

One Penn State 2025

Realizing Transformation

Virtual symposium
February 10, 2021



PennState

Guiding principle 3:

Design relevant and responsive programs



Relevant ☒
Responsive ☒



PennState

One Penn State 2025

Presenters

Annie Taylor (moderator)

Jennifer Sparrow

Anthony Robinson

Kelly Griffith

Agenda

- Introductions and Overview
- "Leveling the Computing Playing Field"
- "Semesters are a Social Construct"
- "Increasing Student Access to Summer Courses"
- Call to Action
- Q&A

Leveling the Computer Playing Field





Goal

A student laptop requirement in place for fall of 2022

- To allow for a unified Penn State experience
- Anywhere, anytime access to software
- Access to low-cost/free digital textbooks

Background

Remote Learning
Insights

Current Laptop
Ownership

Cloud Printing Services

Financial Aid

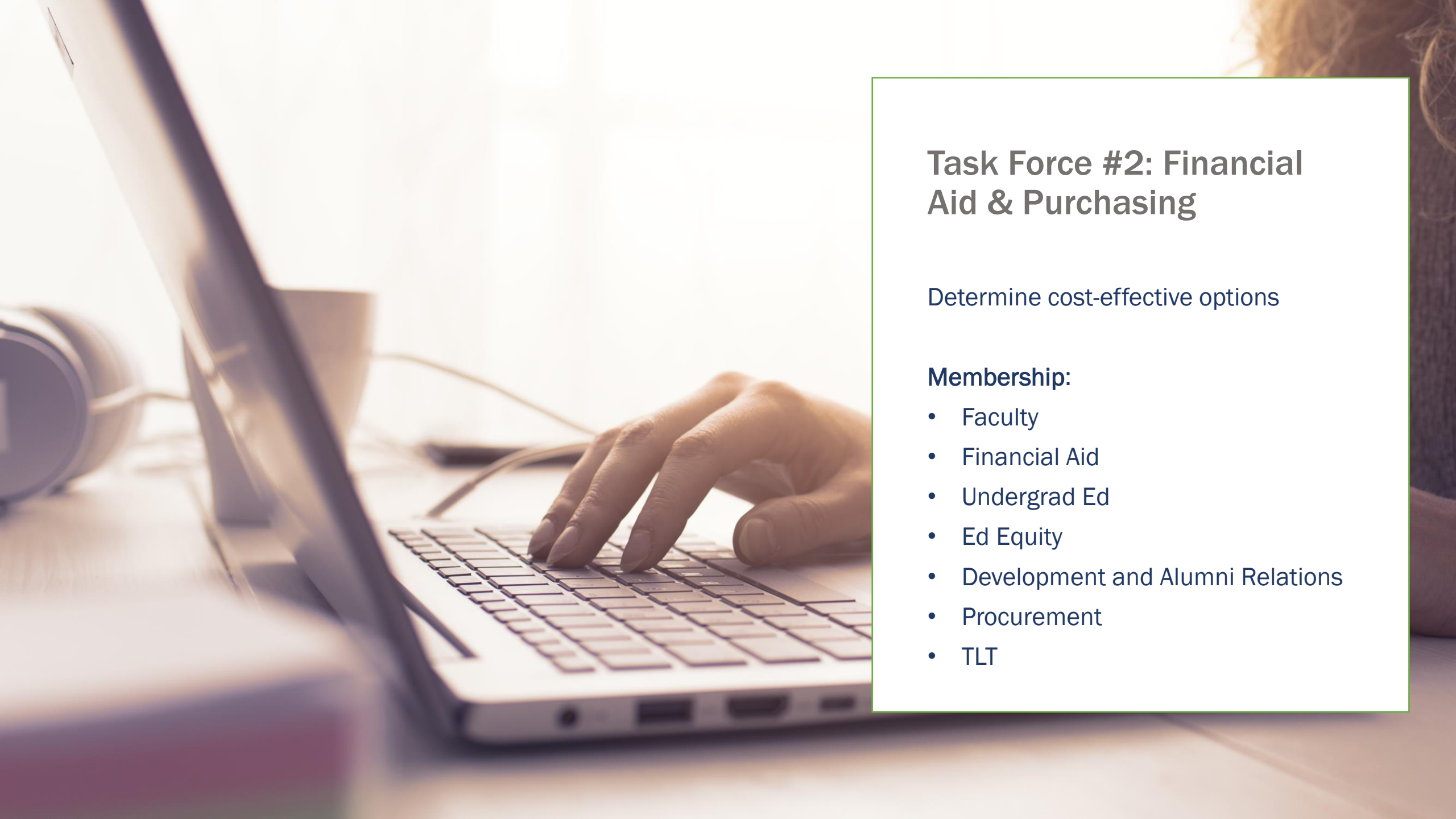
A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hands typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, likely from a window in the background, creating a soft, blurred effect on the background elements like a desk lamp and a cup. The focus is sharp on the hands and the keyboard keys.

