



# Special Meeting of the Board Minutes

University of Delaware  
Mar 21, 2023 at 9:00 AM EDT  
@ Hybrid

## Attendance

### Present:

Members: Shawn Brittingham, Dennis Assanis, Christopher Baker (remote), Jim Borel (remote), Allison Castellanos (remote), John Cochran (remote), James Correll (remote), Claire DeMatteis, William DiMondi (remote), Donna Fontana (remote), Michael Geltzeiler (remote), Kathleen Hawkins (remote), Robert Rider Jr. (remote), Terri Kelly, Nisha Lodhavia, Guy Marcozzi (remote), Terence Murphy (remote), John Paradee (remote), Claudia Peña Porretti (remote), Donald Puglisi, Edmond Sannini, David Spartin (remote), Sean Wang (remote), Kenneth Whitney (remote), Freeman Williams (remote)

### Absent:

Members: Carol Ammon, Joan Coker, Beth Cooper, William Lafferty, Debra Norris

#### I. Call to Meeting

Ms. Kelly called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance and thanked those faculty, administration and public guests who chose to attend the meeting today.

#### II. Attendance Report

Ms. Hawkins provided the attendance report and noted that 26 members of the Board are in attendance and those who could not attend were excused.

#### III. Approval of Minutes: Semiannual Meeting of December 6, 2022

##### **Motion:**

To approve the minutes of December 6, 2022 as presented.

Minutes approved as presented.

#### IV. Public Comment

Ms. Kelly introduced the public comment portion of the agenda and invited Ms. Brand to recognize those registered for public comment. The Board received comments from four

members of the community, Ms. Anderson-Strange, Ms. Davis, Dr. Morgan and Dr. Saylor.

V. Report of the President

Dr. Assanis welcomed those in attendance, both virtually and in person. He presented on the growth of undergraduate applications to date since 2019 and detailed the increases in resident and non-resident applications as well as partnership with K-12 entities in Delaware to strengthen education in the state and prepare more students to attend the University of Delaware. Dr. Assanis next presented on how applications had grown as measured by applications received since 2019.

Dr. Assanis next detailed the growth of the Honors College, noting that the application volume has quadrupled since its transformation from a honors program to a college. The growth in interest comes with increased diversity and the students enrolled as honors students are responsible for more than 90% of the students receiving prestigious national fellowships, and the number of students recognized is ahead of many other prestigious institutions. Dr. Assanis reviewed efforts to advance diversity, equity and inclusion campus-wide and reviewed growth in financial aid, an increase in first-generation students and an increase in Pell students. Dr. Assanis informed the Board of changes in staff structures to support these efforts and provided a preview of the Center for Intercultural Engagement, set to open later this spring. Dr. Assanis introduced a scholarship program that is directed toward supporting students who are on the Autism spectrum.

Dr. Assanis presented on the growth of the Graduate College and the steady increase in enrollment since 2016. The growth in the graduate student population includes both a growth in the number of doctoral degrees awarded and the number of domestic underrepresented minorities enrolled in graduate programs. Dr. Assanis focused on the trajectory of the Biden School over the past several years and highlighted the growth in graduate applications and the establishment of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Initiative for Civic Engagement and Civil Discourse.

Dr. Assanis recognized the centennial of the study abroad program at the University of Delaware and provided an overview of the study abroad program and highlighted the national recognition of the program in local media. Dr. Assanis highlighted the expansion of study abroad both in terms of locations around the world and the programmatic offerings.

Dr. Assanis reviewed trends in international student enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate level from 2010 until 2022. During the coronavirus pandemic, international enrollment was impacted, but moving beyond 2020 enrollment figures are trending back toward pre-pandemic levels. Dr. Assanis presented a map which indicated global education partnerships and emphasized that these collaborations exceed 200 partnerships on six continents.

Dr. Assanis provided an update on global and national rankings and highlighted the ranking of the chemical engineering undergraduate program as #2 in the country. The program's research expenditures are the largest of its peers. Dr. Assanis acknowledged the work of the faculty in helping create these highly recognized offerings.

