University Senate Questions and
Administrative Responses
19 October 2026

Faculty Retention, COACHE Survey Results, and Faculty Climate

Q: The COACHE survey results indicate significant concerns among faculty regarding their experience at Purdue. In particular, the College of Engineering results show that 50% of Assistant Professors indicated a desire to leave within five years of receiving tenure, while another 50% indicated a desire to leave Purdue at a later time. Similar concerns appear in responses to institutional- and college-level questions, including among more senior faculty.

What actions are being considered or planned to address these concerns, improve the faculty experience, and meaningfully strengthen faculty retention?

- Each college has been charged with reviewing its COACHE results, identifying priority areas of concern, and developing an implementation plan to address them. These plans, which are due in December, will focus on issues raised by faculty within each college and department. Faculty Affairs will then work closely with Associate Deans for Faculty Affairs, department heads, and other college leaders to support implementation and monitor progress. Look for more early next semester.
- More broadly, it is a priority for all of us to strengthen faculty support across the institution. This means clear expectations for excellence in hiring, mentoring and promotion/career advancement—including post-tenure review—coupled with strong support of faculty success across all career stages and types of faculty appointments. Some new efforts already begun include enhanced programming for associate professors, expanded mentoring and career-development opportunities, and increased attention to ensuring that promotion and tenure expectations and career pathways are clear and consistent across the institution. Together these efforts are designed exactly to improve the faculty experience at key career stages, strengthen engagement and professional growth, and ultimately improve retention of high-performing faculty across Purdue. We want to create, hire and retain more and more stronger performers as scholars and teachers, and to help strengthen our Purdue culture in ways that specifically encourage and reward sustained excellence in scholarship, teaching and engagement.

Indianapolis Expansion of Clinical Programs

Q: Several clinical programs are interested in expanding to Indianapolis. What specific resources, including faculty lines, clinical and research space, and start-up support, would be available to programs making such a move? What would the timeline and decision-making process look like?

- Answers will be guided by the fit with our Indianapolis Strategy as briefed at the last Board of Trustees meeting: https://www.purdue.edu/bot/meetings/past-meetings/2026/06.%20october/Stated/Wolfe%20Cline%20October%20BOT%20Indianapolis%20100526.pdf

- In the first instance, proposals that describe a fit with this strategy and lay out a framework and timeline for student recruitment, faculty success, staffing, facilities etc should be send through Department Heads and then by Deans to Executive Vice Provost Sunil Prabhakar.
- Additional Details are as follows: Purdue has authorized 73 Indianapolis faculty positions across FY2026 and FY2027, including tenure-track and clinical/professional appointments; 22 of the FY2026 positions have been filled. These positions support existing programs and carefully sequenced new offerings, rather than constituting a dedicated pool for clinical program expansion. The Academic Success Building, expected to open in 2027, will expand academic and student space, but specific clinical and research space commitments would need to be evaluated separately. Departments should begin by working iteratively with Head, Dean and Sunil to develop a proposal that:
  - Defines the academic opportunity and how it leverages Indianapolis' distinctive strengths.
  - Assesses market needs and demonstrated student demand to establish enrollment targets.
  - Identifies faculty, staffing, space, and start-up requirements.
  - Maps the necessary internal and external approvals and an implementation schedule.
- The timeline would depend on the proposal's scope, resource requirements, space readiness, and approval requirements. The Office of the Provost would help departments align proposal development and review with admissions and catalog publication milestones. A launch date and resource commitments would therefore be established through the review process, rather than through a uniform timeline for all programs.

Health Insurance Coverage for Specialized Care

Q: For employees whose family members require specialized care that is not available through a Tier 1 provider, for example, rare-disease treatment at Riley-Tier 2 pricing and a higher out-of-pocket maximum can result in significantly higher costs when there is no in-network alternative.

Would the administration support a Tier 1 exception when no appropriate Tier 1 option exists? If so, what steps would be taken to establish such an exception?

