

Council of Trustees

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Council of Trustees
Friday, September 26, 2025

ACTION

Public Meeting Minutes

The Council of Trustees of Shippensburg University met on Friday, September 26, 2025 at 2:00 PM at Shippensburg University in the Ceddia Union Building MPR in Shippensburg, PA as well as visible through a live stream.

Attendance: Trustees Doug Harbach, Matthew Steck (Zoom), Moriah Hathaway (Zoom), Glen Grell, Colin Arnold, Ashley Loper, Bryan Lowe and President Patterson were in attendance.

Absent: George McElwee

Call to Order

Chairperson Doug Harbach called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM and welcomed everyone attending the meeting. He then led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – No public comment.

Board Action Items

ACTION: Published Agenda - The published agenda was motioned for approval by Trustee Grell and seconded by Trustee Arnold. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Meeting Minutes - The Meeting minutes from May 16, 2025, meeting was motioned for approval by Trustee Arnold and Seconded by Trustee Grell. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Trustee Officer Nominations - Nominations Committee Chair Matthew Steck nominated a slate of candidates for officer positions of the Council of Trustees and motioned to approve the following: Trustee George McElwee as Chair, Matthew Steck as Vice Chair and Ashley Loper as Secretary. The motion was seconded by Trustee Bryan Lowe. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: 2026 Council of Trustee Meeting Dates - The Council of Trustees 2026 Meeting dates was motioned for approval by Trustee Lowe and seconded by Trustee Arnold. The motion passed unanimously.

President's Report

President Patterson provided the following remarks regarding the recent passing of Dr. Robert Lesman, Professor and Department Chair of Global Languages and Cultures:

"Good afternoon. Before we begin our Trustee Meeting, I want to acknowledge a profound loss to the Shippensburg University family that has occurred within the last 24 hours. We mourn the passing of Dr. Robert Lesman, Professor and Department Chair of Global Languages and Cultures, a beloved colleague, teacher, and scholar whose impact on our campus will endure.

Dr. Lesman joined Shippensburg in 2006, earned tenure as an Associate Professor, and was promoted to Professor of Spanish in 2023. He most recently served as Department Chair.

Dr. Lesman was a noted scholar of Latin American and Caribbean letters, and his research illuminated Cuban literature and culture, including the intersections of U.S. and Latin American writing. His recent book, *Translating Cuba: Literature, Music, Film, Politics*, was published by Routledge in 2021, and his articles appeared in respected journals in his fields of study.

Robert led with care in the classroom and the department. He taught courses ranging from Spanish for the Professions and Advanced Interpreting to Hispanic Poetry, helping students connect language study to real careers and communities. His teaching and mentorship were recognized with campus awards, including the Teaching Innovations in Pedagogy and Scholarship Award and the Academic Mentorship Award from Athletics. He also received the Provost's Award for Extraordinary Service for his contributions to the Minds@Work conference.

Colleagues and students knew him as a generous mentor with deep expertise in 20th-century Latin American poetry, the Hispanic Caribbean, Afro-Hispanic cultures, translation, and Spanish for the professions. As chair, he guided Global Languages and Cultures with steadiness and vision. His work with service-learning and open educational resources reflected his belief that access and opportunity matter.

On behalf of the Shippensburg University trustees and our entire university, I extend our deepest condolences to Robert's wife, Julie, their children, and their family, friends, colleagues, and students. We will support the Global Languages and Cultures department through this transition, and we will honor Dr. Lesman's legacy by sustaining the scholarly excellence, student mentorship, and global engagement he championed.

We will share additional information regarding the family's services once arrangements have been made and share with us.

Chair Harbach initiated a moment of silence to reflect on the passing of Dr. Lesman.

President Patterson provided the following remarks:

Earlier today, during our trustees' meeting with the Executive Management Team and myself, we had an opportunity to update our trustees on the enrollment growth we are experiencing here at Shippensburg

University. Our census report shows roughly 5,300 students, representing an increase of 2.7% in total headcount, as well as increases in full-time equivalency and total credit hours—the highest we’ve seen

in quite some time. We’re very pleased with the progress we’re making on that front, and I want to thank everyone, including our faculty and staff, who are involved in the important work of recruitment, retention, and student success. We also had the chance to update trustees on the progress of our programs and majors, including the growth of our ShipStart program, which increased from around 140 students last year to 179 this year. We discussed the success of our recent open houses as we meet new prospective students, their families, and friends. We also talked about the pending appropriations request to the University System of Georgia and the current budget impasse, as well as the potential impacts should that continue.