Task Force #1: Technical Specifications

- Minimum Requirements for Students
- Coordinate with other Task Forces

Membership:

- Faculty
- College & Campus IT Directors
- Penn State IT

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hands typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, likely from a window, creating a soft, blurred background. The laptop is open, and the keys are clearly visible. The overall mood is professional yet relaxed.

Task Force #2: Financial Aid & Purchasing

Determine cost-effective options

Membership:

- Faculty
- Financial Aid
- Undergrad Ed
- Ed Equity
- Development and Alumni Relations
- Procurement
- TLT

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Task Force #3: Infrastructure

Determine needs for: wireless, power, security, classrooms, and software

Membership:

- Faculty
- OPP
- Office of Information Security
- PS IT Software Team
- TLT
- IT Infrastructure

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hands typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, likely from a window in the background. The laptop is open, and the screen is visible on the left. The background is softly blurred, showing a desk and some papers.

Task Force #4: Pedagogy

Determine: How to help faculty leverage student laptop capability

Membership:

- Faculty
- TLT
- VP Academic Affairs
- Undergrad Ed
- OPAIR
- Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

Next Steps

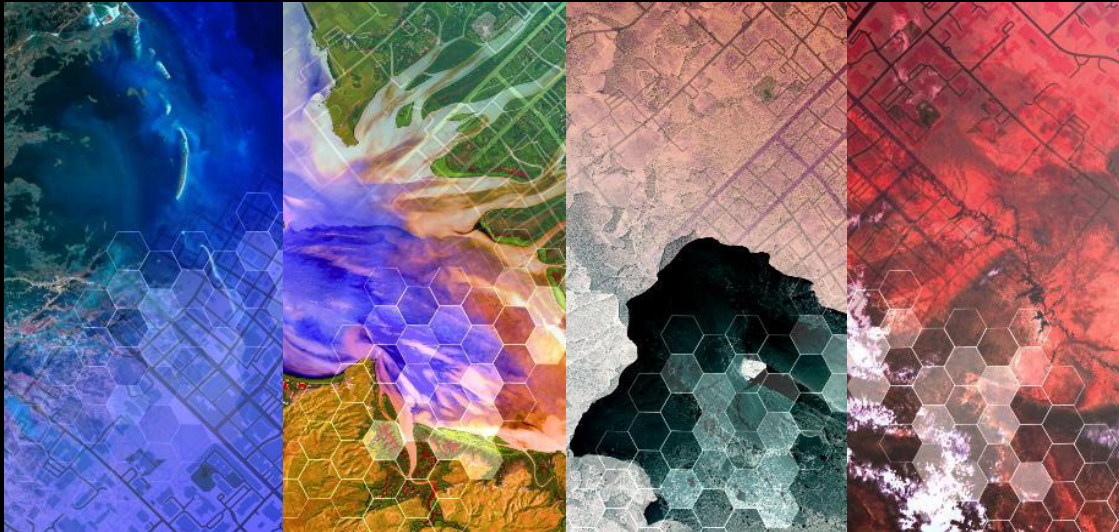


Faculty interested in serving on committees should reach out to Jennifer Sparrow, jls997@psu.edu



