Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Penn State Undergraduate Education (UE)!

Undergraduate Education is composed of fourteen units which are diverse in purpose but united in our shared commitment to supporting the academic success of Penn State undergraduates across the Commonwealth.

Our staff support students through work that ranges from helping students manage the financial investment a college education represents, to advising and supporting undergraduates along their academic journey, to enriching the learning that happens both in and out of the classroom. This work touches every facet of students’ academic experience at Penn State and impacts their lives long after graduation.

As you explore the Blue Book, you will learn more about each of these areas of work and the offices that lead these efforts. You will also learn about the strategic priorities that span multiple UE offices and unite our collective efforts. One theme you will notice is a commitment to continually improving our programs and processes. This commitment is integral to the culture of UE and reflects our dedication to Penn State students. Indeed, UE staff and leadership are determined to advance Penn State’s position as an international leader in undergraduate education.

I hope that after reading this overview of UE, you are inspired by the work we have ahead of us, which has the potential to empower each and every Penn State undergraduate student to form the foundation for a lifetime of success. To Penn State faculty, staff, administrators, parents, and donors, thank you for your partnership in helping us to achieve our mission. To Penn State undergraduates, know that we are here to support you every step of the way on your path to graduation.

Thank you again for taking the time to learn more about Penn State Undergraduate Education.

Vice President and Dean
for Undergraduate Education

Igniting curiosity and expanding opportunity for Penn State undergraduates

Our mission

The mission of Undergraduate Education is to facilitate a Penn State academic environment that enhances the success of all students.

Our vision

The vision of Undergraduate Education is to ensure equitable outcomes for all Penn State students through effective collaborations, responsive and adaptable practices and policies, and informed decision-making.

Yvonne Gaudelius
Vice President and Dean

Jeff Adams
Associate Vice President and Senior Associate Dean

Melissa Johnson
Associate Vice President and Associate Dean

Alan Rieck
Associate Vice President and Associate Dean

Angela Linse
Executive Director of the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence and Associate Dean for Teaching

Maggie Slattery
Director and Assistant Dean for General Education

David Smith
Executive Director for the Division of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Dean for Advising

Vice President and Dean
for Undergraduate Education
Office of the Vice President
and Dean

undergrad.psu.edu 814-863-1864

The Office of the Vice President and Dean leads, coordinates, and collaborates on a wide range of undergraduate education matters across the University. The office also serves as a source and clearinghouse for institutional research and data pertaining to student success and retention.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- coordinate the curricular development and review process
- develop and maintain academic policies and procedures
- ensure academic integrity is upheld at Penn State
- facilitate digital and online learning
- administer the Complete Penn State and Raise.me programs
- serve the needs of all UE units through the Office of Communications, Finance and Administration, Information Technology (IT), and Research and Analysis

Highlights

- Since its founding through 2018-19, Penn State has awarded 887,004 degrees.
- There are 363 general purpose classrooms at University Park, located throughout fifty-five buildings. In these classrooms, there is an aggregate of 20,892 seats, providing up to 33.5 million annual hours of schedulable credit instruction.

Penn State Values

In UE we strive to embody the Penn State Values in all that we do.

Integrity – We act with integrity in accordance with the highest academic, professional, and ethical standards

Respect – We respect and honor the dignity of each person, embrace civil discourse, and foster a diverse, inclusive, and safe community

Responsibility – We act responsibly and hold ourselves accountable for our decisions, actions, and their consequences

Discovery – Through advanced research and scholarship, we seek and create new knowledge and understanding, and foster creativity and innovation, for society’s benefit

Excellence – We strive for excellence in all endeavors as individuals, an institution, and a leader in higher education and research

Community – We work together for the betterment of our University, the communities we serve, and the world

We also strive to uphold the values of:

Student-Centeredness – We are committed to student success and seek to enable students to engage actively in their education and achieve their academic goals

Collaboration – We believe that working across organizational boundaries creates opportunities and improves outcomes

Equity – We believe in the potential of all students and strive to create meaningful opportunities for all students to belong and achieve success

Innovation – We believe creativity and opportunity go hand-in-hand and that breakthroughs inherently involve risk

Strategic Goals, 2020–2025

Goal 1 – Improve success of minoritized and marginalized students thereby having a positive effect on all students

- Develop and utilize data to guide decisions regarding student success
- Lead in efforts to reduce gaps in graduation rates
- Collaborate to improve professional practices that better equip individuals to respond to student needs

