

**Princeton USG Senate
Meeting 9
November 21, 2021
8:00PM**



**Undergraduate
Student
Government**

Introduction

- 1. Question and Answer Session (15 minutes)**
- 2. President's Report (5 minutes)**

General updates:

- Bonfire
 - Class Gov hosted building sessions
 - Handed out remaining shirts
- Lawnparties Review Committee had its first meeting
- Academics and health survey has been sent out and will close 11/29
- Presented to the Trustees SLHA committee about prioritizing mental health and the Community Dining program

New Business

- 1. Vote100 Presentation: Joe Shipley and Ana Blanco (15 minutes)**

2020 Voting Data

- 2016: 46.6% of eligible voters at Princeton voted. This was consistent with Princeton's historic voter turnout.
- 2020: 75.4% of eligible voters at Princeton voted.
- Princeton had the highest growth rate in voter turnout among Ivy League colleges.
- Data has been categorized into departments/majors. Voter turnout has been encouraged within departments.

Vote100 Strategies used in 2020

- Personally contacted the entire undergraduate student population to register to vote through TurboVote
- Civic engagement modules
- Outreach to student organizations
- Voting Power Hours
- Panels on local Engagement
- Made voter registration part of the matriculation process

2021 Local Engagement Initiatives

- Pizza at the Polls: provided transportation to an early voting site

- Boba at the Ballot Box: raised awareness of a ballot drop off box on campus for those who voted by mail
- Created a shuttle service to the polls on Election Day

Next steps for 2022 and beyond

- Ensuring Vote100 remains a robust organization even when there is not an ongoing election cycle
- Revive the State Directors campaign
- Streamline and formalize the Vote100 Fellow selection process to ensure a new class of Fellows is inducted each year
- Strengthen the Ambassadors program to ensure that Vote100 has a reliable community to spread messaging and information
- Restructure Vote100's position within Whig-Clio and ODUS to ensure a continuous funding source as well as institutional support
- The "Princeton pledge" (make signing a version of the Vote100 Pledge a part of the matriculation process)
- Emphasize local elections via partnerships with Princeton/Mercer County elected officials
- Work with the Daily Princetonian to cover individual candidates, platforms, and issues in the county
- Expand Vote100's reach beyond Princeton's campus by working with non-profits like NJISJ and Representable

Questions from the Senate:

- How can students who are not US citizens get involved with Vote100 outreach?
 - Vote100's priority is engaging with US citizens, but Vote100 is discussing civic engagement opportunities with ODUS that would help international students mail ballots to their home country or participate in activities that encourage community building.
 - Suggestion from the Senate: Appoint directors or representatives for countries with high representation among the international student body.
- How does Vote100 disseminate information/data about voter turnout?
 - The data was reported by the Daily Princetonian and was posted on Vote100's social media and website.
- Is there a similar engagement program for faculty and staff?
 - Vote100 has tried to send messaging to the entire University campus community, but has not targeted administrators or faculty. Vote100 would be open to expanding outreach efforts.

2. Referendum Language Review: Austin Davis and Preeti Chemiti (20 minutes)

The Senate Language Review must be passed by a majority vote for sponsors to begin campaigning for their referenda.

Referendum Question No. 2: Shall the undergraduates call on Princeton University to adopt a universal midterm grade reporting for all undergraduate courses, as well as implement new TigerHub functionalities that permit instructors to leave comments that describe a student's academic performance at the midpoint of the semester?

Questions from the Senate:

- Has this referendum been discussed with administrators?
 - Yes, this has been an ongoing discussion with the Committee on Examinations and Standing. The purpose of this referendum is to gauge what students need to make academic decisions at the midpoint of their semesters.
- How does this referendum account for midterms that are administered after fall break?
 - Midterms scheduled after fall break are usually at the discretion of professors. The midterm period itself is established within the University, so instructors could add comments about students' performance at the midpoint of the semester.

Votes:

- Yes: 20
- No: 0
- Abstain: 1

Referendum Resolution 11-2021: Shall the undergraduates call on Trustees of Princeton University to encourage its faculty to publish mental health resources and information on syllabi?

Votes:

- Yes: 21
- No: 0
- Abstain: 0

3. Daily Princetonian Honor Code Article Review: Stephen Daniels (10 minutes)

- The Daily Princetonian article "Life after accusation: Inside Princeton's Honor Code" may be an opportunity for USG to work to address norms around Honor Code related disciplinary actions, especially as it relates to the use of private investigators during the 2021 spring semester.
- This may be a particularly inequitable issue for first generation or low income students.
- USG can make efforts towards institutionalizing dialogue with Peer Reps and the Honor Committee to address these issues.