In addition, we reviewed the PASSHE sustainability metrics, focusing on the university’s progress toward meeting these goals. Shippensburg continues to be in Plan 2 for sustainability, with early indicators showing that we are making significant progress toward meeting our sustainability metrics. We also discussed the Chancellor’s recent visit to campus, where he had a great experience engaging with our faculty, administration, and students. I was very glad to host him. We talked about the progress being made on the Franklin Science Center renovations, which have now passed the 25% mark. Renovations will continue into the fall, and once half of the building is complete, we’ll begin moving faculty back in while the other half continues under renovation.

We also discussed the progress on the adaptive reuse of Kriner Hall, where contractors are expected to begin interior construction in October to transform it into our new Entrepreneurship Hub. The Diller Center continues to support the development of an innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, including prospective surveys that will be distributed to students and faculty in the coming weeks to assess our capacity to support student-made products and business ventures connected to the Entrepreneurship Hub.

We also talked about several upcoming campus speakers who will contribute to conversations on inclusivity and emerging local industries such as energy and manufacturing. Finally, we discussed plans to honor Ms. Diane Jefferson following her recent passing. I want to close by expressing my gratitude to our trustees for all the work they do to support the university. These are unpaid positions—though we do pay them in food—and they eat the same meals our students enjoy in the residence halls. We had a wonderful lunch today with several of our students, giving trustees the opportunity to hear directly from them about their experiences at Shippensburg and how they plan to use their credentials, degrees, and experiences as they enter the workforce. Thank you all for your continued service and dedication to our university community.

ACTION: Order of Succession – The order of succession was presented by President Patterson and sought Council of Trustee approval. Trustee Arnold motioned for approval which was seconded by Trustee Loper. The motion passed unanimously.

Division of Academic Affairs – Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Nicole Hill provided the following remarks:

Greetings from Academic Affairs. We begin our year with a fully executed Academic Master Plan that celebrates our collective work as a public university rooted in the liberal arts and committed to the transformative power of student-centered learning. At the heart of this plan is a belief we hold in common: Education transforms. It shapes not only careers, but character. It prepares not just workers,

but thinkers. It develops ethical, imaginative, and compassionate leaders and beckons all of us to be co-creators of a more just and vibrant world.

This year, the Academic Master Plan will be our compass. It truly is our shared map for where we are headed with our academic mission and how we will lead together. Our Academic Master Plan and work for the year focuses on four essential commitments.

First, we are deepening our investment in innovative academic programs grounded in the liberal arts and aligned with community and workforce needs. We will elevate core competencies ... critical thinking, communication, data literacy, and global understanding ...while building the systems, technologies, and interdisciplinary frameworks needed to keep our programs responsive and relevant. We will partner together to update our general education curriculum to ensure we are actualizing these student learning outcomes in purposeful and meaningful ways while amplifying the career readiness of our students as well as creating flexible instruction options.

Second, we will expand access, flexibility, and equity through new academic pathways - adult learner programs, online offerings, and shared initiatives across the State System. We will meet learners where they are, while preserving and enriching the residential experiences that remain foundational to student growth and community belonging. We have already accomplished so much in this domain with our curricular innovation in our degree completion program, establishment of online transfer pathways for our BSBA programs, and our transfer work that leverages holistic credit mobility... We know there is more to do to serve our communities. We will develop 3 fully online undergraduate programs this coming academic year that respond to workforce needs of our region, address the non-traditional learner market, and harness the pedagogical competencies of our faculty and instructional designers. This will require collaboration and accountability, and we have the skills and purpose to make this happen.

Third, we reaffirm that student success means more than access. It means completion, purpose, and momentum. We will celebrate our collective successes in meaningful increases in our retention metrics while continuing to partner to provide opportunity and potentiality enhancing strategies to our students. This is our collective work across the University and our success in retention is an outcome for all of us to see ourselves as impacting. This year shows our ongoing successes in keeping stable our significant increase the past two years with second year retention remaining at 77.6% and increasing our retention metrics for third and fourth year retention by 3 and 8%, respectively, as well as with our Under-Represented Minority (URM) students. Across second, third, and fourth year retention, we realized an average of 6% increase compared to last year for our under-represented minority students. Our work to ensure every student has the support, agency, and opportunity to finish what they started continues and will be a key driver for our work this year.