Goal 2 – Foster institution-wide connection and collaboration

- Grow UE collaborations with students
- Grow connections and collaborations within UE
- Pursue UE collaborations with other University entities
- Build meaningful UE connections and collaborations with individuals and community entities

Goal 3 – Prioritize and model student-centeredness, equity, diversity, inclusion, and transparency in UE work

- Review and revise policies and processes to be student-centered, equitable, and sustainable
- Promote and model a culture of equity and inclusion among UE professionals
- Practice critical reflection that challenges assumptions

The fourteen units that comprise Undergraduate Education (UE) are diverse and wide-ranging. From the offices that help students begin their Penn State education strong, to those that shape and enhance their experience along the way, UE is committed to working together in innovative, creative ways to provide a world-class experience for Penn State students.

Leadership

Office of the Vice President and Dean

Academic Support, Advising, and Tutoring
Division of Undergraduate Studies
Morgan Academic Center
Penn State Learning
Student Success Center

Course and Program Resources
Office for General Education

Engagement

Student Engagement Network
Undergraduate Research and Fellowships Mentoring

Faculty Development

Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

Financial Support

Sokolov-Miller Family Financial and Life Skills Center

Intercollege Academic Programs
Center for Penn State Student Entrepreneurship
Reserve Officers’ Training Corps

Student Transition Programs
Office for Summer Session
Prior Learning Assessment
Student Orientation and Transition Programs

Our values and strategic goals

Our units and programs
The Division of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) is the academic home for students exploring multiple academic programs before committing to a course of study. DUS serves as a leader in academic advising for the University and other institutions across the nation.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- enroll and advise students who are exploring majors
- teach students about the larger value of higher education by fostering reflection and intentionality in decision-making
- enable students to persist at Penn State even if they change academic direction
- administer student success technologies such as Starfish and ALEKS
- provide guidance for the development of academic policies, procedures, and supporting resources
- set a standard of excellence for academic advising University-wide, as well as for the continuing development of the academic advising profession both at Penn State and at institutions throughout the nation.

### Highlights

- **DUS** is the largest enrollment unit for first-year students across the University.
- **DUS students** take the same classes as other Penn State students take.
- **Students** who start in DUS take the same amount of time toward graduation as students who start in a Penn State college.
- **Students and families** say they chose DUS and Penn State because they feel comfortable knowing that students will have time and support in choosing a major, without losing time toward graduation.
- **DUS students** declare their majors by the end of their second year, at the same time as all other Penn State students.

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**Morgan Academic Center**

[morgancenter.psu.edu](http://morgancenter.psu.edu)  
814-865-0407

The Morgan Academic Center (MAC) provides comprehensive support services to all student-athletes as they fully engage in the University educational experience, earn meaningful degrees, and prepare for a lifetime of impact.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- provide comprehensive learning services that support all student-athletes in reaching their potential while achieving academic and athletic excellence
- enhance the collegiate experience of all student-athletes through academic and career planning and encouraging participation in both leadership education and community service opportunities
- produce periodic reports to the University Faculty Senate, NCAA, and Big Ten Conference regarding overall student-athlete academic performance

### Morgan Academic Center Highlights

- The MAC provides 32,000 square feet of office and academic support space for all staff and student-athletes.
- The MAC includes individual study space, classroom space, fifteen collaborative learning rooms, a One Button Studio, and state-of-the-art technology throughout the building for both tutoring and mentoring sessions.
- Each academic year, the MAC employs and trains over 100 tutors to fulfill over 500 tutor requests made by over 300 student-athletes.
- 207 Penn State student-athletes have been recognized as CoSIDA Academic All-Americans, the fourth highest among all NCAA Division I institutions.
- 6,697 Penn State student-athletes have been Academic All-Big Ten Conference honorees, the second-highest total in the conference since 1991-1992.
- In October 2019, the NCAA released its annual graduation rates report, which revealed that Penn State student-athletes earned a school record Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of 91 percent.

