

# General Faculty Meeting

President Dennis Assanis

May 14, 2025

# Reflecting on Our Progress, Driving Our Vision Forward



# Inaugural celebrations draw UD together





# What's Next?

- *How do we take the rich legacy of discovery, progress and people forward?*
- *How can we impact a new generation?*
- *How can we ensure that our University not only endures, but thrives for centuries to come?*



# ARETÉ , αρετή

*The constant drive for virtue and excellence*

Captures our shared aspirations, defines our shared goals and shapes our ability to meet the next great challenges of our future.

# Envisioning five pillars of excellence



- *Expanding student access and success*
- *Building an environment of inclusive excellence*
- *Expanding interdisciplinary and global opportunities*
- *Redefining creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship*
- *Reimagining intellectual and physical capital for a sustainable and boundless campus*



# Enhancing Student Success

*A journey of enlightenment and academic excellence*



# Expanding access, affordability and success



**40,929**  
**Undergraduate applications**  
Fall 2025  
*+55% over 2016*

**5,341**  
**Graduate students enrolled**  
Fall 2024  
*+19% over 2016*

**First State Promise**  
Launched in 2021 —  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  Delawareans study for free

**4,002**  
**Undergrad Pell recipients**  
Fall 2024  
*+62% over 2016*

**3,176**  
**First-generation students**  
Fall 2024  
*+23% over 2016*

**97%**  
**of UD graduates employed or continuing their education six months after graduation**

**3,949**  
**Underrepresented minority students**  
Fall 2024  
*+35% over 2016*

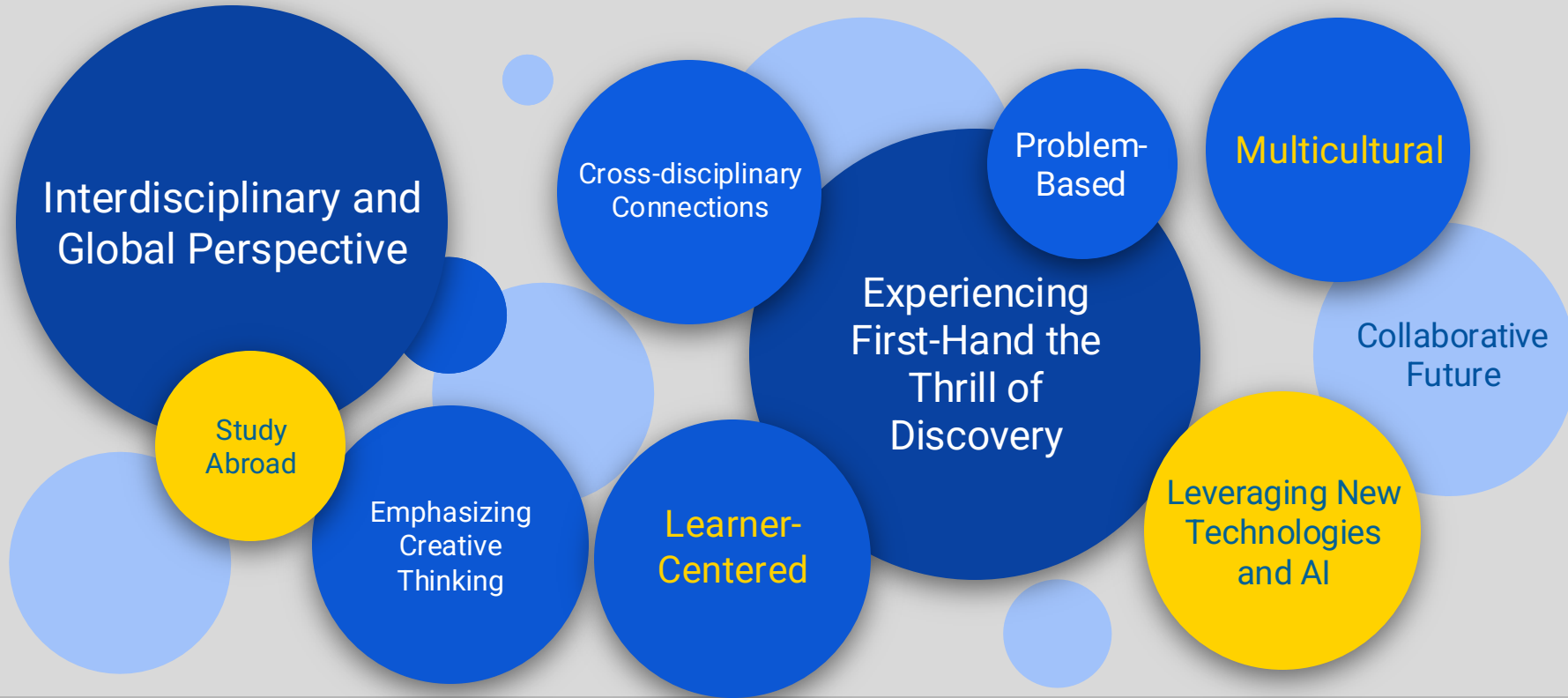


# New programs advance student access and success



- Spectrum Scholars
- Early College Credit Program
- Expand Associate degree pathways through the addition of new specialized tracks and facilities

# Enhancing our academic curriculum



# Advancing innovation and entrepreneurship

- Built the top University-based youth entrepreneurship program, serving more than 5,000 students from more than 70 countries and 34 states each year.
- Expanded general education I&E course offerings and certificates, which will engage almost 1 in every 10 UD undergraduates this year, including students from more than 100 majors and all UD colleges.
- Built programs to provide training, mentorship, connections, and several millions of dollars of grant and prize award funding to dozens of student, postdoc, and faculty led ventures.
- In the process of creating a school of innovation and entrepreneurship with a transformational gift.