Dr. Assanis reviewed faculty hiring since 2016 and explained that nearly one third of the current faculty have been hired since August 2016. Over this same period the diversity of the faculty also increased. Faculty hiring and growth outpaced student enrollment growth, resulting in an improvement to the student to faculty ratio. One marker of the transformational impact of our faculty growth since 2016 is the growth in the research enterprise. Last year research expenditures exceeded \$220M, and Dr. Assanis expressed optimism for continued exponential growth of research expenditures over the next five to ten years.

Dr. Assanis highlighted programs that advance innovation and entrepreneurship, including a partnership between the State of Delaware, DuPont and the University which has resulted in the foundation of more than 100 companies, which in turn created more than 400 jobs and raised more than \$800M collectively. Dr. Assanis spoke to the role of spaces in enabling these opportunities and presented renderings of Building X and outlined the types of research and teaching that will take place in that space. Construction for Building X is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2024. Dr. Assanis provided an update on the renovation of Drake Hall and invited the board members to participate in the ribbon-cutting later this spring. Both Drake Hall and the construction of Building X are both supported by funds from the State of Delaware.

Dr. Assanis reviewed the transformation of the STAR Campus and detailed the current facilities and developments on the campus. Moving forward, the remaining undeveloped space has been zoned into three general categories: academic uses, mixed use developments and industry partnerships. This does not include additional space that is reserved for future uses. Dr. Assanis spoke to the work of NIIMBL and reviewed the

economic impact from 2017-2021 and the anticipated future impact looking to the future between 2022-2026. The FinTech Innovation Hub continues to bring on new occupants, including a restaurant on the ground floor which is anticipated to open in the coming months. Dr. Assanis noted the university, inclusive of the STAR Campus, is a significant economic engine for the state and the region.

Dr. Assanis acknowledged the need for housing for students, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and noted the role that housing plays in the student experience. Addressing housing will require both near-term and long-term strategies. Dr. Assanis provided an overview of the strategy to help address the need for graduate housing in the near-term.

Dr. Assanis acknowledged two departing deans, Bruce Weber and John Pelesko. Dr. Weber is leaving to serve as the dean of the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College and Dr. Pelesko is leaving to serve as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Dr. Assanis thanked both of them for their contributions to the university. Next, Dr. Assanis acknowledged the appointment of Fabrice Veron as dean of the College of Earth, Ocean & Environment and the hiring of the co-directors of the new Office of Sustainability, Christ Williams and Jeffrey Summerhays. Dr. Assanis reviewed ongoing and upcoming senior leadership searches. In closing, Dr. Assanis made note of the president's report for 2023 and encouraged everyone to explore the digital report and noted the forthcoming printed report.

#### VI. Report of the Provost

Dr. Carlson thanked the Board for its time and offered some learning as she nears one year in her role at the University of Delaware. She connected the strategic initiatives that were mentioned by Dr. Assanis to topic of student enrollment and the promise and obligation the university makes to those students it enrolls. She reviewed the traditional approach to receiving a college degree and the recognition this pathway may not be sufficiently inclusive to serve students of today and the future. One opportunity to expand access is to broaden offerings and engagement in winter and summer sessions. Opportunities include exploring experiential learning, securing additional degrees, and make these sessions a more highly utilized offering by our undergraduate students. Dr. Carlson reviewed the most recent winter session and highlighted efforts in partnership with the Office of Communications and Marketing to promote 2023 winter session. Targeted expansion in winter session offerings has focused on providing high demand courses, informed by multiple factors that support students. During the most recent winter session, 90% of those courses defined as high demand were offered. The

administration provided resources to help units calculate the financial viability of course offerings and highlighted the benefit of providing additional graduate student teaching opportunities. While winter 2023 enrollment was greater than the prior year, enrollment is still below pre-pandemic levels. Dr. Carlson noted that online modalities were the most popular offering in 2023.

Dr. Carlson moved from the review of winter session to the discussion of how to best leverage summer sessions. She spoke to the approaches being considered for the summer, including experiential learning opportunities, undergraduate research opportunities, and supporting students on-time graduation rates. The administration is looking for ways to ensure these special sessions support social mobility. Dr. Carlson thanked Unidel for its support of a pilot program to support a cohort of 25 Pell-eligible students to receive stipends and tuition support for both winter and summer session enrollment.

