

Council of Trustees

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Council of Trustees

Friday, May 15, 2026

Public Meeting Minutes

ACTION

The Council of Trustees of Shippensburg University met on Friday, May 15, 2026 at 2:00 PM at Shippensburg University in Stewart Hall, Shippensburg, PA as well as visible through a live stream.

Attendance: Trustees George McElwee, Matthew Steck, Ashley Loper, Doug Harbach, Moriah Hathaway, Glen Grell, Henry Mohl, Bryan Lowe and President Patterson were in attendance.

Absent: None.

Call to Order

Chairperson George McElwee called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM and welcomed everyone attending the meeting.

Public Comments – No public comment.

Board Action Items

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

ACTION: Meeting Minutes - The Meeting minutes from February 20, 2026 meeting was motioned for approval by Trustee Hathaway and Seconded by Trustee Mohl. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION: Trustee Bylaws – Chair McElwee provided an update on a review completed by PASSHE Legal of the Council of Trustees Bylaws. An updated version of the Bylaws were provided to Council members and action for approval is anticipated at the September meeting of the Council.

President's Report

President Patterson provided the following remarks:

Today, I had the pleasure of updating our University Council of Trustees on the ongoing progress toward our Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation process, with our self-study co-chairs continuing to provide further guidance throughout the summer of 2026 regarding our self-study. As I reported during that time, everything appears to be proceeding smoothly with our accreditation process.

I also updated our trustees on the planning of our strategic plan, which began in the spring of 2026 with the development of a new mission statement. I will continue to keep the trustees informed on the progress and milestones of the strategic plan as they unfold throughout the summer and into the fall.

We provided an update on enrollment, which appears to be stable at this time. We also shared updates on personnel matters, including yesterday's appointment of Dr. Nicole Hill as our new Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. We congratulate her on this appointment and appreciate her joining us.

In addition, Dr. Hill and I provided updates on our program array adjustments in response to market demands, including the online launch of our BSBA in Marketing, BSBA in Management, and BA in Psychology programs, as well as our continued data-informed planning and decision-making regarding our academic program array.

We discussed financial stewardship and budget management within board and system guidance, including the development of our CPP, the status of university appropriations from the General Assembly, and tuition and fees. We also reviewed long-term sustainability measures, including budget reductions, the assessment of contracts and memberships, and other financial matters.

The trustees received updates on advancement and alumni engagement, including our continued donor cultivation and engagement strategies and fundraising efforts aligned with academic and student priorities. In particular, we highlighted improvements to campus facilities through Kreiner Hall and other planned improvements supported through advancement and external fundraising.

We also discussed Alumni Weekend, taking place May 29 and May 30, and encouraged everyone reading these minutes to attend. Additional conversations focused on workforce and campus climate, including labor relations, upcoming collective bargaining preparations, and continued attention to communication, morale, and professional development across campus.

Further discussions centered on campus facilities, safety, and operations, including updates to Kreiner Hall, the Franklin Science Center, and other important master plan-related campus improvements. We also reviewed the recent electrical outage that occurred on campus.

The trustees were updated on government and community relations, including the work being done by the President's Office with elected officials and community partners as we continue advancing key university initiatives.

I also shared updates on our softball team's competitive success in the NCAA Atlantic Regionals, including an 8–0 victory over Claflin, as well as their PSAC Championship. Congratulations to our softball team on these accomplishments.

Additionally, we discussed the hiring of Andrew Hale, a member of the Class of 2023, as our new head coach for men's and women's swimming. Congratulations to Andrew on his appointment.

Finally, we reviewed trustee engagement, governance, and upcoming priorities. That concludes my report.

ACTION: Facilities Naming – Trustee Steck made the following motion for naming of elements of Kriner Hall:

“I motion to accept the recommendations of the President on the naming of these four spaces as part of the Kriner Hall; the Lobby, the Plaza, the Vestibule and the Small Business Hub in advance of a public announcement at a time as determined by the University President. The public announcement will be made in conjunction with a special ribbon cutting for the Kriner Hall Entrepreneurship Hub.”

The motion was seconded by Trustee Grell. The motion passed unanimously.

