

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Committee Advocating for Staff Interests (CASI)

Annual Report for 2024-2025

Purpose: The Committee Advocating for Staff Interests, formerly the Committee on Academic Staff Issues (CASI) shall advise the dean on the formulation and review and shall represent all Academic Staff in the development of all policies and procedures concerning academic staff members of the college, including personnel matters.

I. Responsibilities of the CASI include but are not limited to:

- a. Formulating and reviewing college policies and procedures concerning academic staff members.
- b. Representing academic staff members in the development of all college policies and procedures concerning academic staff members.
- c. Providing advice to the dean on college program decisions likely to affect promotional opportunities or lead to non-renewal or layoff of academic staff members.
- d. Developing opportunities for participation of academic staff members in department and unit governance.
- e. Developing opportunities for recognition of academic staff member contributions to the excellence of the college.
- f. Reviewing campus policies and procedures and recommending implementation and monitoring strategies for the college administration.
- g. Communicating the CALS CASI activities to the Office of the Secretary of the Academic Staff and other appropriate entities.

II. Membership

- a. The CALS CASI shall consist of thirteen voting members. Ten shall be elected by the academic staff of the college to represent particular groups (wards) of academic staff. When a ward race has only one candidate, the election process can be waived, and the candidate named a member of the committee if there is unanimous support for the candidate among existing CASI committee members. The remaining three members shall be appointed at-large by the Dean of the College. The Dean's appointments shall ensure a broadly representative

committee. All members shall be academic staff holding an appointment within the college.

b. Ex officio members of the committee shall include the Dean or Senior Associate Dean; the Associate Dean of Human Resources; and one, or both, of the academic staff members on the college's Academic Planning Council.

2024-2025 CALS CASI Members:

Name	Department	Term End
Brian Asen	Bacteriology	2027
(Fred) Josh Blaydes	BSE & SES	2027
Nancy Esser	Agricultural Research Stations	2027
Amber Haroldson	Nutritional Sciences	2026
Emily Laabs	Russell Labs Hub	2026
Arnoldo Lopez-Hernandez	Food Science	2025
Ally Magnin Harvey	Agricultural and Applied Economics	2026
Brittany Magrady	Bacteriology	2025
Erin Pierce	Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences	2025
Brandon Prochaska	Center for Dairy Research	2027

Name	Title	Department
Tom Bryan (APC Rep)	Teaching Faculty	Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences

Thomas Browne	Senior Assistant Dean	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Aaron Crandall (ASEC Rep)	Administrative Director	Social Science Research Services
Tara LaRowe (APC Rep)	Faculty Associate	Nutritional Sciences
Veronica Law	HR Director	CALS Human Resources

Administrative Support provided by Ally McCann.

III. Meetings

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month during the academic year. Agendas and minutes of each meeting are posted to the CASI website:

<http://casi.cals.wisc.edu/meetings/>. Each meeting includes updates from the Dean's office related to staff issues.

Highlights from 2024-2025:

September 18, 2024

- The meeting was called to order by Ein Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- Minutes from the May 15, 2024 meeting were approved.
- College updates shared by Tom Browne. Answered committee questions about Black Community Experience report from the ad hoc study group.
- College Updates from Veronica Law about transition to Workday. Discussed with the committee about compensation exercise.

2024-2025 CALS CASI Subcommittees established:

Name	Awards and Professional Development	Communications	Nominations and Mentoring	Personnel Procedures, Compensation, and Governance (PPCG)

Brian Asen	X			
Josh Blaydes		X		
Nancy Esser			X	
Amber Haroldson				X
Emily Laabs			X (Chair)	
Arnoldo- Lopez Hernandez	X (Chair)			
Ally Magnin Harvey		X		
Brittany Magrady		X (Chair)		
Erin Pierce				X (Chair)
Brandon Prochaska	X			

- Meeting adjourned at 1:02PM.

October 16, 2024

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- Louis Macias and team gave DEI updates for the college and campus, specifically about the CALS Climate Survey.
- Louis Macias also took questions from CASI Committee for CALS DEI.
- Minutes from the September 18, 2024 meeting were approved.
- Veronica Law talked about the timeline for ATP and HR Lunch & Learns.
- Arnoldo Lopez-Hernandez shared updates from the Awards and Professional Development subcommittee, specifically about CALS Awards due date and increasing nominations.
- Brittany Magrady shared updates from the Communications subcommittee and led a discussion on CASI brochure updates.
- Emily Laabs shared updates from the Nominations and mentoring subcommittee, specifically remaining vacancies.
- Erin Pierce shared updates from the PPCG subcommittee, specifically about the bylaws to update the CASI acronym.
- Chair updates about the CASI Coalition letter.
- No APC representative is present for updates.
- The meeting adjourned at 1:05PM.