Committee work to begin in March

Semesters are a Social Construct: Classes out of the Box



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Director, Online Geospatial Education Programs

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Flexible learning should include new semester models

The standard-length Fall/Spring semester is not timed that way because we evaluated every alternative

Events of the past year have clarified our need to be nimble, and in several cases we have modified our semester design on-the-fly

We have experience in doing this in non-emergency settings, and it works well to support adult learners at a distance

GEOG Online Programs – 10 week terms, offered 5x annually

PSU Great Valley Systems Engineering – 7 week terms, offered 4x annually

Our peers do this already – e.g. University of Maryland Global Campus has dozens of term options throughout the year



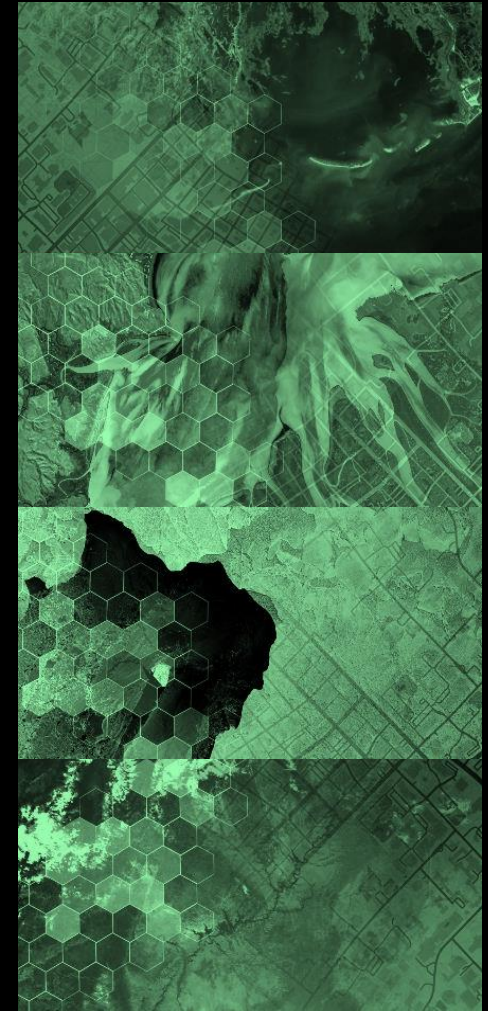
Flexible terms have many upsides

Pedagogical advantages associated with more intense, shorter duration experiences that don't overlap with other classes

Students can take advantage of flexibility afforded by shorter duration terms vis-à-vis career + family needs

Enables us to offer higher frequency of offerings throughout the year – more entry points to our programs

Faculty benefit from flexibility in scheduling (e.g. 5 potential teaching slots vs. 2)



Flexible terms have many upsides downsides

Current refund policy

Calendar from 16-week semester is compressed downwards to fit 10-weeks

Spring 2021 January 6 - March 17

Begin Date	End Date	Withdrawal/Drop % Charged	Withdrawal/Drop % Refunded
01/06/2021	01/09/2021	0	100
01/10/2021	01/14/2021	25	75
01/15/2021	01/19/2021	50	50
01/20/2021	01/24/2021	75	25
01/25/2021		100	0

Student in 2nd week of class has already lost **\$1386** (of \$2772 total) – by the time they realize that a class is too much, they are usually out the entire cost

These students are unlikely to re-engage with Penn State later and are likely to tell friends/co-workers about our harsh policy



Flexible terms have many ~~upsides~~ downsides

Discontinuation + billing processes interfere with students taking courses that begin after the 16wk late add period

A student who registers in December for a class in our Spring 2 term beginning mid-February can be considered overdue in payment well before their class begins and may be discontinued as a result

Resume studies process remains a hindrance

Adult learners frequently take 1+ terms off in the course of their studies, & the process for resuming studies is still time-consuming & opaque

Resident semester boundaries constrain our flexibility

Cannot cross 16 week resident semester boundaries (changed in 2013) – reducing our flexibility in an arbitrary way



