Friday, March 29, 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

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Database
Are you looking for undergraduate researchers? Consider submitting your research project to Undergraduate Research and Fellowships Mentoring’s Undergraduate Research Database. Before posting your opportunity to the database, you must first create an account. Afterward, you can submit a posting form with each opportunity you have so that students can learn more about your work and contact you about available positions. These opportunities are listed on the URFM website as well as in the "Research" section of the Engagement App.

Judges needed for Undergraduate Exhibition
Faculty members are invited to serve as judges for the 2024 Undergraduate Exhibition on Research, Inquiry, and Creative Activity, from April 15-17. Judge sign-up is open until April 8; find instructions here.

Student Educational Experience Questionnaire (SEEQ) Reminder
The SEEQ will be offered to students from April 8 to 21 for 15-week courses. Strategies for increasing response rates are available here.

Alternatives to the Term “Non-Tenure-Line” Sought
At the last Senate meeting, there was strong agreement between the University Faculty Senate and the administration that the general term “non-tenure-line” to refer to research, teaching, and clinical faculty members and professors of practice is problematic, as it defines this important constituency by what they are not rather than by what they are. The Senate’s Committee on Faculty Affairs will take up this issue at its committee meeting on April 15 and determine how to move forward with identifying a term that acknowledges the important contributions these faculty make to the institution.

Faculty Senate February and March meetings recap
During its regularly scheduled February meeting (Feb. 27), Penn State’s Faculty Senate and University leadership discussed updates on the ongoing Academic Portfolio and Program Review (APPR) and the strategic planning process. The senate also passed revisions to its standing rules and heard reports on topics such as student health services and the new Employee Assistance Program. During its March 19 meeting, the Senate passed advisory reports recommending centralized funding for Student Disability Services and increased recognition for faculty engaged in overseeing global programs. It also passed a resolution expressing concern about budget reduction at Commonwealth Campuses and requesting an alternative approach.
CAPS Red Folder Initiative
Penn State Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) reminds faculty, staff and campus leaders about The Red Folder and how to recognize, respond to and refer students experiencing distress. The Red Folder course is now on Penn State’s Learning Resource Network (LRN).

COVID Extension Deadline Approaching
April 1 is the deadline for tenure-line faculty in the penultimate year of their probationary period to accept a one-year extension to their probationary period due to COVID-19. By completing the online form “Confirmation of Extension of the Probationary Period Due to COVID-19,” the faculty member’s probationary period will be extended by one year. Detailed information is available here.

Rescinding the COVID Extension
Faculty members who confirm their acceptance of the COVID extension but later decide that they do not want the year added to their probationary period may relinquish the extension by notifying the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs at vpfa@psu.edu. Requests to relinquish the one-year extension must be made by April 1 of the penultimate year of the probationary period. Please note that if a faculty member is in the midst of a formal review, the extension will be applied once the formal review is completed.

Academic unit leaders will be notified once you withdraw your acceptance of the extension. It is strongly recommended that you notify your academic unit leader (e.g., department head/school director/chief academic officer/director of academic affairs) that you are submitting a request to withdraw the confirmation as candidates may only request to relinquish the extension of the probationary period ONCE.

Values, Ethics, and Compliance 2024 Training Reminder
You should have received an email asking you to complete Penn State’s Values, Ethics, and Compliance training for 2024. All full-time and part-time employees must complete this training, which is due by May 3, 2024. To access the training, log in at http://lrn.psu.edu.

2024 Faculty and Staff Award Recipients
Congratulations to the faculty members who were recognized with University-wide awards at a ceremony on March 28. Awards included several undergraduate and graduate teaching awards, the Excellence in Advising Award, the Rosemary Schraer Mentoring Award, and Faculty Scholar Medals. Please see the news article for a full list of awardees.

Faculty Passings
John Chapin, professor of communications at Penn State Beaver, passed away on March 4. He worked at Penn State for more than 25 years and was a renowned researcher in violence prevention. Please click here to read his obituary.
Frederick Groh, lecturer of earth sciences at Penn State DuBois, passed away unexpectedly on March 8.

FACULTY OPPORTUNITIES

TLT Faculty Fellows
The window to apply for the next Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Faculty Fellows cohort is open and proposals will be accepted until Friday, April 19. Faculty who submit successful proposals will work collaboratively with TLT project teams to combine ideas, innovative spirit and academic expertise to apply emerging technologies to teaching and learning. To request more information or to submit a proposal, please email tltfellows@psu.edu.

Teaching and Learning Technologies Faculty Advisory Committee
Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) is accepting self-nominations through April 18 for the 2024-2026 Teaching and Learning Technologies Faculty Advisory Committee. This committee plays a pivotal role in guiding TLT on integrating technology into teaching and learning at Penn State.

Advancing Equity and Inclusion Grant Program
The Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence invites proposals for the Advancing Equity and Inclusion Grant program. Now in its third year, the program supports projects that have the potential to influence teaching and learning at the scale of the program, department, school, division, college or campus. Projects should address inequities or advance inclusion in teaching and learning. More information can be found here.

EVENTS AND TRAINING

Inclusive Mentoring: A Workshop for Faculty, Postdocs and Graduate Student Leaders
Engage in a meaningful dialogue about bullying in academia and inclusive mentoring at our Spring Office of Postdoctoral Affairs workshop on Friday, April 19, from 12:00-3:00 p.m. This event is a partnership between Postdoctoral Affairs and Faculty Affairs that will highlight our own national expert on workplace bullying, Dr. Leah Hollis, Associate Dean for Access, Equity and Inclusion within the College of Education. Lunch is included, and Zoom is available for those who cannot attend in person.

This program emphasizes the critical need for safer and more inclusive research spaces. Register here.

Webinar on the Deposit Rights Environment
The University of California and the Authors Alliance have organized a free webinar to explore the deposit rights environment authors will face under new, zero-embargo public access policies from federal funders, and the role institutions can play in supporting these rights. The webinar will be held on **April 16 from 11:00-12:30 pm PDT (2:00-3:30 EDT)** and is co-sponsored by the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL), the HBCU Library Alliance, the Ivy Plus Libraries Confederation, and the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC). Authors and librarians at U.S. higher education institutions are encouraged to attend. Visit the webinar's [event page](#) to register and see the agenda.

**Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities for Teaching**

- **SITE faculty** are available to discuss these [self-reflection resources](#) for annual reviews.
- The Schreyer Institute offers [Peer Review of Teaching Grants](#) to support academic units as they update peer review guidelines.
- [Registration](#) is open for the Endorsement on Inclusive and Equitable Teaching, part of the new Provost Endorsement Program.
- A SITE resource on [Increasing Response Rates](#) for student feedback surveys is available on our [Assessment of Teaching](#) website.
- SITE offers an upcoming workshop on "Beyond the Basics: Practical Applications of Generative AI in STEM" Thursday, 4/4/2024, Noon - 1:00 p.m. by Zoom. [Register](#). To join SITE's Summer Read Program for Sarah Rose Cavanagh's *Spark of Learning: Energizing the College Classroom with the Science of Emotion* (2016), please complete this [form](#).
- 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. Faculty new to Penn State may be particularly interested in the [Dreamery Speaker Series focused on AI in Teaching and Learning](#) on April 16-17.
- 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 the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs [website](#)
- Previous issues of this [Digest](#)