November 20, 2024

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- Minutes from the October 16, 2024 meeting were approved.
- Tom Browne had no updates from ODEI.
- Veronica Law had no updates, the committee discussed HR questions to address next semester.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee shared submission numbers, hoping for more by the December 2nd deadline.
- Brittany Magrady shared updates from the Communications subcommittee, specifically about the annual report.
- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee plans to meet about how to recruit research scientist position.
- PPCG met to worked on letter to dean about having a written policy for voting in the department.
- Erin Pierce shared update about CASI coalition letter and suggested edits from CALS CASI.
- Tom Bryan shared APC updates, specifically new majors and RISE.

- The meeting adjourned at 12:45PM.

December 18, 2024

- The meeting was called to order by Amber Haroldson.
- No changes we made to the agenda.
- Joshua Schiffman, Director of the Employee Assistance Office gave a presentation and answered questions asked by the committee.
- Tom Browne reminded members to take the CALS Climate Survey.
- Veronica Law had no updates.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee will meet after the updated awards deadline on 01/06.
- Communications subcommittee continues to work on the annual report and brought up items for next month's meeting: CASI acronym and language update, access to CASI website for edits, and updating climate report on website.
- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee had no updates and will work on recruitment next semester.
- The PPCG subcommittee will discuss a written policy for departments at the January meeting.
- Amber Haroldson gave chair updates. Topics for the next CASI meeting, which will host Dean Gillaspay, were discussed. All CASI letter feedback was discussed.
- Tara Larowe gave an update from APC: Biology 151/152 sequence commencement for undergraduates, CALS in-house mental health provider, and program review processes for Bacteriology and Nutritional Sciences.
- The meetings adjourned at 1:04PM.

January 15, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- The December 18th minutes were approved.
- Glenda Gillaspay, CALS Dean and Director, reviewed college priorities with CALS CASI members. CASI members discussed concerns and needs with Dean Gillaspay:
 - Staff participation in shared governance, staff voting at department level
 - Discussion of the college creating a best practices list for department chairs to follow or creating a task force on task issues.
 - Career paths and advancement options
 - Current admin cap ending in December 2026
 - Documentation for department/program policies, college verses department policies, what is a policy verses what is a guideline

- Teaching load expectation for staff who teach
- Progression and promotion, titles and promotions that Total Title and Compensation took away, Dean Gillaspay and Veronica Law will discuss this and get something back to the committee.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee were given nominations. In the future, they are considering a CV, resume or list of job responsibilities being a requirement for nomination.
- Communications subcommittee will bring a motion to propose name change in the February meeting. They will also pursue getting staff data from the climate survey to put on the CASI website.
- Nominations and mentoring subcommittee will send emails to University Staff and Ward III for open seat nominations.
- Personnel Procedures, Compensation and Governance subcommittee will discuss comments from the Dean and debrief.
- Chair updates: Amber Haroldson will serve on the committee looking at teaching load expectations for staff who teach.
- Academic Planning Council Representatives will give updates at the February CASI meeting.
- The meeting adjourned at 1:11PM.

February 19, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes to the agenda.
- The January 15th minutes were approved.
- Tom Browne gave an update on the climate survey and how extending the deadline and confirming confidentiality of responses helped with participation. Results are set to be released by the end of the spring. Due to federal changes, the ODEI unit will face some changes. There was concern from members about how survey results would be followed through on with office changes happening.
- Veronica Law shared about continuing Workday prep, including assigning security roles. Employees will get an email from campus with trainings based on their role. PMDP evaluations are due June 30th. Future evaluations will be done in Workday. Veronica answered questions from CASI members.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee met and submitted nominations for 6 awards. There were 15 nominations for academic staff and 8 for university staff.
- Communications subcommittee officially received access to the CASI website and plan to add a tab for staff to anonymously share thoughts. Name change vote will take place in the March meeting.

- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee found someone to fill the scientist position, this person will start their term in July. They will follow up after the CASI committee survey closes in March.
- Personnel Procedures, Compensation and Governance will look at how to engage with the Dean.
- Chair updates included comments and thoughts after the Dean's visit in January.
- Academic Planning Council Representative shared that there will be a new certificate program for genetics. The Board of Regents voted on the new Plant Science and Technology major. Admin Resource Teams (ARTs) in L&S were discussed.
- The meeting adjourned at 1:02PM.

