

# Carnegie Mellon University

## Charge for the President's Advisory Board on Student Well-Being, Mental Health and the Academic Experience

### Introduction

Carnegie Mellon University is committed to fostering a community where academic excellence, mental health, and personal well-being are deeply interconnected. In support of this commitment, the university regularly reviews and enhances its programs related to student well-being and support — including through the Presidential Advisory Boards in 2016 and 2019 as well as the Task Force on the CMU Experience.

In October 2025, President Farnam Jahanian announced the President's Advisory Board (PAB) on Student Well-Being, Mental Health and the Academic Experience. This PAB brings together distinguished external experts and diverse perspectives to help the university strengthen our culture of care, well-being and success.

### Purpose

The Advisory Board is charged with examining and recommending strategies for integrating Carnegie Mellon's services, resources, and support structures to enhance the holistic student experience. A key focus is understanding how the academic experience intersects with mental health and overall well-being—identifying opportunities to strengthen coordination, reduce barriers to support, and empower the university community to promote a culture of care, connection, and student success.

### Scope of Work

The Presidential Advisory Board will conduct its assessment through a comprehensive and well-supported review process, drawing on detailed background materials, data analyses, and insights from the campus community. This work will include interviews and focus groups to ensure a rich understanding of the CMU experience. The process will culminate in an in-person visit, during which the Board will engage directly with students, faculty, and staff to deepen its understanding of the university's culture and context.

More specifically, the charge of the PAB is to review and assess strengths and opportunities and make recommendations across the following areas:

- **Interconnected Student Support:** Help examine the current state of holistic support, with a focus on how academic experiences — including academic advising — and personal well-being are interconnected. This examination should span both undergraduate and graduate students and be inclusive of mental health support and suicide prevention efforts. We are interested in an assessment of the extent to

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which these areas are integrated and ways we can prevent a fragmented or siloed experience.

- **Proactive and Responsive Models:** Review our balance of responding to both the immediate needs of students and taking more proactive measures, such as fostering an environment and a campus culture that promotes a positive academic experience, encourages well-being, and swiftly addresses mental health concerns. We seek guidance on how we might enhance both our proactive and responsive approaches.
- **Engagement and Training:** Consider the roles and experiences of faculty, staff, and families in supporting the student academic experience and overall student well-being. We are interested in an assessment of current training, engagement, and communication efforts across multiple audiences, particularly in a complex university environment.
- **Removing Barriers:** Explore the connections among faculty, staff, families and peers acting as student support systems and consider how to strengthen a sense of shared responsibility, including as it relates to academic advising and well-being support, within our campus community. We seek insights on breaking down any organizational and experiential barriers between academic, administrative, and student affairs units.

At the conclusion of the in-person visit, President Jahanian will meet with the PAB to hear initial observations. The PAB will then prepare a summary of key findings and recommendations for the University Leadership Council and the Board of Trustees. President Jahanian will then share with the campus community a summary of the report's findings and information on implementing the PAB's recommendations.