# Celebrating UD's leadership in study abroad



1 in 3 students study abroad each year; UD named a Top Producer of Fulbright Scholars (2024)



# Expanding our World Scholars program

Three new first-year sites added



American College of Greece



University of Auckland, New Zealand



Newcastle University, England

# Outstanding students earn prestigious recognition





# Enhancing Student Life and Athletics



# Creating a more supportive student experience



Center for Intercultural  
Engagement



Student Wellbeing Center



President's Student Advisory  
Council



# Launching our esports program



# Supporting Blue Hen student-athletes



# Student-athletes succeed in competition & in class



- 22 straight semesters of a 3.0 GPA or higher, including highest ever in fall 2024 with 3.4 GPA
- 94.5% graduation rate for student-athletes in the class of 2024
- 95% of student-athletes employed or pursuing further education from the Class of 2023
- Launched the BLUE program
- 1 national championship (field hockey 2016)
- 29 team conference championships (regular season and conference tournament)
- 47 individual conference titles (swimming & diving, cross country/track & field)



# Stepping up to CUSA and FBS

Also playing UConn,  
Buffalo, JMU, Colorado,  
Wake Forest,  
Vanderbilt, Indiana, Pitt,  
Maryland!







## Expanding Academic Excellence

# Investing in our outstanding faculty



**576**

Faculty hired  
and retained  
since 2016

**44%**

Current faculty  
hired and  
retained since  
2016



**#1**

Rank among  
research  
universities in  
partner-hiring  
practices

# Biden School of Public Policy & Administration



**2017** — Launch of the Biden Institute

**2018** — Renamed the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration

**2021** — Biden School is made an independent academic unit; initial launch of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Ithaca Initiative

**2025** — The school's academic ranking has moved 18 spots, from #45 in 2016 to #27 in 2025, in the overall Public Affairs category for graduate schools in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings

**Since 2016** — Doubled research and public service expenditures; raised \$55M for programs and Biden Hall; 3 faculty named to the prestigious National Academy of Public Administration





# College of Agriculture & Natural Resources



Vet School entrance success 2x the national average



\$38M Worrlow Hall renovation



Leading the battle on avian influenza



25% growth in undergraduate enrollment



UDairy Creamery — Over 500 students learn by doing





# College of Arts & Sciences



Biological Sciences has improved 50 spots in their *U.S. News* rankings of graduate programs, as have a majority of CAS departments.

