

**Committee Advocating for Staff Interests**  
**College of Agricultural and Life Sciences**  
February 18, 2026, 12:00pm-1:00pm  
473 Moore Hall

Attendees: Brian Asen, Josh Blaydes, Shyanna Brickson, Tom Browne, Tom Bryan, Aaron Crandall, Nancy Esser, Marie Gilbertson, Amber Haroldson, Emily Laabs, Weiya Li, Ally Magnin Harvey, Sandy Peterson, Glenda Gillaspy

Not present: Tara Larowe, Veronica Law, Brandon Prochaska, Megan Sippel

Minutes by: Ally McCann

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MINUTES

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This meeting was called to order by Amber Haroldson at 12:02 pm.

**1. Review agenda**

*No changes to the agenda.*

**2. Consent agenda**

*Minutes from the January 21, 2026, meeting were approved and will be posted on the CALS CASI website.*

**3. College updates and questions from the committee**

*Tom Browne, Assistant Dean for Student Belonging, talked about the Associate Dean for Graduate Education position search. This position will offer support for grad students and post docs and be an important position for the college. This will be a 50-100% appointment and is open to CALS faculty and staff. There was one instance where someone with a dual appointment had their application blocked. It is unclear whether this is due to classification in Workday or their appointment. Depending on the issue, this could be affecting others. It is a concern and seems very relevant to CASI's purpose. It could be sending an exclusionary message and encourage further siloing. CALS CASI would consider signing a letter of support if someone else made one about the issue. The response from college administration has not addressed the problem. In the future, exceptions may need to be made when they come up for eligible employees. This could include going outside of Workday.*

*Veronica Law, HR Director, sent a reminder that mid-point performance evaluations are due at the end of March.*

***Dean Gillaspy Questions and Updates***

*The Dean encourages departments to ask their chair about updates on Act 15 from the Chancellor. Auditing will be done at the campus level. Accounting will be done at the university level, not the*

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ASEC meeting materials can be found here: <https://kb.wisc.edu/acstaff/>

*school/college level. Departments in CALS have different teaching loads, and the point is not to change that or try to make them fit into a certain mold. Some departments are looking at teaching equity. Jeri Barak and Academic Affairs will keep looking at teaching load for the college. Group and individual instruction data is being used for the audit. The college receives that data then talks to departments about how they carry out teaching instruction. It's not necessarily best to look at the class size and math of it to try and determine equity. The university and college will not patrol how things are recorded for team teaching because departments know best how that work is split up and carried out.*

*What does "CALS only" for a search mean for people with joint appointments? The person can have any type of appointment in CALS, but not an "agreement". That is an HR rule. For most split positions, there is a split appointment. Someone like that would be eligible. An internal search was started to have the search go quickly and get someone who can hit the ground running.*

*The appointment percentage can look different depending on who is hired. Staff could be close to 100, faculty member would be less. This was done for flexibility. The new Associate Dean needs to be excellent at graduate education and other college aspects. The Dean wanted flexibility for people to stay involved with a percent of what they currently do and acknowledges the importance of getting the right person in the role and seeing how it develops or grows in future years.*

*Office hours have been a great way for the Dean to interact with undergrads, grad students, staff, and faculty. Most people come with a topic to discuss, and the Dean has been made aware of some important things although the opportunity is about awareness and not necessarily fixing things. The Dean is learning a lot and people who have come seem happy with the experience.*

#### **4. Subcommittee updates**

##### **a. Awards and professional development**

*The subcommittee reviewed 18 academic staff and 16 university staff nominations for awards. They sent recommendations and a list of strengths/weaknesses for candidates to the Dean's Office. The subcommittee generally agreed on the top candidate and learned a lot about CALS during this process.*

##### **b. Communications**

*The subcommittee put thought into the recognition program information on the website and may change the tabs. The College of Engineering has a good model for this on their website. The current thoughts/questions box could be modified or a Qualtrics survey could be used if needed. Nominations would be sent to the person nominated and their supervisor. The subcommittee would be responsible for sending out emails when people are nominated.*

*Drawings would be monthly or quarterly depending on the number of people being submitted. Off campus staff could have swag shipped to them if they won. The subcommittee will make website edits and bring to the full CASI before publishing.*

*The subcommittee will work on the annual report.*

##### **c. Nominations and mentoring**

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*The college committee interest survey went out in February. The subcommittee will start to do some outreach after results come in and could help with the recognition program. 4 seats will be open next year, including one open university seat.*

d. Personnel procedures, compensation and governance

*The subcommittee has no updates.*

**5. Chair updates**

*The CASI chair and Chair-elect discussed the draft budget letter. Some edits were made from comments that were left. This will be sent before the next CASI meeting unless there are more edits to be addressed. Motion to approve letter as it is and discuss as needed was approved.*

**6. Academic Planning Council report and discussion**

*Tom Bryan, APC Representative, discussed the core course updates that academic affairs staff are currently dealing with. This involves civic and comm A/B required classes. A reattribution to map to the new system is due February 27. APC voted to keep the incoming class on the old system to avoid a short transition time. This will affect transfer students heavily. See the added document in Box with a table on page 3.*

**7. Adjourn**

*Meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.*