Division of Academic Affairs –Interim Provost Nicole Hill provided the following remarks:

Good afternoon, and thank you for this opportunity, as well as for your ongoing support of the university. One week ago, we celebrated our commencement ceremonies, and all three ceremonies were wonderful and served as a testament to the collective dedication and hard work of colleagues across campus. Thank you to all who participated. This spring and summer, the Registrar’s Office approved 662 undergraduate students for graduation, representing an increase of 94 students compared to last year. In addition, 220 graduate students were approved for spring or summer graduation, an increase of 17 students over the previous year. Our commencement ceremonies were truly exciting and meaningful, reminding us that the ultimate purpose of our hard work is to see our students succeed. It was a beautiful celebration and a fitting conclusion to a very successful academic year.

During the year, three faculty members were promoted to associate professor, six faculty members were promoted to full professor, and two additional faculty members were granted tenure. Nine faculty members also secured sabbaticals for the upcoming academic year. Their projects reflect impressive breadth and depth across disciplines. One faculty member will focus on immigration legal services and social work education by building accredited representative capacity and bringing that expertise into the classroom. Another project will incorporate AI-guided coding assistance into instruction in biometry, while another faculty member is developing a book titled *Make Believe: A Guide to Writing Compelling Fiction*.

We have also experienced growth in ShipStart enrollment, along with improved third- and fourth-year retention metrics. Following recruitment and admission through the Admissions Office, faculty members Mike Levinstein and Jen Wysocki advise and register these dual enrollment students into courses. This spring, after visiting five high schools and conducting dozens of in-person and Zoom meetings, a total of 207 students enrolled in more than 325 courses. These new and continuing ShipStart students represent a 40% increase over Fall 2025 and a 95% increase over Fall 2024. We are grateful for the excellent work of both our admissions team and faculty advisors in supporting these students throughout the process.

The university has also continued significant curricular and programmatic innovation. In addition to the three fully online undergraduate programs previously referenced, we are launching a concentration in our MBA program focused on artificial intelligence for business. We are also introducing a public health concentration and minor in sociology, as well as a mid-level minor for Pre-K through 6 certification in response to grade band changes from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

This academic year, the Office of Workforce Development launched the Mid-Level Leadership Manager Essentials Series, which has demonstrated exceptional demand and engagement. The program has operated at or near full capacity for all ten monthly sessions, reflecting its strong relevance and alignment with market needs. The Office of Workforce Development has also expanded external partnerships through collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. This

partnership includes employee engagement initiatives in frontline and mid-level leadership development, as well as customized trainings in ethics for geologists and engineers, public relations and communications, and Six Thinking Hats methodology.

I would also like to highlight several recent accomplishments of our faculty, staff, and students. The Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition received a violence intervention and prevention grant of more than \$300,000 from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, supporting continued positive impact for youth in our community.

Dr. Matthew Shop and Shannon Shoemaker, along with doctoral student Emily Spencer, traveled to Spain to deliver three presentations to an international audience of counseling professionals. In March, Shelby Danable, Director of the Office of Accessibility Resources, co-presented a nationally attended webinar with 171 participants alongside a colleague from Gettysburg College for the Association on Higher Education and Disability. The session focused on developing a regional peer mentorship network connecting professionals across diverse institution types.

Student achievements also continue to stand out. Robert Long was selected for a Research Experience for Undergraduates at Yale University through Yale's Physical and Engineering Biology Department. He will work in Dr. Martina del Bello's lab using quantitative and computational biology methods to study bacteria and bacteriophage diversity and function through microbial microcosms.

Professors Jeb Kagaris and John Richardson, along with undergraduate researchers Cole Pearson and Rebecca Fite, attended the 2026 Intercollegiate Student Chemists Convention. Cole and Rebecca delivered judged oral presentations on their research while competing against students from institutions across the nation, including the U.S. Naval Academy. Cole earned second place in his category, an outstanding accomplishment.

Finally, I would like to highlight achievements from our Art and Design Department. Maddie Peln and Professor Harley Weigel attended the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conference in Detroit, which attracted more than 10,000 attendees from across the country, including educators, artists, graduate schools, residency programs, and industry professionals. During the conference, kiln company SCUT hosted a national student throwing competition judged by renowned artist Stephen Hill. Competitors were challenged to create the most creative and technically difficult vessel on the potter's wheel using only five pounds of clay within thirty minutes. Our student competed before a live audience and earned second prize, an extraordinary accomplishment.

Thank you again for your support and for helping make this such a successful academic year.