- Numerous departments have increased their percentile ranks in research and scholarly productivity, including:
  - Political Science & International Relations (up 60)
  - Anthropology (up 29)
  - Women's & Gender Studies (up 19)
  - Theater & Dance (up 19)
  - Sociology & Criminal Justice (up 16)
- Research expenditures have increased by 50%, leveraging new facilities such as Center for Biomedical and Brain Imaging and development of the Tower and Ammon Pinizzotto at STAR Campus.
- CAS now retaining students from first to second year at 91.7%.

# College of Earth, Ocean & Environment

- Enrollment up 14% - Research Expenditures up 25%
- Started new professional M.S. programs in Environmental Science and Management
- Launched interdisciplinary Sustainability Graduate Certificate (with COE, CAS, CANR)
- Launched UD's Climate Change Science and Policy Hub
- Obtained several federal earmarks for workforce development in: Offshore wind, Blue Economy, Oyster Aquaculture
- Launched Delaware Sea Grant Oyster Hatchery
- Conducted research projects in all oceans and on all continents, including Antarctica

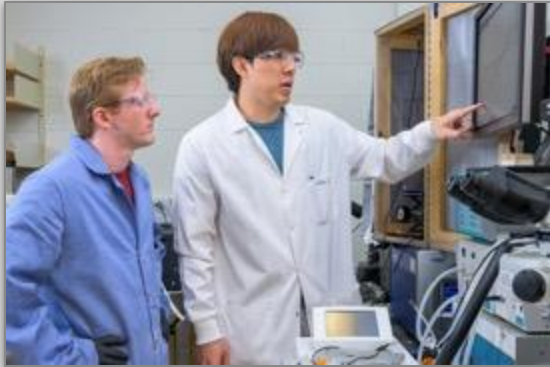


# College of Education & Human Development

- **Consistent Top-tier Rankings**  
Graduate and online education programs ranked in top 10–13% nationally, top 6% online
- **Significant Increases in Federal Research Funding**  
Secured over \$27M in 2024 for research in early childhood, special and STEM education
- **Strengthened Teacher and School Leader Pipelines**  
Launched new associate degree, Teachers of Tomorrow and Teacher Residency programs to create accessible pathways to teaching opportunities
- **Impactful Community Engagement**  
Made statewide impact through key centers for education, outreach and research, including Children's Campus, CDS, DIEEC and others
- **Enhanced Scholarly Leadership and Curriculum**  
Hired 37 faculty members since 2019, adding leadership and instruction in education and social policy, evaluation and measurement, human development and family sciences, school psychology and special education
- **Developed new Masters in Social Work Program**  
Graduate program prepares students to address critical community social problems and well-being challenges.



# College of Engineering

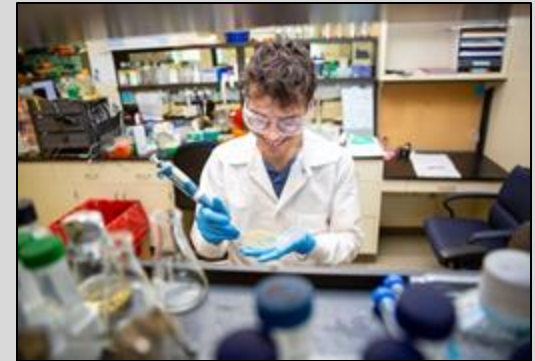


- Increased faculty body from 142 to 182 (up 28%).
- Doubled research expenditures to more than \$126M, including multiple interdisciplinary centers on clean hydrogen, engineering-driven health, bio-materials, plastics, composites, sustainability, and resilience.
- Significantly raised national profile, with *U.S. News* rankings moving from #56 to #37 (up 19 spots).
- Established new academic programs in AI, robotics, cybersecurity, and quantum science.
- Established a dual-degree pathway with Delaware State University.
- Opened the COE Living Learning Community, improved first-to-second-year retention to 92.7% , increased graduate student enrollment by 21%.
- Joined the World Scholars Program at Newcastle University.