And fourth, we will expand high-impact, hands-on learning opportunities that connect students to the world and themselves. We will expand our work-based learning initiative and continue to invest in our research and creative programs for our students. In the past year, we gave engaged 1,202 of our students in career on-ramp and industry recognized credentials as part of our WBL initiative. This engagement includes employer engagement with over 250 employers. These high impact learning moments are the very fabric of the Shippensburg University experience where learning becomes action, and knowledge becomes change.

I would like to conclude my remarks with recognizing two student accomplishments.

Cole Pearson, a senior Chemistry major in the Wood Honors College, was selected to participate in the Nuclear Chemistry Summer School, sponsored by the Department of Energy and the American Chemical

Society, in San Jose, California in summer 2025. During the intensive six-week program, Cole studied fundamental nuclear science, fuel reprocessing, medicine, security, radiochemistry, and energy. Cole

earned A+'s in the lecture and lab courses, and he was recognized with the Trish Baisden Student of the Year Award.

Kenny Tran, a senior Finance major in the Wood Honors College, interned with Northwestern Mutual in summer 2025. Kenny was ranked as one of the top interns in Pennsylvania and qualified for the 2025 Elite College Financial Representative Academy, which will be held at Northwestern Mutual headquarters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in November. The conference celebrates top interns from every state for their achievements. Kenny has been offered a position as a Financial Advisor with Northwestern Mutual after graduation.

Division of Administration and Finance – Vice President Jolinda Wilson provided the following remarks: Thank you, Chairman Harbach and good afternoon. First up, I am presenting the CPP (Comprehensive Planning Process) for approval. I will call on Trustee Grell for a motion on that item.

Trustee Grell provided comment to the CPP completed in May would typically be voted on at the September meeting, however that due to the state budget situation the ability to revise properly is inhibited. To ensure there is not a compliance issue with PASSHE, he motioned to table action on the revised CPP until the next Council of Trustees meeting in November. The motion was seconded by Trustee Steck. The motion passed unanimously.

For information only, I've shared in your packet Purchases and Contracts for the period May 1, 2025 through August 31, 2025.

Additionally, I've shared Personnel Actions from May 1, 2025 through August 31, 2025.

And that concludes my report, thank you.

Division of Enrollment Management and Marketing – Vice President Megan Luft provided the following remarks:

Thank you, Chairman Harbach. Since our last Council of Trustees meeting, we have been a very busy division, concluding the summer, wrapping up Fall 2025 recruitment, and hitting the road for Fall 2026, our next cohort of students who will graduate in 2030!

I would like to highlight some key points of pride and ongoing efforts within the Enrollment Management and Marketing division.

Census has been finalized and submitted to the state system. We are currently at a total enrollment of 5,302 headcount, representing a 2.7% increase over Fall 2024. We also saw an increase in FTE, credit hours, and the number of first-time in college. The admissions team missed a few goals, but through ongoing efforts and practices, the enrollment management and retention teams collaborated to increase our total enrollment year over year for the first time since the 2009-2010 academic year. As I mentioned, our teams are already off and working on 2026, and we are currently ahead of the point in time of this time last year, recruiting for 2025. All hope we continue our increasing enrollment here at Ship.

Staffing Update:

We are excited to announce that Ian Weikel, over the summer, transitioned from our graduate assistant to our newest Assistant Director of Admissions, replacing Jeremy Miller, who moved in the spring to transfer to an international program. We are excited not only as alumni but also as long-time student employee of the department and division that Ian will represent Ship well in the Eastern part of the state.

Admissions, Events & Orientations:

Orientation and FWW saw over 1300 students this summer and wanted to congratulate Brandy Brady on her success first year overseeing NSO and FWW. We saw more students engaged and participating during FWW than in years past.

Fall recruitment currently has over 500 high school visits scheduled for this fall and over 300 college fairs scheduled

We already had our first Open House last Saturday with a show rate of 83% and about 50 more students than in September 2024. The number of visitors to our campus continues to grow each year.

Financial Aid:

Finally, this year we are hopefully back to a normal FAFSA year. The FAFSA will open on October 1, 2025, with beta testing already underway during the summer. We anticipate a timely release of the application and a return to our normal schedule for releasing financial aid offers.

Luhrs Performing Arts Center:

25-26 is Luhrs' 20th Anniversary – stay tuned for an exciting announcement about our 20th year celebration, and we are excited for this year's lineup and the 26-27 that is already forming!

The 24-25 season saw record-breaking ticket sales since before COVID, great additions to our performances, including an employee appreciation event in conjunction with the OWD, exciting new events, collaborations with faculty for speakers, and other new rentals of the LPAC.