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**Penn State State Learning**

[pennstatelearning.psu.edu](http://pennstatelearning.psu.edu)  
814-865-2582

Penn State Learning develops and assesses peer-led, undergraduate learning communities in math, sciences, writing, languages, and economics through tutoring, workshops, and guided study groups.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- help all undergraduates at University Park meet or exceed the skill standards required to succeed as scholars in their chosen programs and to thrive as cooperative citizens and peer educators within a global society
- support individual and group tutoring, learning community development, and collaborative projects with academic departments to assess learning and improve academic assistance resources for undergraduates
- develop tutors through a credited tutoring training course and through ongoing observations, peer mentoring, and staff meetings
- offer research-based, metacognition resources and programs to help students meet the demands of college-level courses

### Highlights

- Tutoring and study groups are included in tuition, are on-campus and online, and are instructor-supported.
- Penn State Learning employs over 150 undergraduate peer tutors in writing, math, languages, sciences, economics, statistics, and public speaking.
- Tutors conduct upwards of 40,000 tutorials a year with 12,000 students.
- Tutors conduct approximately 1,000 online tutorials per year.
- Course-embedded tutors lead approximately seventy Guided Study Group sessions per week for twenty high-enrollment General Education courses.

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**Student Success Center**

[success.psu.edu](http://success.psu.edu)  
814-865-4086

The Student Success Center exists as both a physical center at the University Park campus and a broad-based commitment toward University-wide student support and retention goals. Launched in 2019, the center partners with various departments, programs, and initiatives to assist Penn State students in their academic pursuits, allowing them to fully harness the power of financial support and academic engagement opportunities. The Student Success Center is committed to empowering students and their advocates across the University Park and Commonwealth campuses to help students fulfill their academic goals.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- administer the Complete Penn State program, which provides resources for students who are in their final two semesters of study and experience a situation that negatively impacts their ability to complete their degree

### Highlights

- The center has fielded more than 1,250 student applications or referrals for assistance.
- The center has awarded scholarships to 625 students representing thirteen academic colleges and eighteen Penn State campuses, in addition to the World Campus.
- The center has awarded more than $1.5 million in aid.

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**Student Success Center**
The Office for General Education works to inspire transformative student learning through collaboration, innovation, and scholarship. The office supports faculty and staff in the development and delivery of an intentional, excellent, and innovative undergraduate General Education curriculum and provides resources to help students make intentional decisions in crafting their General Education experience.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- work to position Penn State as a national leader in General Education and make General Education a hallmark of a Penn State education
- manage support programs, such as the General Education Faculty Scholars Program and various initiatives, to assist faculty in the development and delivery of General Education courses and in creating and using innovative and effective pedagogy
- coordinate and collaborate with the Office of Planning and Assessment to assess the General Education curriculum and use assessment data to improve General Education
- support students in selecting transformative educational experiences within General Education

**Highlights**

- More than 35 percent of each baccalaureate student’s required credits are General Education (45 out of a minimum of 120 credits).
- More than 1,200 Penn State courses have a General Education designation.
- Sixteen General Education Scholars, with representation from each domain and from a range of Penn State campuses, work with the office in support of General Education across twenty undergraduate campuses.

**Student Engagement Network**

The Office of Undergraduate Education, Student Affairs, and Outreach and Online Education, the Student Engagement Network (SEN) connects students with curricular and co-curricular opportunities such as research, student organization involvement, community leadership, study abroad, internships, and many more. The SEN advances the power of participation by connecting students with experiences that empower them to make a positive impact as citizens and leaders of the world.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- help students discover research and fellowship opportunities that match their goals and interests
- provide competitive funding for students to complete undergraduate research experiences
- educate students about all aspects of the research process, from selecting a project to presenting their findings
- provide opportunities for students to present their research findings to their Penn State peers and support students in traveling to conferences to share their work with the broader scholarly community
- advise students through the entire fellowship application process, from written application to interview, and educate students on the profile of a competitive candidate

**Undergraduate Research and Fellowships Mentoring**

Undergraduate Research and Fellowships Mentoring aims to spark personal reflection and professional growth in undergraduates by encouraging students to engage in undergraduate research and pursue national or international fellowships. Penn State students leverage these experiences to attend graduate school, join the scholarly community, become educators, contribute to business and industry, and more.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- help students discover research and fellowship opportunities that match their goals and interests
- provide competitive funding for students to complete undergraduate research experiences
- educate students about all aspects of the research process, from selecting a project to presenting their findings
- provide opportunities for students to present their research findings to their Penn State peers and support students in traveling to conferences to share their work with the broader scholarly community
- advise students through the entire fellowship application process, from written application to interview, and educate students on the profile of a competitive candidate

**Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence**

The Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence (SITE) advocates for effective and evidence-based teaching practices at all Penn State locations. SITE sustains instructional creativity by collaborating with faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, administrators, and staff through consultations, teaching and learning scholarship, and grants to enable growth of innovative instruction. The Schreyer Institute also manages the Pollock Testing Center, which provides computer-based testing and processes exam “bubble sheets” for Penn State courses.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- work with faculty to explore effective teaching methods, design courses and curricula, and evaluate student learning
- conduct teaching and learning scholarship in collaboration with faculty and students
- manage the Pollock Testing Center
- administer Penn State’s Student Ratings of Teaching Effectiveness (SRITE)
- oversee the University undergraduate teaching award process

**Highlights**

- SITE faculty served as consultants and coaches for faculty and graduate students teaching more than 50,000 students over the past five years.
- Every year, SITE designs more than 100 workshops and presentations for more than 1,000 faculty.
- SITE awards at least $50,000 in grants per year to support innovative teaching and learning and scholarship of teaching and learning.
- SITE has supported more than forty Faculty Teaching Communities including teaching in STEM disciplines, language instruction, teaching evaluation, online learning, and many more.
- SITE staff support online testing and paper exam scoring for thousands of courses.
Sokolov-Miller Family Financial and Life Skills Center

The Sokolov-Miller Family Financial and Life Skills Center helps students gain the knowledge and skills needed to manage their financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial wellbeing. Through workshops, webinars, online self-study modules, and one-on-one meetings with staff and student ambassadors, students can learn the principles of financial literacy and receive help tailored to their specific financial challenges.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- develop and lead financial literacy education workshops, webinars, and online modules throughout the year on a wide range of issues including budgeting, credit cards, student loans, and more
- meet confidentially with students to address their money management concerns
- partner with departments throughout the University to create programs that help students develop long-term strategies for financial stability and offer support for those experiencing financial hardships.

Highlights

- The Sokolov-Miller family gave a generous endowment to the center in 2018 to support Penn State’s financial literacy programs.
- Business-focused and similarly qualified students hold paid positions at the center to help promote its programs and services and also work with students to address money management concerns.
- The center gave 202 presentations during the 2018-2019 academic year.
- Faculty, staff, and student groups can request a workshop, tailored to their needs, by submitting a request online.

Center for Penn State Student Entrepreneurship

enti.psu.edu  814-865-7084

The Center for Penn State Student Entrepreneurship teaches Penn State students the foundational skills needed to position themselves as successful entrepreneurs and innovators. The center leads curricular and co-curricular initiatives that support undergraduate student entrepreneurship, including the Intercollege Minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI) and Lion LaunchPad, which offers a special living option for first-year students who want to get involved right away in the Penn State entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- coordinate all aspects of the ENTI minor across all colleges and campuses
- coordinate all aspects of the Lion LaunchPad special living option
- collaborate with faculty, students, alumni, and other stakeholders across the University to advance Penn State’s mission of teaching, research, and service.

Highlights

- Students are encouraged to start taking entrepreneurship courses as early as they are interested, even before they declare a major.
- The ENTI minor is open to students of all disciplines and provides students with specialized knowledge and skills that prepare them to launch an enterprise of their own.
- Penn State Global Entrepreneurship Week happens every fall, with workshops, visiting entrepreneurs, and activities. Penn State Startup Week takes place in the spring and includes featured speakers and workshops.

Reserve Officers’ Training Corps

undergrad.psu.edu/rotc

The Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) trains undergraduate students to become commissioned officers in the United States Armed Forces. Students in ROTC must attend service-specific ROTC academic classes, which count for college credit, and participate in weekly leadership labs and physical fitness training as part of the program. Students may receive a competitive, merit-based scholarship, covering all or part of college tuition and fees.

ROTC graduates serve in all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and incur a four-year active duty service obligation (ADSO) and an eight-year military service obligation (MSO) if they accept a commission as a regular officer.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- coordinate all aspects of the ROTC program specialized professional training for military officer positions after college
- develop strong technical and leadership skills in ROTC students
- encourage mental and physical growth in ROTC students

Highlights

- Military training has been part of Penn State since its founding in 1855 as part of its duties as a land-grant University.
- The first full-time professor of military science was assigned to Penn State in 1878.
- In June 1916, the National Defense Act formally created an ROTC unit at Penn State.
- Air Force is the youngest ROTC program, having been established in 1947 when the Air Force became a separate service.
- The Joint Service Coordinator is an administrative position that rotates annually among the three ROTC commanders and represents the units at Penn State.
- Penn State’s ROTC program is the largest in the Big Ten and one of the largest and highest performing in the nation.

Office for Summer Session

summer.psu.edu  814-863-4174

The Office for Summer Session works with Penn State colleges to expand opportunities for students and to develop creative offerings for summer study. The office provides students with the requisite information about summer session course offerings.