# College of Health Sciences

- **Increased Services to the Community & New Graduate Programing (2016)** — Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and Speech-Language Pathology Program (part of the newly formed Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders)
- **Innovative Spaces & New Graduate Program (2018)** — The Tower at STAR opened, expanding lab, clinic, and academic space; Epidemiology program launched (earning department status in 2025)
- **Rapid, Holistic, Collaborative Response to COVID-19 (2020)** — CHS and UD HR partner on public COVID vaccine clinics; CHS nurses collaborate with local hospitals during the pandemic
- **Physical Therapy back at #1, Medical and Molecular Diagnostics (in its 75th year) has grown undergraduate enrollment by 50%, Kinesiology doctoral program ranked #7; Nursing jumped 38 spots to #74; Health Behavior & Nutrition Sciences established two new doctoral programs**



# Lerner College of Business & Economics

- Graduates' placement is 95%, with \$70K starting salary
- Lerner programs are highly ranked
  - #20 Online MBA (*U.S. News*)
  - #52 Best Undergraduate Business Schools (*Poets & Quants*)
  - #27 Top 50 Best Undergrad Programs for Entrepreneurs (*Princeton Review*)
- Historic \$71.5M Siegfried gift to fund new Siegfried Hall
- Opening of Fintech Innovation Hub fosters growth and collaboration of Fintech research and programs
- SWUFE-UD graduated its first cohort (~170 students) in 2024



# Honors College

- Became a college in 2020
- Quadrupled applications
- 4-year graduation rate reaches 88%
- Created the Office of National Fellowships and became a Fulbright Top Producer
- Ranked #21 in the nation





# Graduate College



Since the creation of the Graduate College in 2019...

- Seven interdisciplinary graduate programs are thriving in the Graduate College with over 150 students enrolled
- UD has been awarded multiple graduate training grants with the support of the Graduate College
- UD prepares our students for successful careers with multiple professional development opportunities
- Over 100 faculty have participated in our research mentor training programs
- UD has helped create a stronger, more resilient graduate community
- Applications to our graduate programs have grown by nearly 60% in five years
- Our programs have steadily climbed in the rankings, on average 3 positions per ranked program over the last 5 years.

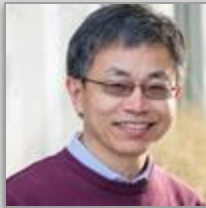


# Recognizing the excellence of UD faculty

## National Academy of Education



## National Academy of Engineering



## National Council on the Humanities



## National Academy of Public Administration



## National Academy of Inventors



## National Academy of Sciences



# Cochran Scholars advance inclusive excellence



Tiffany Gill



Pascha Bueno-Hansen



Tanisha Ford



Dominique Baker



Monica Coleman



Kofi Britwum



Derrick Spires



Katherine Poggensee  
(starting fall 2025)





# Recognizing UD's best with the Alison Award

2016



2017



2018



2019



2020



2021



2022



2023



2024



2025



# Serving the needs of our state and nation



**Dennis Assanis**

President's Council of  
Advisors on Science &  
Technology



**Mike Bowman**

White House  
Advisory Committee  
for Trade Policy and  
Negotiations



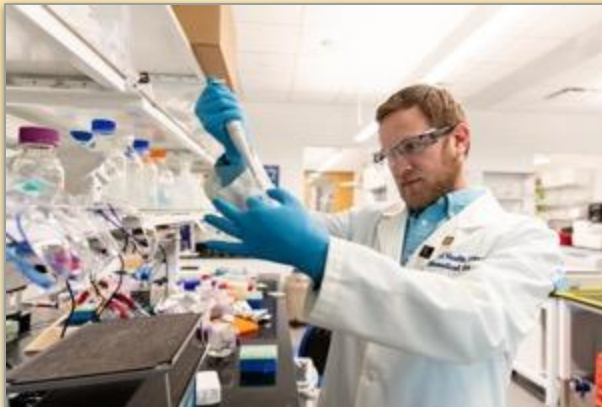
**Rita Landgraf**

Former Del.  
Secretary of Health  
and Social Services



**Cathy McLaughlin**

Chair, AmeriCorps Board of  
Directors



## Advancing Research Impact



# Research centers and institutes created since 2016

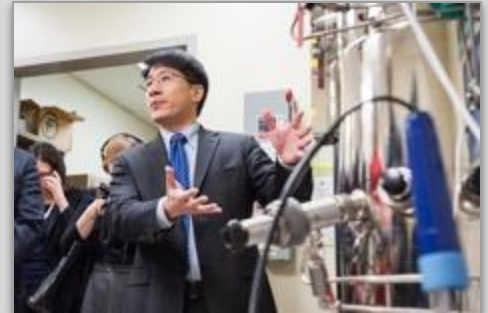


CENTER FOR AUTONOMOUS AND ROBOTIC SYSTEMS (CARS)