March 19, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- The minutes from the February 19th meeting were approved.
- Tom Browne and Veronica Law were not present for updates.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee shared that the college will not have Staff Excellence and University Staff Recognition awards this year. CASI was disappointed with this decision for a number of reasons. It comes at a time when staff are being asked to take on additional duties and responsibilities, including those associated with Workday and RISE. Morale is low given the current financial climate, especially for staff. Job security and deportation uncertainty are also affecting morale. The committee felt that awards could have been given for recognition even if no funds were available. The CASI chair will send feedback to the HR and Finance Associate Dean. Brittany Magrady talked about UW United Faculty & Academic Staff (UFAS). They will be handing out red cards that contain information about the rights of immigrants.
- Communications subcommittee showed a preview of the "Thoughts & Questions" page on the CASI website for staff to submit anonymous questions and concerns. Motion passed unanimously to change from "Committee on Academic Staff Issues" to "Committee Advocating for Staff Interests".
- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee will contact those who are interested in being new CASI members once admin shares the information.
- Personnel Procedures, Compensation and Governance subcommittee will follow up on the task force (February meeting) for staff and next steps.
- Chair updates included a vote on signing the CASI Coalition Letter, the motion to sign passed with 7 yes's and 1 abstention. A volunteer chair-elect will be discussed at either the April or May meetings.

- Tara Larowe discussed policy being developed for giving an Incomplete to undergraduates. There was also a discussion at APC about the current environment regarding funding.
- Ally McCann, CALS Unit Transit Coordinator, gave a presentation on CALS parking. The committee expressed a lack of parking information during onboarding.
- The meeting adjourned at 1:02PM.

April 16, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by Erin Pierce.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- The minutes from the March 19 meeting were approved.
- Tom Browne shared how the CALS Office of Student Engagement and past DEI staff have been restructured. Louis and Mandi will continue to administer the climate survey, they should have results in the spring.
- Veronica Law talked about Workday trainings, employees have been assigned specific trainings based on their roles, and more fundamental trainings with basic information will begin in May. She also shared that there will be a slow down for hiring. HR does not know if anyone in CALS has been individually impacted by the federal government regarding their VISA at this time, every situation will be on a case-by-case basis.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee shared that even though no money is awarded for the Academic Staff Excellence and the University Staff Recognition awards, there is still a cost associated with giving the awards that the college chose not to spend this year.
- Communications subcommittee has officially added the anonymous submission box to the CASI website. All submissions will go to the Communications subcommittee chair, which will need to be updated each year. A how-to guide will be posted to the CASI BOX folder.
- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee has begun reaching out to people who marked interest in CASI on the committee survey. They will follow up to fill all open seats.
- Personnel Procedures, Compensation and Governance subcommittee, as well as the CASI committee, approved Josh Blaydes to become CASI-co-chair beginning in May.
- CASI Chair Erin Pierce will send the CASI Coalition letter to Dean Gillaspy and cc the committee.
- Veronica Law and Todd Schry will present on the CCF at the May meeting. There is no CCF for FY25.
- There were no APC representatives present.

- The meeting adjourned at 12:51PM.

May 21st, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by Amber Haroldson.
- No changes were made to the agenda.
- The minutes from the April 16 meeting were approved.
- Tom Browne had no updates to share.
- Veronica Law and Todd Schry gave a presentation on the CCF, the previous process being inconsistent, the new process being more consistent and the improvements after the first review. Eligibility for pay increase, parity, market compensation, compensation for performance were the topics presented on. Questions from the committee were answered after the presentation.
- Awards and Professional Development subcommittee had no updates to share.
- Communications subcommittee is considering a post in eCALS about the feedback form on the website.
- Nominations and Mentoring subcommittee is planning an onboarding lunch for new CASI members this summer.
- Personnel Procedures, Compensation and Governance subcommittee had no updates to share.
- The CASI Coalition letter was reviewed. CASI plans to have a fall welcome event and will begin planning in late summer. College and campus mentoring was discussed.
- Tara Laroew discussed a new tool that will be used for course evaluations, old program will be archived.
- Meeting adjourned at 1:19PM.

For full agenda items and meeting minutes, please visit the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Committee Advocating for Staff Interests (CALS CASI) website at:

<https://casi.cals.wisc.edu/meetings/>.