

Prepared Remarks by Mung Chiang for April 21, 2025, Purdue University Senate Public Meeting

Thank you Chair South for your prepared remarks. As is standard practice, my prepared remarks are provided in two parts: one by myself and the other by colleagues rotating each month across different key units at the university. This month, that's Indianapolis by Dan Hasler and David Umulis.

But I would like to start out by thanking Chair Susan South for her outstanding leadership and trusted partnership. The collaborations, especially between her and Provost Wolfe, over the past academic year have proven to be a cornerstone to the stability and success of our university. As this semester wraps up next week and makes way for finals and Commencement, we again express our appreciation for all members of the Senate, and we look forward to Professor Mark Zimpfer's leadership starting June 1.

Now, as has been stated in the campuswide email on April 10, not all the top universities in the United States are the same. Purdue is a public university in America and the state land-grant institution in Indiana.

Topic 1: Successes and positive impact items

This university continues to expand its support for colleagues and positive impact, with collective accomplishments across faculty hirings, research funding, student interests and financial resilience, and academic facility improvements — underlining our unique strength serving more than 70,000 students and colleagues on the main campus alone.

- **Faculty and staff hiring and retention.** Unlike peer institutions in a long and increasing list, Purdue is not freezing hiring or salaries. For example, in the ongoing recruiting season, 61 signed offers in the past two months alone. Last month, the Board of Trustees approved the tenure and promotion of 163 faculty systemwide. In the meantime, staff turnover at our West Lafayette location dropped from 3.7% to 2.8% in the last three years. Faculty turnover decreased from 2.2% to 1.7%.
- **Research funding and opportunities.** In past two months alone, Purdue faculty have been awarded over 500 grants totaling over \$140 million from the U.S. Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, NASA, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including \$26.4 million from industry partners. The Office of Industry Partnerships continues to work closely with college deans, department heads and all faculty to attract more corporate support for new research centers/consortia and strengthen our existing centers.

- **Investment in the latest facilities.** Recent examples include:
 - Nursing and Pharmacy Education building
 - Mitch Daniels School of Business building
 - Academic Success Building
 - The modernization of Birck Nanotechnology Center and Zucrow High-Speed Propulsion Lab
 - As part of the One Health initiative alongside investment in faculty and students, a planned Life Science Research Building and a facility for four departments involving chemistry are seeking faculty input across many departments throughout multiple colleges.
 - Enhanced commercial air service is coming to Purdue University Airport. Flights are expected to begin Aug. 5 — the same day the Amelia Earhart Terminal opens at the airport.
 - And a nearly 1,000-bed student housing facility is on track to open this summer at Third Street and McCormick Road, with another new residence hall expected next year.

Topic 2: Bridge Funding Program to Support Faculty, Staff, Students

We remain committed to supporting the vital research and scholarly efforts happening every day at Purdue by our tremendous faculty, students and staff. Last week, we launched the 2025 Bridge Funding Program. With this effort, we support our researchers and scholars to maintain continuity following any unanticipated terminations or interruptions of external funding.

You can find the link to the Bridge Funding Program with additional information and an FAQ at Purdue's Federal Funding Updates website.

Topic 3: International student visas

There are resources available to Purdue community members with visa questions. We all recognize this is an anxious time for our international community, and we are providing both overarching and tailored support to those impacted, consistent with our responsibilities as a public, land-grant host institution in an evolving context of current federal actions and court cases.

Purdue has been in contact with anyone who has become aware of a change in their visa status according to government databases. Student visa inquiries should be directed to Chris Collins, Director of International Student Services (ccollins@purdue.edu). Faculty, staff, and postdocs with visa-related questions should contact Amanda Thompson, Director of International Scholar Services (thomp557@purdue.edu). Additional details have been communicated in Purdue Today.

Today, Purdue's Action Council on Student Housing and Well-Being is also hosting a special meeting to gather additional ideas from representatives of the community.

Topic 4: Learning AI

AI literacy will clearly be a crucial foundational requirement for all of our students, now and into the future as we had a glimpse at the last meeting through demos. We are hopeful for the Senate's input on some kind of AI literacy expectation. Knowing that there are multiple ways of accomplishing this, we are eager to ensure that Purdue maintains clear educational leadership in this area. I will turn it over to Provost Wolfe to cover this topic in more detail.

Wrapping up these four topics, we again highlight how the community at our university appreciates the efforts of each of us as we continue Purdue's trajectory of stability and success.