INSTITUTE FOR ENGINEERING DRIVEN HEALTH



# National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals (NIIMBL)



# NIIMBL's impact extends far beyond campus

The logo for the National Institute of Innovation in Manufacturing & Biotechnology (NIIMBL). It features the letters "NIIMBL" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A stylized DNA double helix is integrated into the letter "I", with one strand in blue and the other in orange.

Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker

8 years  
200+ organizations  
160+ innovation projects  
\$10m from Gates Fdn for global health  
Viewed as a National Security asset



NIST





# UD research tackles world's toughest challenges



**\$465.7M**

**Total research expenditures**

**FY 2024**

*(+164% over FY 2016)*

**#28**

*among public institutions*

*Up from #59*

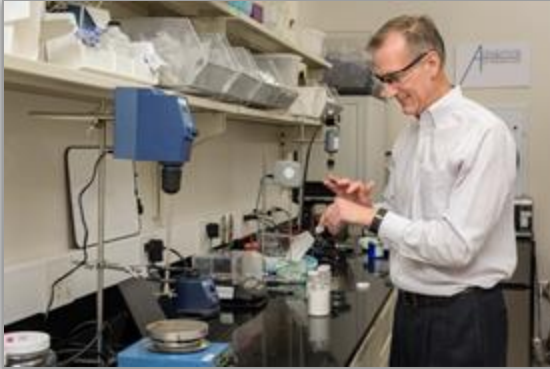
**#45**

*in non-medical school R&D*