Taking Action for One Penn State 2025

Identify programs at PSU that already use non-standard terms

Benchmark peer institution usage of non-standard length terms

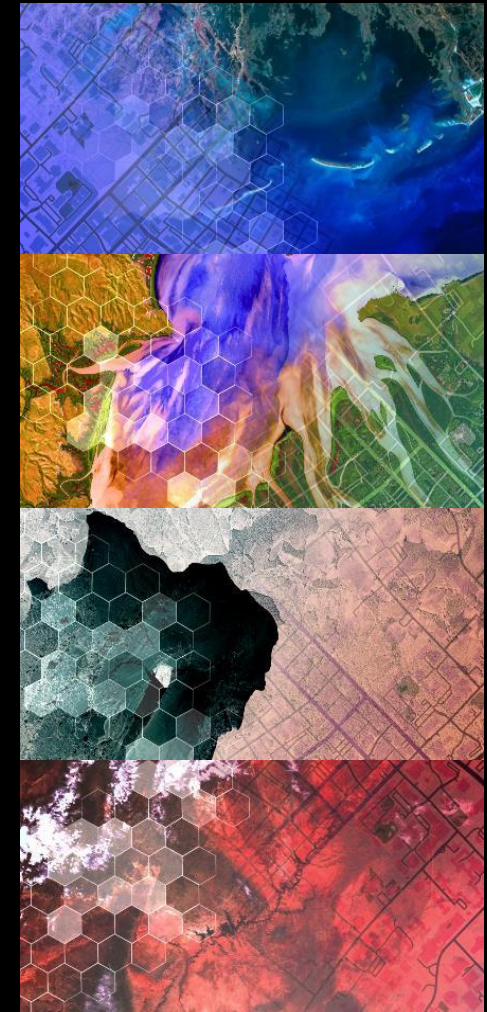
Convene University stakeholders to propose modifications to University policies to support non-standard terms

Survey current and prospective students regarding preferences for term lengths and formats

Develop a guide for faculty based on best practices regarding positives/negatives associated with various non-standard term options and prototypical pathways

Identify programs aligned with emerging workforce trends that students could complete in non-standard terms, invest in their development via RFP

*full details in **Action Item 2.2 of the GP3 Plan**



Increasing Access to Summer Courses through a Shared Marketing Approach

- In summer, students tend to limit their search for courses to their home campus
- Many students take courses at other institutions and transfer credits back to PSU
- Summer courses are optional and have in the past created a competitive environment vs a collaborative environment

What opportunities does a collaborative approach to marketing Summer Session courses provide?

Benefits to Current Students:

- Increased awareness of all courses offered across the institution
- Flexibility to choose preferred instruction mode, timeframe, and location for summer courses
- Ability to find courses they are looking for at Penn State vs transferring credits back in from another institution

What opportunities does a collaborative approach to marketing Summer Session courses provide?

Potential Benefits to the Institution

- Sharing of resources to expand and increase the quality of all marketing efforts
- Paid marketing that is not location based to attract current and visiting students to all campuses
- Opportunities for intra- and inter-disciplinary collaboration across the institution for unique summer offerings that align with workforce and societal trends (e.g., online certificates that could be completed in one summer; engaged scholarship opportunities, etc.)

Opportunities for Future Progress:

- Expand upon and further market the historic summer course offerings Power BI Report to assist students in their summer planning
- Utilize data to identify gaps in summer offerings to consider courses, timing, and unique opportunities
- Create an administrative structure to further collaboration and support the implementation of new ideas

So, what happens next?

Student laptop initiative

- **Interested in joining one of the 4 task forces?** (Technical Specifications, Financial Aid & Purchasing, Infrastructure, and Pedagogy)
- **Contact:** Jennifer Sparrow - jls997@psu.edu

Flexible Terms

- Full details in **Action Item 2.2** of the GP3 Plan
- **Want to help? Have an idea?**
- **Contact:** Anthony Robinson - acr181@psu.edu

Shared Marketing of Summer Courses

- **Want to help? Have an idea?**
- **Contact:** Kelly Griffith - kmg19@psu.edu