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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs and Research Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 9, 2026 · 12:00 p.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island
Beagle Board Room, The Alumni Center
73 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

This meeting will be held in person and will use videoconferencing.

To view the meeting remotely,
go to <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>
and select the meeting to watch.

**Virtual access is being provided only as a convenience and is not an
official "location" where access to the meeting is guaranteed.
Being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee
complete access to the meeting.**

AGENDA

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- a. Minutes of the February 10, 2026, Academic Affairs and Research
Committee Meeting [Enclosure](#)**
Neil Kerwin, Committee Chair

2. REPORT OF THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- a.** Review progress of University academic performance metrics and update on
academic initiatives.
b. Review of academic efforts in support of student success.
c. Update on searches and NECHE accreditation.

3. REPORT OF THE CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER

Bethany Jenkins, Vice President, Research and Economic Development

- a. Update on Activities, Metrics of Success, and Strategic Planning for the URI Research Foundation

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **Annual Review of the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter.** [Enclosure](#)

Neil Kerwin, Committee Chair

- b. **Annual Review of the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Calendar.** [Enclosure](#)

Neil Kerwin, Committee Chair

5. ACTION ITEMS

- a. **Consideration of the granting of tenure effective December 28, 2025, for Allison Sylvetsky, PhD, who has met the requirements for tenure at the University; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.** [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- b. **Consideration of the awarding of a posthumous academic degree at Spring Commencement 2026; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.** [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

- c. **Consideration of the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates, and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who will have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Spring 2026 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.** [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

- d. **Consideration of legislation from the Graduate Council #2025-2026-05C, College of Arts and Sciences to create a new degree opportunity in Applied Science Communication, Master of Arts which has been approved by the faculty and president of the University of Rhode Island; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.** [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- e. **Consideration of legislation from the Faculty Senate Curriculum & Standards Committee Report #2025-2026-06C, College of Engineering organizational change to create a new degree opportunity, Bachelor of Science, Environmental Engineering, which has been approved by the faculty and president of the University of Rhode Island; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.** [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- f. Consideration of legislation from the Graduate Council #2025-2026-04C, College of Education to create a new degree opportunity in Health Professions Education, Master of Arts which has been approved by the faculty and president of the University of Rhode Island; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees. [Enclosure](#)**

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- g. Consideration of legislation from the Faculty Senate Curriculum & Standards Committee Report #2025-2026-05C, College of Engineering, to implement an organizational change establishing a standalone Department of Biomedical Engineering, which has been approved by the faculty and the President of the University of Rhode Island; and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees. This will be accomplished by transitioning the biomedical engineering program out of the Department of Electrical, Computer, and Biomedical Engineering and renaming that unit as the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, thereby creating two separate departments. [Enclosure](#)**

Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee may seek to enter into executive session for the following item:

- a. Discussion regarding matters related to the question of the investment of public funds, which includes any investment plan or matter related thereto, where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(7); specifically,**
- Research support from partner organizations**
Bethany Jenkins, Vice President, Research and Economic Development

7. ADJOURN

The next URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2026.

The University of Rhode Island strives to provide inclusive access to events. If you need a reasonable accommodation or have a question about accessing a Board of Trustees' public meeting, please call (401) 874-4338 in advance of the meeting. For TTY, please call the R.I. Relay Service at 711. We encourage all individuals seeking an accommodation to reach out as early as possible in advance of the meeting as the University's ability to provide a requested accommodation may be impacted by the timing of the request.