*Up from #84*

*Higher Education Research and Development survey*

# Strengthening Delaware's innovation ecosystem



**2016** — DTP@STAR

**2017** — Delaware Innovation Space Inc.

**2023** — Life sciences facility at DTP



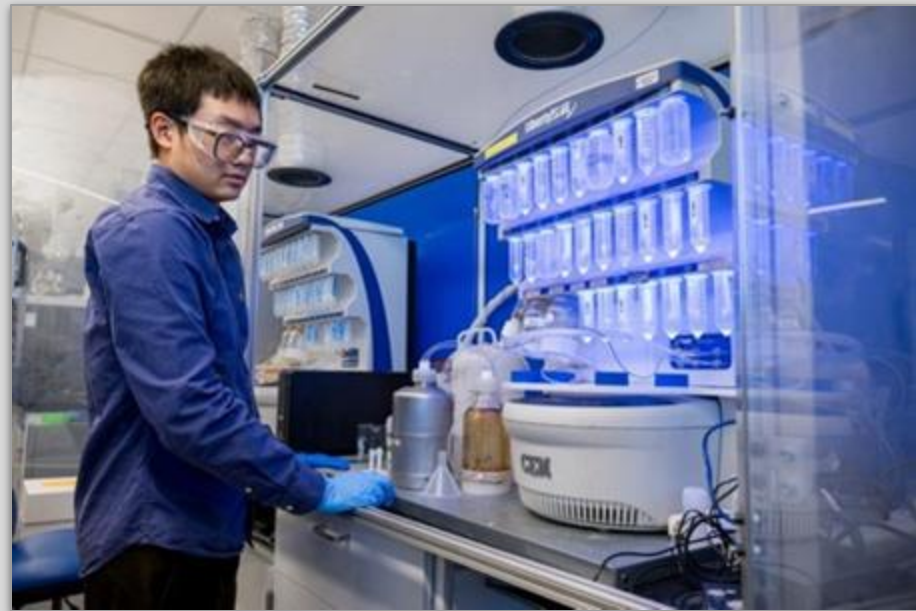
**2024** — FinTech Innovation Hub

# Life Sciences





# Advanced Materials



# Clean Energy



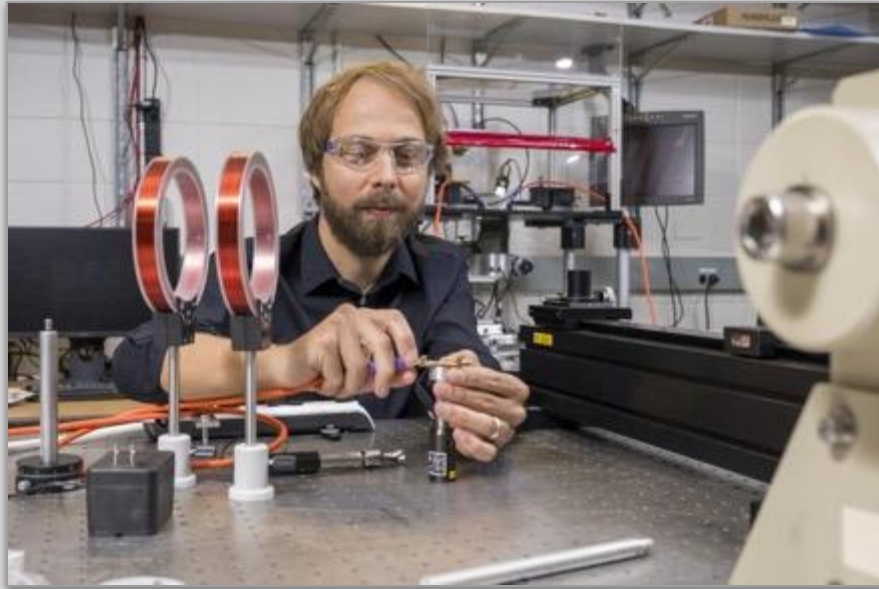


# Environmental Sciences and Sustainability

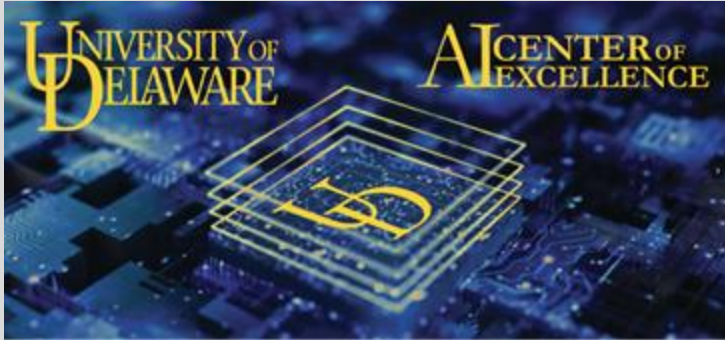




# Data Sciences



# Human-Centered AI



## CURRENT PROJECTS

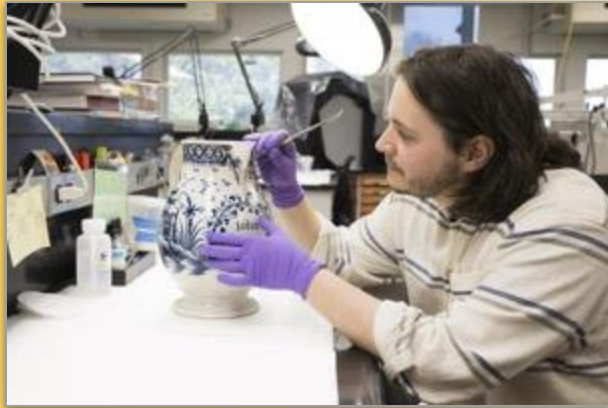
- Coastal Science — Urban and coastal flood modeling and sub-model for settling for settling velocities of cohesive sediment
- Social Science — Multi-Model Topic Models of Foreign Policy Speech Texts and Photographs
- FinTech — Enhancing financial wellness and health
- UD Athletics — Machine Learning to augment baseball pitcher performance



