Chair’s Report. Faculty Senate Chair Reed Pyeritz noted that the Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (SCESF) is in the drafting stage of its report, which will be published in early 2016. Due to time constraints, he announced that a more detailed report of the activities of the Senate committees will be deferred to the next meeting.

Past-Chair’s Report. Faculty Senate Past Chair Claire Finkelstein reported that the Academic Planning and Budget Committee and the Capital Council have both held their second meetings of the year. She gave an update on the Campaign for Community, informing SEC members that applications for branding and funding of up to $1,500.00 are currently being accepted. She reminded the SEC of the “Academic Freedom Now” symposium, co-sponsored by the Faculty Senate and the Campaign for Community, which will take place on October 27, 3:00-6:00pm, in the Kislak Center (6th Floor, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library).

Athletics and Recreation at Penn. M. Grace Calhoun, Director of Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics, gave SEC an overview of athletics and recreation at Penn. She reported that Penn Athletics is a broad-based division covering wellness programming for all students, ranging from intercollegiate teams to club teams, intramural teams, scheduled classes and programs, and drop-ins. She reported that a Divisional task force was convened last fall that established standards for team discipline, including the use of alcohol and drugs. An updated anti-hazing policy was endorsed in September 2015, which has included coach and student-athlete education programs and written annual commitments to the policy by each student-athlete. An ongoing sexual misconduct prevention program is also in place. She reported that all Ivy League schools use an “academic index” in their admissions processes, which takes into account the student’s secondary GPA and standardized test scores to ensure that the prospective student has the potential for academic success at the institution. This policy is managed collectively by the eight Ivy League presidents.

Imminent Threats of Campus Violence. Maureen Rush, Vice President for Public Safety, reported on the campus-wide alert of potential violence on October 5, 2015. She reported that a notice was sent to the Penn community with information regarding the alleged threat, which was based on a post to a popular website, and that significant additional security measures were taken to ensure the safety of the community. She added that the posting was later determined to be a hoax. Vice President Rush discussed the effectiveness of the University’s new HELP Line, and encouraged SEC members to remind their constituencies of its 24/7 availability by calling (215) 898-HELP.

2015 Senate Nominating Committee. Pursuant to the Faculty Senate Rules, the members of SEC were asked to submit a nomination of a member of the Standing Faculty to the Nominating Committee.

Update from the Office of Investments. Peter Ammon, Chief Investment Officer, discussed the work of the Office of Investments and described the process his office uses to manage the Associated Investments Fund (AIF), a pooled investment vehicle in which the vast majority of Penn’s endowment is invested. Individual endowments and trusts at Penn hold shares or units of
the AIF, whose purpose is to provide stability and perpetual support for Penn’s mission and programs.