Marketing & Communications:

I am excited to announce that, in conjunction with PA Media Group, our digital marketing partner, Shippensburg University, placed Silver or 2nd in the UPECA national marketing conference for our Anti-Melt Campaign, which just wrapped up its 3rd successful year. PA Media Group achieved record-breaking marketing metrics, and Ship reduced its summer melt by 4% since launching this campaign in 2023.

As I am sure you are aware, since I saw some of you wearing your new Athletic logo swag, M&C, Athletics, and Sports information just launched their new athletic logo to students and the public on September 4th. We are already seeing great feedback, revenue from merchandise sales, and what some are dubbing 'New Logo Mojo' with our athletic teams! This was a cross-divisional success and a year-long undertaking, and the revenue is already beginning to offset the small financial investment.

In conclusion, we are excited to work hard as we begin our push for Fall 2026. However, I would be remiss not to congratulate our division and everyone on this campus, as it takes everyone to recruit, retain, and graduate our students. Our excitement to continue increasing enrollment here at Ship is shared by all.

Division of Student Affairs – Vice President Lorie Sheetz provided the following remarks:

Earlier today I updated the trustees on our Housing occupancy numbers. At freeze we had over 98% occupancy in our suite style buildings and over 100% planned occupancy in our traditional halls. This is slightly higher than Fall 2024. I also gave information on the number of medical singles that due to OAR accommodations and the increase in those each year as well as the effect on revenue. Finally, regarding housing, we reviewed the number of Emotional Support Animals we have on campus and the increase in those annually due to students mental and emotional wellbeing.

I also updated the trustees on dining information including new offerings in our residential location Reisner, which now offers Denim coffee and the Raman stations. Information was also given on the 7 retail locations, and I updated trustees on the contract terms that end in 2027.

Finally, information was shared about our clubs and organizations on campus and upcoming family day tomorrow and Homecoming October 24-25.

Chair Doug Harbach provided the following remarks to the Executive Management Team: I just want to thank every one of you that are here, and the work that you're doing. We are blessed to have you. You're outstanding, you're the best, I think, in the state system. And I know with all the stuff that goes on, whether it's dollars and cents or students. Or getting students in the door, or raising money. It's a big job for each and every one of you, and thank you again for all your hard work in what you do.

APSCUF Report – Aaron Dobbs provided the following remarks: Eulogizing for Dr. Lessman, he came in 2006 with me. And it's been a particularly hard day, so thank you. The faculty are enjoying the interactions that we're having with our students. Some are enjoying the interactions that they're having with their administration that they see in their colleges, and all the way up and all the way down, and through the staff. I'm saying that in a positive sense because I've heard far fewer complaints this year, maybe that's just that I'm not president, I'm past president, but it's lovely to hear positive things being said about the administration from the faculty, so thank you.

A couple other highlights that I thought I'd call out real fast tomorrow, after the game, if you feel like going to, I believe it's Mechanicsburg, the SU Marching Band will be performing in a high school cavalcade of bands which is a competition between six or 7 high schools. The university will show up at the end while judges are scoring to entertain the high school bands and perhaps pull a few band members in Shippensburg which has been very successful over the years. The band will be performing in a high school. Um, Cavalcade, which is a competition band 6 through 7 high schools, where the university will show up at the end while the judges are scoring to entertain the high school bands.

Then Sunday, if you're not doing anything Sunday please come to Allentown for the 29th annual Cavalcade of university bands, where we will have most of the PASSHE schools and several privates. Several state schools from other states competing at the Bernie Crum Stadium in Allentown. So those are the two big, exciting things that you have opportunities for this weekend.

Thanks to the trustees for your support. We're doing quite good things here, and we all appreciate it. From the faculty side, thank you.

President Patterson added that the SU Band would also be performing in the 250th anniversary parade in Philadelphia.

AFSME Report – Steven Bucher provided the following remarks: I also will add to the band discussion that we had a daughter who graduated a couple years ago and was in the band and really enjoyed it.

Staff members have been working very hard and covering work that was covered in the past by several different people, so they are working extra hard. I ask everyone to encourage our staff members as they work hard and work many longer hours than they probably should. If they didn't do that, we all would suffer from it.

SCUPA Report – Kyle Miller provided the following remarks: I feel compelled to talk about the band, but I got nothing, so other than that sounds like a really cool collection of performances coming up. It has definitely been an energetic and robust high-energy starter to our semester here at SHIP, in so many different, wonderful, good ways, and we've seen that come out in. Interactions that our SCUBA members have had with students also comes with a lot of needs and support and services that we've been able to provide.

