshops

The Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity sponsors in-person and virtual events including Faculty Women Coffee Talk Fridays, Scholars' Circles, and "Pre-Tenure and the Faculty of Color Experience." More information is available at <https://equity.psu.edu/offices/faculty-pathway/workshops>.

TLT Resources

Penn State's [Teaching and Learning with Technology](#) (TLT) units, [Creative Learning Initiatives](#) and the [Learning Design Team](#), along with [IT Learning and Development](#) offer workshops, programs, and individual consultations for faculty looking to enhance their teaching and learning through technology.

Full List of Faculty Professional Development Resources – SITE and TLT

SITE and TLT offer many continuous learning opportunities and professional development resources for Penn State faculty: [Faculty Professional Development Opportunities -Continuously Updated.docx](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, please review:

- The Office of Faculty Affairs [website](#)
- Previous issues of this [Digest](#)