Division of Administration and Finance – Vice President Jolinda Wilson

Vice President Jolinda Wilson presented the following items for action:

ACTION: 2026 -27 Fee Schedule - The 2026 Summer Fee and Refund Schedule was motioned for approval by Trustee Grell. The motion was seconded by Trustee Harbach. The motion passed with Trustee Lowe dissenting.

ACTION: Capital Projects List for 2027-31 – The Capital Projects List was motioned for approval by Trustee Grell and Seconded by Trustee Harbach. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Reaffirmation of Fee Waivers – The Reaffirmation of fee waivers was motioned for approval by Trustee Grell and seconded by Trustee Hathaway. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice President Wilson reported that information was shared with the Council including purchases and contracts along with personnel actions from February 1st through May 6th.

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

Good afternoon, and thank you, Chairman McElwee. I'd like to provide a brief update from the Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing, and the Luhrs Performing Arts Center.

Overall, we continue to see encouraging momentum in several areas of enrollment, particularly in undergraduate first-time-in-college, transfer, and adult learner engagement, while also preparing for significant federal financial aid changes that will affect students nationwide beginning in the 2026–27 academic year.

For Fall 2026, our preliminary enrollment indicators indicate that we are projected to hit our goals of 1,100 first-time college students, 180 transfer students, and continued growth in Ship Start enrollment. We are also seeing positive movement in our online undergraduate programs, with more than 100 applications already submitted and strong interest in Management, Marketing, and Psychology. Our concerns and focus remain on graduate recruitment strategies, as we are behind this point in time compared to last year.

From a marketing perspective, we have transitioned away from the Niche platform and are moving toward a more strategic and cost-effective model. This includes partnerships with PA Media Group, targeted College Board outreach campaigns, and increased in-house design and printing capabilities. These changes are intended to improve flexibility, efficiency, and overall return on investment. We are also actively preparing for the federal legislation known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” which significantly changes federal financial aid beginning next year. The legislation introduces caps on Parent PLUS loans, reduces borrowing flexibility for graduate students, changes repayment options, and revises Pell Grant eligibility. These changes will likely create affordability concerns for many families across higher education. Our teams are already working proactively on financial aid counseling, communication strategies, and enrollment planning to minimize disruption for students.

Turning briefly to the Luhrs Performing Arts Center, the Center continues to operate in a very challenging national entertainment environment. While we are still projecting a positive operating margin for the year, revenues are down significantly due to a combination of artist cancellations, increased touring costs, visa complications, and softer ticket sales across portions of the entertainment industry. At the same time, several performances and partnerships continue to perform very well, helping stabilize the overall season. In response to current market conditions, Luhrs is expanding its rentals, adjusting its marketing strategies, refining its programming approaches, and pursuing additional partnership and sponsorship opportunities.

I also want to note that Director Robin Dolbin will retire on June 30, 2026, after many years of service and leadership. I wanted to publicly thank her for her service to this institution and the Luhrs Performing Arts Center. As we look to fill the position left by Robin's retirement, we are completing final interviews for the next director this month.

Overall, despite a rapidly changing landscape in higher education and entertainment, the Division remains focused on enrollment growth, student access and affordability, operational sustainability, and long-term strategic positioning for the University.
Thank you, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

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

Earlier today, information was presented to the trustees regarding our third-party partners. I highlighted the outstanding work of Ship Dining and their achievement of a 95.8% average quality assurance score across all 15 inspections conducted during this academic year. The target score is 93%, and Ship Dining exceeded that benchmark in 14 of the 15 inspections, including exceptional scores of 99.5% and 100%. I also recognized the excellent work Ship Dining has done through its donations and continued support of both the university clubs and orgs and sports teams and the greater Shippensburg University community.

Information was also presented on Etter Health Center and the services provided by WellSpan. Throughout the next academic year, we will focus on implementing a five-question text survey to gather feedback and measure satisfaction with services.

Finally, we highlighted Camps and Conferences for Summer 2026 as activities officially kick off this weekend with our PIAA district events. Next weekend, we will welcome more than 2,200 athletes and coaches who will live on campus during the PIAA State Championships. We also look forward to celebrating the 50th year that Shippensburg University has hosted this outstanding event.

20th Anniversary Show & Gala with Trisha Yearwood, which is currently Sold Out.
Thank you, Chairman

APSCUF Report – No Report.

AFSME Report – Carole Rosenberry provided a written report stating appreciation for all the work being done to prepare for the upcoming PIAA events.

