

The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments

Council Handbook
'12-'13



What is CCSG?

The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments is the legislative body representing the 19 Commonwealth Campuses across The Pennsylvania State University. Based at University Park, CCSG Central Staff comprises student leaders who have continued to devote themselves to bettering the Commonwealth since their transition to University Park. Working alongside the Student Governments across the state CCSG aims to give a voice to the 34,000 Commonwealth students around our great university.

What Goes on at Council?

Student Life:

The Student Life committee advocates for improvement in the lives of every student across the 19 commonwealth campuses. In committee breakouts, Student Life will open discussion in order to better understand what students at each commonwealth campus would like to see happen, as well as have conversations about existing programs.

No Place for Hate:

One effective program that will be advocated this year is called No Place for Hate. This is an anti-bullying program run by an outside organization that we would like to see expand to all campuses in order to foster a healthy student experience.

The Diversity Summit:

The Diversity Summit is a major event in the Student Life committee held during the fifth council weekend. Its purpose is to exhibit the diverse student population that we have at Penn State and also to remind students that although we are all different, we are one university. Student Life is committed to this and much more to ensure a quality experience of living for all students.



Student Affairs:

In the Student Affairs committee breakout we discuss the Student Activities Fee, Facility Fee, Information Technology Fee, Student Service Standards, STAC, SAFB, and any other topics that affect the students at the 19 Commonwealth campuses.

SAF:

The *Student Activities Fee* is a pre-determined fee that every student has to pay while attending Penn State which goes to supporting student programs and leadership on every Commonwealth campus. Any club, organization, or student can request funding from this fee. The main requirements are that any student, club, or organization who receives funding from SAF will need to benefit the campus and be open to all students.

SAFB :

The *Student Activity Fee Board* is the main governing board for the Student Activities Fee. This board holds meetings before council weekends in order to discuss and implement changes to the Student Activities Fee Guidelines. This committee is comprised of professionals in Student Affairs, as well as students from both the Commonwealth Campuses and University Park. .

SFF :

The *Student Facility Fee* is used for is to make improvements or expand non-academic, recreation, and multi-use student space. These improvements to the campus are all a part of the master plan to make each campus better.

IT Fee:

The *Information Technology Fee* is for every student enrolled at Penn State. Each student pays a fee to support the overall cost of the network facilities. This fee is to update, maintain, and use all the computer software Penn State provides, such as ANGEL and Webmail.

STAC:

The *Student Technology Advisory Committee* is an advisory committee that meets once a month and provides recommendations on current and future issues involving information technology. The Information Technology fee is the highest fee that Penn State Students pay at the campuses. The IT fee goes toward internet access, e-mail, computer labs, eLion, and other digital services. This committee meets to try to improve the technology available on campus and see what expectations students have for IT services.

Governmental Affairs:

The Governmental Affairs Committee works year round to advocate for student across the commonwealth by keeping constant communication to budgetary administrators and state legislators to keep YOUR tuition as low as possible. It is our job in the Governmental Affairs Committee to make sure that a quality education can be both gratifying and affordable. As a committee, we work with the Penn State Grassroots Network and the Pennsylvania State Legislature on appropriations funded to the university which directly affect in state tuition rate. We hope that through our committee, Pennsylvania State University students will become more knowledgeable on the state of our tuition rates and the decisions taken by government leaders in Harrisburg. With that knowledge we will be able to work more efficiently with legislators and university administrators to better advocate for the students to keep our education affordable.

Capital Day:

Capital Day is an opportunity for Penn State students around the commonwealth to have their voices heard in the Capitol Rotunda. Penn State students, families and alumni will campaign together for support from legislators for Penn State's appropriation, which directly affects tuition increases. Without help from state appropriations, we can expect a steeper tuition increase next year.