Questions from the Senate:

- Is there any information about what students do when they have to take a semester or full academic year off due to disciplinary action?
 - USG efforts have been focused on non-separable offenses.

Referendum Question No.

Princeton University Undergraduate Student Government Election—Spring 2022

Sponsored by PREETI CHEMITI '23

On November 21, 2021, the USG Senate approved the language of this condensation (ballot question) and referendum resolution as being clear and not claiming to exercise a power that cannot be exercised by an undergraduate referendum (___ members in favor, ___ members opposed, ___ members abstaining).

Condensation (Ballot Question)

Shall the undergraduates call on Trustees of Princeton University to encourage its faculty to publish mental health resources and information on syllabi?

Explanation (Submitted by the Sponsor)

The sponsor's explanation is due Sunday, November 14 and may be updated before that date.

Across the nation, collegiate institutions are experiencing a mental health crisis. Rates of mental health concerns among students have been steadily rising over the past decade, but the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these challenges. Federal data shows a nationwide surge of depression, anxiety, and suicide rates during the pandemic – a surge that's further taxing on student populations like ours that are facing academic stressors. On Princeton's campus alone, Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) reported an all-time high in clinical appointments in March of 2020 with a record of 1,490 clinical appointments. In an effort to address student concerns, last April, CPS joined the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and University Health Services (UHS) in signing a statement about prioritizing student mental health. Though such steps centered on administrative action are in the right direction, students continue to require heightened mental health support during this school year and beyond.

Faculty have an important role when it comes to supporting student mental health on campus: they are often seen as mentors, allies, and guides throughout a student's academic career. Including mental health messaging on syllabi will send positive signals of support for students' learning and well-being by including recommendations and encouragement for students to take care of themselves and seek help when they need it. For these reasons, it is imperative for faculty to know of Princeton's campus resources and share mental health information.

Far too often under the status quo, access to mental resources is decentralized, stigmatized, and unclear for students. Students' health ought to be a priority, especially at an institution as academically rigorous as Princeton. Passing a proposal to include mental health information on syllabi would drastically increase awareness of support networks, foster a culture of care, and encourage students who need help to reach out.

THE UNDERGRADUATES OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Princeton, New Jersey

Referendum Resolution 11-2021

Referendum Question No. (Spring 2022)

Sponsored by PREETI CHEMITI '23

Referendum Resolution

Calling on the Trustees of Princeton University to encourage its faculty to publish mental health resources and information on their student syllabi materials to encourage a community of care and seeking help.

Whereas Princeton University's "Health and Wellness" page considers that at Princeton, the administration "believe[s] in taking care of your whole self and have dedicated resources to sustaining and enhancing your physical, psychological and emotional health";

Whereas collegiate mental health rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide have steadily increased over the past two years, highlighting the long lasting repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas at Princeton, a record-high number of appointments were made with Counseling and Psychological (CPS) services last year;

Whereas administrative action can be greatly bolstered by demonstrating student support for increased visibility of mental health services and options for the student body; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the undergraduates of Princeton University,

SECTION 1. FACULTY, DEPARTMENT HEADS, AND ADMINISTRATION.

The undergraduates call on the Trustees of Princeton University to:

- (1) Encourage faculty members to publish the following mental health blurb within their syllabi:

"Princeton University wants to foster and uplift mental health, wellbeing, and accessibility resources for our students. We understand that various experiences can be distressing such as relationship struggles, ongoing loss associated with the pandemic, depression, anxiety, academic struggles, difficulty adjusting to college, relying on substances and alcohol, and identity changes. If you or someone you know needs support or is looking to access specific services, consider reaching out to these campus partners and student-led resources: If you want to learn more about access and possible accommodations for your time at Princeton, please contact the Office of Disability at 609-258-8840 or by e-mail at ods@princeton.edu.

If you are feeling distressed or need support, please contact CPS at 609.258.3141 for immediate support or to schedule an appointment with a counselor. CPS is a confidential resource.

The Sexual Harassment/Assault Advising, Resources and Education (SHARE) office is a survivor-centered, trauma-informed confidential resource on campus for the Princeton University community. Please contact SHARE (hyperlink <https://share.princeton.edu/>) at 609-258-3310.

The Princeton Peer Nightline is a student-run peer listening service. It is not affiliated with CPS or the University administration. They offer anonymous chat/call peer support.”

SECTION 2. USG SENATE

As per Section 708 of the Elections Handbook, the USG Senate will write a report that explains the official position of the undergraduates as stated in the referendum resolution. The report will include action steps for the Senate and recommendations for the administration to further the undergraduates' official position.. The report must be written and sent to the administration by no later than the start of Spring 2022 classes on January 24, 2022.