Dr. Carlson acknowledged that another way to expand opportunity is to be inclusive of pathways to a degree at the University of Delaware beyond the traditional, first-time full-time student. Those pathways include partnerships with other institutions within the state, the Associate in Arts Program (AAP), and transfer students. Dr. Carlson highlighted the existing partnership with Delaware Technical and Community College which provides a pathway from the Associate Degree to a Bachelors degree from the University. The University is establishing additional dual degree initiatives in partnership with Delaware State University, starting with engineering but with potential for additional partnerships with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the College of Earth, Ocean & Environment.

Dr. Carlson reviewed the growth of 4+1 programs at the university and shared that those opportunities have doubled since 2018. She acknowledged there is an opportunity to further communicate these opportunities and increase uptake from students. Dr. Carlson spoke to the success of the AAP and the opportunity to expand its impact above and beyond the existing opportunities within the College of Arts & Sciences. Dr. Carlson presented the over 40 bachelors degrees that are available as part of the current AAP portfolio. She closed connecting these initiatives with the vision from Dr. Assanis and the strategic plan moving forward.

## VII. Special Presentation

### A. College of Education and Human Development - Dean Gary Henry

Dr. Assanis introduced Dr. Gary Henry, dean of the College of Education and Human Development.

Dr. Henry thanked Dr. Assanis for the introduction and shared his appreciation for the Board of Trustees to have the opportunity to present. Dr. Henry noted that his presentation would provide an overview of partnerships the College has with the P12 system in the State of Delaware and the initiatives to support education in the state. He described the relationship as reciprocal, as those who participate in the system go on to become college students and community members. Dr. Henry noted the national teacher shortage and provided data on how the state of Delaware compares across the nation. Dr. Henry presented on the structure of the College and its work as measured by faculty, research productivity and more. Dr. Henry provided an overview of both undergraduate and graduate enrollment and its growth since 2019.

Dr. Henry provided a sampling of media headlines to add context to the narrative around the teacher shortage in Delaware. The pandemic, and resulting loss of instructional time for students, has had a dramatic impact on student achievement and student outcomes. The state has also seen an outsized decline in teacher preparation program enrollment, down 60% compared to a national average decline of 35%. Dr. Henry highlighted the growth in elementary teacher education enrollment since 2019 and noted opportunities to grow enrollment not only in numbers but in terms of teacher diversity. The students in Delaware are majority-minority and the demographic makeup of teachers are not in alignment with that population. Dr. Henry outlined the steps taken to increase partnerships with Delaware schools to increase overall enrollment and enrollment of underrepresented students in teacher preparation programs. Dr. Henry outlined ongoing efforts to enhance the flexibility, quality, options and access to teacher preparation programs. This effort includes additional degree offerings for middle grade programs.

Dr. Henry spoke to efforts to retain graduates as teachers in Delaware as well as successful efforts to provide professional development for educators and those in administrative roles in the P12 ecosystem. These efforts include the creation of a new success center which combines development for teachers as well as administrators. Dr. Henry reviewed student readiness as measured by standardized tests and noted the relative performance and declines in performance in recent years. He reiterated that these challenges are systemic and exacerbated by the loss of instructional time during the pandemic. Dr. Henry reviewed the initiatives the College has to address these issues, working proactively and collaboratively with the state officials. Dr. Henry highlighted a subset of those school policy experts within the College.

Ms. DeMatteis thanked Dr. Henry for his presentation and emphasized the importance of the AAP for meeting students where they are and asked if Dr. Henry could speak to where graduates of the College in teacher preparation programs end up teaching. Dr. Henry noted that the enrollment is split almost equally between resident and non-resident students, and nearly 80% of resident students stay in Delaware to teach and only approximately 20% of those non-residents remain in Delaware to teach. He acknowledged a need to grow the number of graduates who choose to become educators in the state following graduation.

Dr. Assanis thanked the Board for its time, and for Dr. Henry for his comments.

VIII. Adjournment

With no additional business, the Board adjourned its meeting at approximately 10:58 a.m.