- Yes. In fact, this exception currently exists for all covered employees and their dependents.
- Purdue medical plans participate in the HealthSync network that provides high-quality providers for a lower cost. HealthSync providers have shown to provide more comprehensive care for their patients as well as helping to keep healthcare costs manageable for both members and employers. The HealthSync network is limited to Indiana currently but has over 10,000 providers across the state participating.
- In the event there is not a tier 1 (HealthSync) provider available within 50 miles of a member's Indiana residence, members may utilize a tier 2 provider and contact Human Resources (hr@purdue.edu). The university's third-party administrator, Ameriben, will review the claims and if

it is determined that a tier 1 provider was not available, the tier 2 claims may be processed as if they were tier 1.

Research Security and Export Controls – Purchasing from Chinese Companies

Q: Faculty have expressed concerns about the approval process for purchases from Chinese companies, including reports that the Research Security and Export Controls office is unable to process requests in a timely manner or has been unresponsive.

Would the administration consider temporarily suspending or modifying this approval process until the office has sufficient capacity to handle these requests?

- As noted in a September response, we will fix any undue delays and other vexations within our power to fix. Still, new federal and state restrictions require this additional review and do, in fact, limit some of our purchasing options. We must continue to comply with those legal requirements.

Transparency and Representation in Leadership Searches

Q: Faculty have expressed concerns about transparency and accountability in senior administrative decision-making. There are also questions about the process that will be used to select Purdue's next president and the next dean of the College of Engineering.

Will the Board of Trustees establish a search committee with meaningful representation from faculty and other University constituencies for the next presidential search? Is a similarly open and representative process anticipated for the next dean of the College of Engineering?

If these decisions have not yet been made, would the administration recommend that the Board use such processes? If representative search committees will not be used, would the Board be asked to explain the rationale for that decision to the University community?

- There will not be a search committee formed for purposes of the presidential search. Rather, the Board of Trustees will conduct the search taking into account the input it has received from the campus community. When Mark Lundstrom was announced upon Arvind Raman's departure, it was noted that a search for the next Engineering dean would commence after identification of a next president. While the Board understands the desire for greater transparency in the search for a president, the reality is that many well-qualified candidates view such transparency as a significant professional risk and may opt to not participate in searches that are conducted as transparently as the university community may desire. The Board will certainly describe its rationale for the selection of the next President, including how the campus community's input was used in the search.

Dream Hires

Q: Although we are encouraged to nominate candidates for "dream hire positions", decisions as to whether the process can proceed are made at the university level. Our department has nominated several candidates who have gotten a negative response from the office of the Provost. As I understand the process, this involves an algorithm of some kind, which has a minimum cutoff that the candidates must meet. If that is the case, then it seems to be a waste of time and effort to establish a candidate's interest and carefully review their CV at the department level. I would suggest that it would be a better use of everyone's time if we simply submitted a list of names and were given a yes or no based on the algorithm before we proceeded with more in-depth vetting, and certainly before we reach out to gauge interest. At the very least, it would be helpful if we better understood the process by which these decisions were made. What does the administration think of these suggestions?

- This is a misunderstanding in the sense that there is certainly no “algorithm” or similar. But it is a very good idea to vet lists of names with the VP for faculty affairs, along with CVs and brief rationales. It is in everyone’s interest to help us all make informed decisions about potential nominations!
- Potential dream hire candidates are review by the VP for Faculty Affairs along with colleagues in Facilities (for space/laboratory reasons) and Finance (in consideration of start-up funds and the like). There is no algorithm or automatic cutoff used in the Dream Hire review process. Requests are evaluated based on the candidate's CV and the rationale submitted by the dean describing the candidate's anticipated impact and fit with institutional priorities.
- Colleges vary in how they manage the process before a nomination reaches the Provost's Office. Some colleges use internal vetting committees or other review mechanisms to assess candidates and prioritize nominations before they are submitted for university review.