SCUPA Report – Kyle Miller provided the following remarks:

Good Afternoon, everyone. Another exciting academic year come to a close and certainly an eventful one. Everyone can take a quick breather, and... immediately start to do it all again. Summer is going to include many exciting things, including those fueled by the work of SCUPA employees. The end of May sees the annual Alumni Weekend and then June and July contain 6 new student orientation days. In both May and August, Housing & Residence Life we will be replacing more than 2,000 mattresses in the residences halls and working with a company to have the old mattresses recycled; avoiding approx. 30 tons of material from going into landfills. Special shoutout to SCUPA members Lori Smith, Brandy Brady, and Jeff Ward for spearheading those initiatives.

SCUPA's biennial campus elections are currently underway, so we will know in early June if y'all are going to be stuck with me for two more years.
Congratulations to Dr. Nicole Hill on her appointment as Shippensburg University's next Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs.

And finally, I hope everyone has a wonderful summer.

Alumni Affairs Report – Lori Smith provided the following remarks on behalf of the Alumni Association:

A few updates on alumni events and engagement since your last meeting. Anytime we can host events with an alumni connection we try. This spring we connected with the Josh Neil, class of 2015 who is the head winemaker at Mt Hope Estates in Lebanon. Around 80 joined us at Mt Hope to hear from Josh, from his journey into wine making, to wines of Mt Hope. From that interaction, I asked Josh to come to campus and he's leading a wine 101 no-nonsense wine class the Saturday of Alumni Weekend.

The alumni office traveled to Raleigh, NC to meet alumni in March, followed by Charlotte, NC which really energized alumni in the Charlotte area. Their initial social brought out almost 50 and the group has hopes to make it an annual alumni get together.

Then just last month in April,

1. Alumna Kim Manning with two co-hosts, hosted the what is now an annual Denver, Colorado alumni social.
2. We brought 18 alumni to campus for a Fraternity and Sorority Networking Night as part of Greek Week.
3. Alumni board president-elect Taylor Mason, along with 3 alumni board members hosted a volunteer night in Harrisburg at the Central PA Food Bank, and
4. For National Pay It Forward day, the alumni association paid for beverages at Dunkin and Starbucks for students during a designated period of time. It provided a pick-me-up for students during their final weeks of the semester and provides brand recognition for the Alumni Association.

Then this month of May, the alumni office with the President and First Lady hosted the 2026 Derby party which not only offers great engagement with alumni and community, but also serves as a fund raiser for the Student Emergency Fund. Thank you President Patterson and Colleen for the support of the event, and for trustees Glenn Grell and Doug Harbach for your support of the event, and Doug for your willingness to participate in the hobby horse racing on the upstairs track in Stewart Hall.

Last week, we hosted senior send-off with a champagne toast, giveaways, and door prizes as a congratulations and welcome to the alumni association. We thank the career center and the SU Foundation for their collaboration with giveaways, and for the administrators who supported the event.

And a reminder that Alumni Weekend 2026 with approximately 20 various activities occurring between Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30 is just two weeks away. We are excited for a great weekend reintroducing alumni to the Ship campus.

Student Government Association Report: Student Government Association, Student Government President Emily Wojnarski provided the following written remarks:

SGA plans to hold our annual retreat on August 27th, 2026. At this retreat, we will discuss senator expectations, public meeting procedures, and hold a team bonding activity. This retreat is mandatory for all senators and ELC members to attend.

At the last public meeting on 4/30/2026, SGA swore in our new senators and ELC members for the 2026-27 academic year. Our new ELC includes President Emily Wojnarski, Vice President Daniel McCleary, VP of Student Groups Chace Garrison and VP of Finance Ryan Mills.

SGA finished out the Spring 2026 semester by holding a finals week pop-up on 5/4/2026. Members of SGA handed out snacks to students and encouraged students to participate in writing what they like most about Shippensburg University to be posted in a video on the SGA Instagram.

New Business:

Former Student Trustee Colin Arnold was recognized with a Proclamation for his service to the University for a two year term. Mr. Arnold provided brief remarks thanking everyone for the opportunity to make an impact at the university and that it was an honor and privilege to work with everyone.

The next meeting will be September 25th, 2026.

Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn by Trustee Harbach and seconded by Trustee Hathaway. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:49 PM.

Submitted by: Drew Alosi

Reviewed: George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees


George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees
Ashley Loper, Secretary, Council of Trustees