SECTION 3. TRANSMITTAL OF RESOLUTION

The Executive Secretary of the Senate shall transmit an official copy of this resolution to each of the following university officers:

- (1) Christopher L. Eisgruber '83, President of the University.
- (2) Jill Dolan, Dean of the College.
- (3) W. Rochelle Calhoun, Vice President for Campus Life.
- (4) Kathleen Deignan, Dean of Undergraduate Students.
- (5) Louise S. Sams '79, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Princeton University.
- (6) Professor Blair Schoene, Chair, Resources Committee of the Council of the Princeton University Community.
- (7) Dr. Calvin Chin, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services.
- (8) Dr. Anne Laurita, Project Manager of TigerWell.

BRAIN S. LI '24,
Chief Elections Manager

Attest:

JOSEPHINE KIM '23,
Executive Secretary of the Senate.

Referendum Question No. 2
Princeton University Undergraduate Student Government Election—Winter 2021
Sponsored by AUSTIN DAVIS '23

[Language about Senate Approval].

Condensation (Ballot Question)

Shall the undergraduates call on Princeton University to adopt a universal midterm grade reporting for all undergraduate course, as well as implement new TigerHub functionalities that permit instructors to leave comments that describe a student's academic performance at the midpoint of the semester?

Explanation (Submitted by the Sponsor)

The sponsor's explanation is due Sunday, November 14 and may be updated before that date.

The purpose of this referendum is to encourage the Office of the Dean of the College to adopt a universal midterm grade reporting policy for all undergraduate courses, as well as take steps to minimize the use of the "N" ("no-grade") designation.

Currently, the Office of the Dean of the College mandates the instructors 100- and 200-level courses to report midterm grades by the Monday after the midterm break period.¹ Designed to help inform students' academic planning for the remainder of the given semester, this policy offers students the requisite information to readjust studying strategies; consult University academic advisors and resources; speak with their instructors about their academic performance, course expectations, and course grading; and/or elect a Pass/D/Fail option, among others.

This policy has two primary shortcomings. First, it does not cover students who take 300- and 400-level courses. Second, many instructors choose to elect the "N" designation, even in situations where they are mandated to input a grade. Thus, many undergraduate students do not have access to important academic information to help inform their decisions in the second half of the semester.

Enacting academic policy changes that amend these problems would serve to the benefit of the student body without substantially changing the workload of the faculty. In fact, these changes are aligned with existing recommendations from the Dean of the College to faculty on assignments and grading; namely, to "grade early and often" and to space out assignments out through the semester.² Thus, the Office of the Dean of the College should implement the outlined changes.

¹ "Conduct of Courses," Office of the Registrar, last updated August 12, 2021, <https://registrar.princeton.edu/faculty-and-department-resources/examinations-and-grading/conduct-courses>, accessed September 30, 2021.

² Jill S. Dolan to the faculty, "Fall semester teaching and learning," 12 August 2021.

THE UNDERGRADUATES OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Princeton, New Jersey

Referendum Resolution 6-2021 Referendum Question No. 2 (Winter 2021) Sponsored by AUSTIN DAVIS '23

Referendum Resolution

Calling on the Office of the Dean of the College under the advisory power to adopt a universal midterm grade reporting policy.

Whereas the Office of the Dean of the College already mandates the instructors of 100- and 200-level courses to report midterm grades by the Monday after the midterm break period;

Whereas this original policy supports students, particularly first- and second-years, with the requisite information to make important academic decisions after the midpoint of the semester in a prompt fashion;

Whereas instructors often leave an “N” (“no grade”) designation when inputting midterm grades, even when they are required to under the current policy;

Whereas the Office of the Dean of the College implements such policies to support undergraduate students’ academic success and meeting their needs;

Whereas the extension of such a policy would benefit a wider array of the student body, particularly those who are enrolled in 300- and 400- level courses;

Resolved by the undergraduates of Princeton University,

SECTION 1. FACULTY, DEPARTMENT HEADS, AND ADMINISTRATION.

The undergraduates call on the faculty and Office of the Dean of the College to:

- (1) Implement a universal midterm grade reporting policy that is extended to all undergraduate courses at the University.
- (2) Create a new TigerHub functionality that allows instructors to leave comments to explain or supplement a student’s midterm grade.
- (3) Prohibit instructors from leaving an “N” designation without also having to leave a comment describing a student’s academic performance.

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- (4) Kathleen Deignan, Dean of Undergraduate Students.
- (5) Polly Winfrey Griffin, University Registrar.
- (6) Claire Fowler, Senior Associate Dean of the College.

BRIAN LI '24,
Chief Elections Manager

Attest:

JOSEPHINE KIM '23,
Executive Secretary of the Senate.