As Dr. Patterson mentioned earlier, the Chancellor visited. SCUPA and AFSCME had a wonderful dialogue with him that was just a really great discussion. That is the end of my report. Happy Friday, everybody. Thank you.

Alumni Affairs Report – Moriah Hathaway provided the following remarks on behalf of the Alumni Association: Greeting Council members from the Office of Alumni Relations and the Alumni Board of Directors.

To recap from the summer:

For Alumni Weekend we hosted 500 alumni that registered for activities held over the course of the weekend for another successful Alumni Weekend. Of the 500, just over 100 were first time attendees. The planning for Alumni Weekend 2026 for the weekend of May 29 and 30 will start soon. Our alumni board of directors will meet tomorrow. Two alumni were newly elected to the alumni board. They are Michael Coyne from the class of 2012 and Lance Hines-Butts from the class of 2022. Alumni board president Aven Bittinger shares that the charge for the board for the year is to emphasize engagement. Engagement with alumni, engagement with students, and engagement with the university.

As part of the board meeting tomorrow, we will participate in and welcome our alumni legacies families that will be participating in our annual legacy pinning program. Registration numbers show that 50 current students will be pinned a legacy with 200 in attendance.

On the calendar, there are currently three regional events. A social in Virginia in the greater Washington DC area at Solace Brewing Co with one of the co-founders who is an alum from the class of 2008 sharing information on how the brewery formed. Right now we are expecting approximately 70 to attend. Then in November there will be a pod-cast style talk hosted in Stewart Hall with three alumnae: Annie Carnathan, CEO of Universal Media, Anne Deeter Gallaher, CEO of Deeter Gallaher Group, and Lee Adams Kuhn, VP of Promotion at Broken Bow Records. And later in November, an alumni social in Reading.

If you have not indicated your attendance at the annual alumni awards of distinction reception and dinner during Homecoming Weekend on October 24, I encourage you to do so. The university will

recognize ten alumni in the categories of Distinguished Alumni, Outstanding Young Alumni, Lifetime Achievement, Cultural Impact, and Exceptional Service.

Then on Saturday, attend with your family and friends to watch the homecoming parade outside the CUB and walk thru the tailgate Fan Zone to say hello to alumni. The alumni office has activities planned to encourage interactive engagement and conversation including the alumni board volunteering at a prize spin wheel and popcorn machine, and added a cotton candy machine to the mix this year as well. You'll see stations this year for food and activities – be sure to get your souvenir photo in the photo booth, and check out the inflatable obstacle course.

And a quick plug for two events in 2026. New for 2026 is a For the Love of Ship Dinner and Dance inside Stewart Hall on Saturday, February 14 and the Derby Party will be hosted on Saturday, May 2.

Student Government Association Report: Student Government Association President provided the following remarks:

SGA has already been busy meeting, collaborating and working on being an effective advocate for the campus community.

So far this semester, we had a successful fall welcome week ice cream social, participated in events like the campus activities fair, the Around The World Event, and tomorrow we will be collaborating with student affairs to sponsor an event during family day.

In a broader discussion around how, SGA can improve their effectiveness, the Executive Leadership Team has been discussing the purpose of our student committees and whether changes can be made that allow our senators to be more involved representatives and improve our outreach.

Additionally, SGA is working on making our public meetings a more informative and collaborative meeting by hosting representatives from various campus resources. At our first public meeting last week, we heard from Dr. Schoolcraft who was able to give us updates on academic affairs and answer several questions about the new academic integrity training that has been rolled out to students this semester. We will continue to have guest speakers at our public meetings, and we hope to have representatives from Financial Aid, Etter Health and other resources that are important to students.

This past week we elected 5 new senators, filling almost all our elected senator positions. We are excited to welcome additional representatives from the incoming freshman class and other communities on campus.

New Business: A motion was made by Trustee Arnold to approve recognition opportunities for which will be release in conjunction with the planned public announcement at a future date as determined by the President. The motion was seconded by Trustee Grell and passed unanimously.

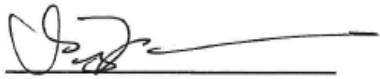
Trustee Doug Harbach thanked everyone for the time he had to serve as Chair. Trustee Grell and Trustee Steck both provided thanks to Trustee Harbach for his service.

Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn by Trustee Lowe and seconded by Trustee Arnold. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:43 PM.

Submitted by: Drew Alosi

Reviewed: George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees



George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees



Ashley Lopez, Secretary, Council of Trustees