Key responsibilities of this office include:

- coordinate the Learning Edge Academic Program (LEAP) for first-year students entering University Park in the summer
- manage the Student Transitional Experiences Program (STEP) for change-of-campus students and summer programs for international students
- make students aware of the many advantages of taking summer session courses, including the opportunity to catch up on missed requirements or incomplete credits, focus on challenging classes, and receive individual attention in smaller classes
- encourage students to stay on track, get ahead in their program, and to graduate on time

Highlights

- LEAP participants have higher first-year GPAs and higher first-to-second-year retention rates compared to students who do not participate in the program.
- LEAP provides leadership experiences to fifty to sixty undergraduate students each summer through the LEAP mentor program.
- Summer Success Scholarships provide financial support to students who need to take summer courses to get back on track to timely degree completion but have financial challenges to do so.

814-865-7084
Prior Learning Assessment

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) works to ensure that knowledge and skills acquired by students prior to coming to Penn State, or outside of their Penn State classroom, are consistently evaluated and awarded credit across Penn State’s colleges and campuses. Some examples of prior learning credits awarded to students include transfer credits, credits from Advanced Placement exams, and credit by portfolio. To increase student access and success, PLA strives to ensure that Penn State appropriately awards college-level credentials in a way that upholds the academic integrity and excellence of programs that lead to a Penn State degree. Earning credit for prior learning may shorten time to degree and reduce tuition costs.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- provide leadership for University-wide efforts in prior learning assessment and serve as the primary point of contact on prior learning assessment for students, faculty, and staff
- develop collaborative processes for implementation and administration of prior learning assessment
- work with faculty and professional staff to develop criteria, tools, and record-keeping for prior learning assessment
- promote a widespread understanding of prior learning assessment policies and processes and the role that prior learning can play in student success by working with Admissions, the Registrar, and advising staff
- plan and coordinate activities and communications on prior learning assessment opportunities to prospective and current students, faculty, and staff

Highlights
- In the fall 2017 semester, 13,197 students transferred 294,018 credits to Penn State.
- On average, one-third of first-time college students begin their college careers with credits earned previously.

Student Orientation and Transition Programs

Student Orientation and Transition Programs (SOTP) facilitates comprehensive learning experiences for Penn State undergraduates that support a successful academic, social, and personal transition to the University. Our team of full-time staff, undergraduate student leaders, and program volunteers work throughout the year to assist new students, parents, and family members at each stage of their transition to the University. SOTP is operated in partnership with Student Affairs.

Key responsibilities of this office include:
- coordinate Link UP, a visit program for students considering a Penn State campus change
- plan, coordinate, and implement New Student Orientation (NSO), a two-day, on-campus summer orientation for new first-year students and their parents and family members
- provide Transfer Student Orientation (TSO), a program specifically designed for students who have previous experience at another college or university
- collaborate with campus partners to deliver Welcome Week programs, which are composed of activities to help students learn more about Penn State at the start of each semester
- provide leadership for the planning and implementation of the President’s New Student Convocation

Highlights
- SOTP has introduced a number of new Signature Events to our Welcome Week calendar including Tip Off the Semester (with Penn State Athletics), the Campus Traditions Tour, and Paws Point information stations.
- The office has invested in positively impacting the change-of-campus student experience through strategic partnerships that have helped us increase Link UP attendance by 29 percent and pilot a mentoring program for students in the College of Engineering.

The Future of Undergraduate Education at Penn State

As the units that comprise Undergraduate Education pursue a shared vision of excellence in undergraduate teaching and learning, we will help to advance several key University-wide initiatives that will shape the future of Penn State:

One Penn State 2025
This initiative aims to position the University as a leader in higher education in the realms of student success and lifelong engagement.

Achieve Penn State
Achieve Penn State helps Penn State undergraduates overcome obstacles on the path to graduation so they can graduate with lower debt and in less time.

Engage Penn State
This initiative helps unify efforts across the University to provide Penn State undergraduates with opportunities for hands-on, real-world learning.

The history of Penn State’s “Blue Book”
Before the internet transformed higher education, Penn State undergraduates browsed available courses in a thick book with a bright blue cover. After the Undergraduate Bulletin was transferred online, the physical “Blue Book” was relegated to Penn State history. We’ve borrowed the book’s name for this publication to honor UE’s historic role not only in publishing the Undergraduate Bulletin, but also in helping to shape the curriculum that appears therein.