Students will join alumni in individual meetings with Pennsylvania senators, representatives and their staffers. With help from the Penn State Alumni Association's Grassroots Network, we hope to convey the message that a strong state appropriation will allow Penn State to continue its land-grant mission of providing quality, accessible higher education at affordable tuition rates for students and their families.



Academic Affairs:

The Academic Affairs committee deliberates on programs and policies that affect the academic lives of students throughout the commonwealth campuses, and to ensure that all Penn State undergraduate students are having their educational needs met by the university. Topics discussed during committee breakouts includes: Administrative Council of Undergraduate Education (ACUE), the University advising council (UAC), Shield Resource Advisory Board (Shields), grading policies, advising issues, administrative policies and or any other issues that the committee feels necessary to discuss.

ACUE:

The *Administrative Council of Undergraduate Education* is the primary advisory committee who oversees administrative matters that impact undergraduate education across the University. ACUE is responsible for the makeup of academic and administrative policies and procedures that support the University's undergraduate education goals and objectives.

UAC:

The *University Advising Council* provides oversight of the University's academic advising programs. It was created by the University Faculty Senate and is chaired by the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education

SHIELDS:

The *Shields Resources Advisory Board* provides feedback and guidance from students to the three offices in Shields Building that provide administrative services to students: Office of the Bursar, Office of the University Registrar, and Office of Student Aid. Its' goal to provide a method of communication between students and the three offices listed above. the board is used as means to inform students of upcoming service roll-outs or service improvements and invite students to provide feedback their services.

THON:

The Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, affectionately known as THON, is a yearlong effort to raise funds and awareness for the fight against pediatric cancer. Since 1977, THON has raised more than \$89 million for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. THON 2013 will take place from **February 15th-17th, 2013** at Penn State's Bryce Jordan Center.



THON Breakouts:

This is the only time where THON Chairs have the opportunity to meet their CCSG Liaisons and all 19 commonwealths to discuss their organizations, progress and concerns.

THON Chair:

Every campus that has a THON Organization also has one or multiple THON Chairs that are representing this organization. Some Campuses call these individuals THON Overalls, THON

Chairs, THON Captains, or THON Presidents. Each of these names has the same meaning.

“The Caucuses”:

What’s a caucus? The caucuses are here to provide/facilitate conversation among the neighboring commonwealth campuses within their distinct regions--Northwest, Southwest, Central, Northeast, and Southeast--and different demographic breakup--Resident Halls with less than 1500, Resident Halls with more than 1500, Commuter Campuses with less than 1000, and Commuter Campuses with more than 1000.

These conversations can range from campus/social life, local issues, caucus based events, to any topic thought up within the caucus breakouts. These caucus breakouts are also meant to familiarize the campuses with one another in these distinct regions and demographic breakups.

*It is important to note that the “Characteristic Caucus” is a new breakout this year.

Additional Terms

Commonwealth Campus:

A Commonwealth Campus is the official term for the campuses outside of University Park in the Penn State system.

GSA:

Penn State's *Graduate Student Association* formally passed its constitution on October 1st, 1951. Today, GSA stands as the oldest continuously existing student governing organization at Penn State. Over the years, GSA has taken the lead on numerous issues affecting graduate students, has aided in shaping the way Penn State is today, and continues to play a vital role in University life.

“Transition” vs. “Transfer”:

Transition refers to the someone going from one Penn State campus to another. So, if someone went from Altoona to University Park this would be classified as a transition. Meanwhile, a student transfers when they come from one college, like Ohio State, to another- like Penn State.

UFS:

The *University Faculty Senate* is the representative body of Penn State's faculty with legislative authority on all matters pertaining to the educational interests of the University and all educational matters that concern the faculties of more than one college. In addition, the Senate is recognized by the University as an advisory and consultative body to the President on all matters that may affect the attainment of the University's educational objectives.

UPUA:

The *University Park Undergraduate Association* serves as the Student Government for University Park. As such, they serve as the representatives for the approximately 44,000 students at University Park in all facilities from academics to governmental affairs.