# Humanities and Social Sciences







# Strengthening the Arts and Humanities

# Elevating the School of Music



# Choral Scholars gain prominence on a global stage

Delaware Chorale  
Scholars **ranked #1**  
**in the world** by  
INTERKULTUR  
following 2024  
World Choir Games  
stellar performance

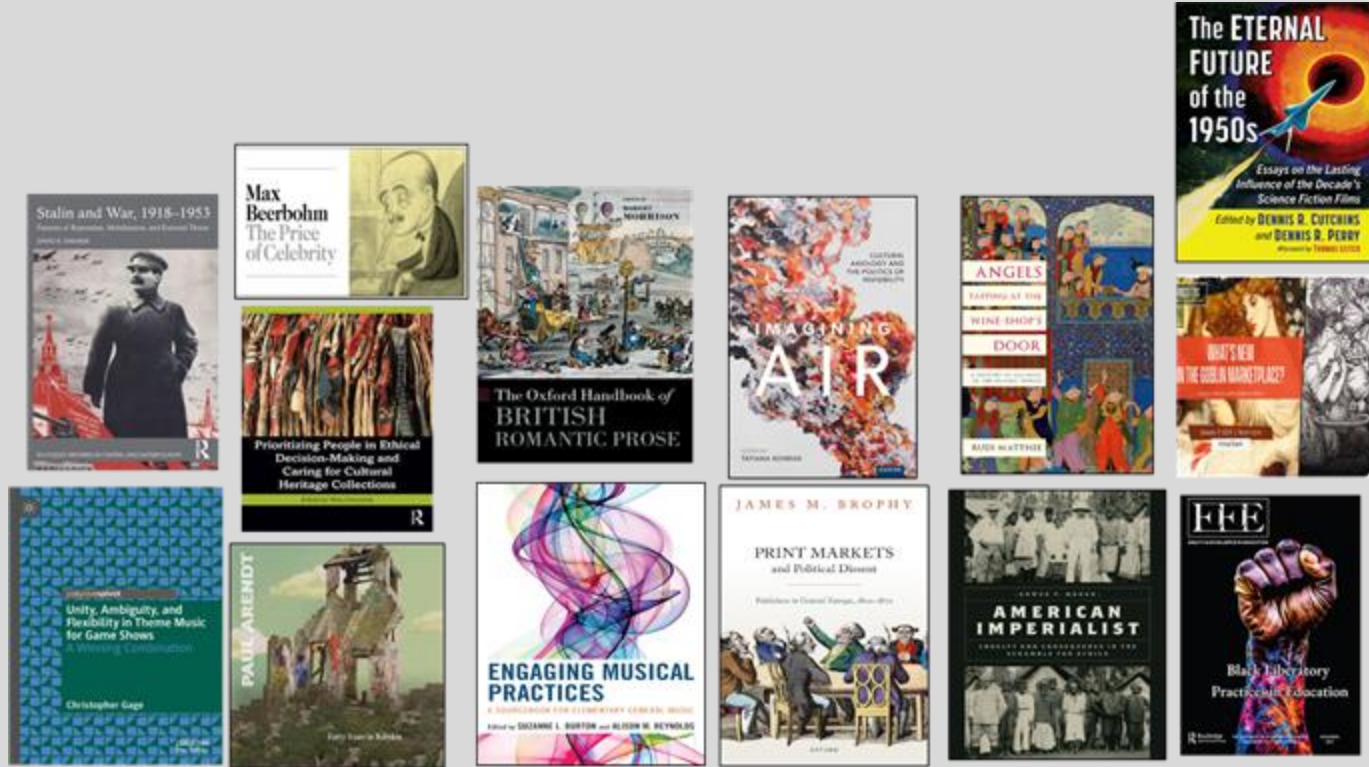




# UD continues to lead the Art Conservation world



# Supporting faculty scholarship in a range of topics



# Supporting events and programs with F&A





# Promoting a Community Engaged University



- Created the Community Engagement Initiative in 2016
- Launched:
  - Partnership for Healthy Communities
  - Partnership for Public Education
  - Partnership for Arts and Cultures
  - Wilmington Partnership



# Evolving Our Campus

# STAR Campus: An emerging community



2016



# STAR Campus: An emerging community



**Now**

# The Tower at STAR



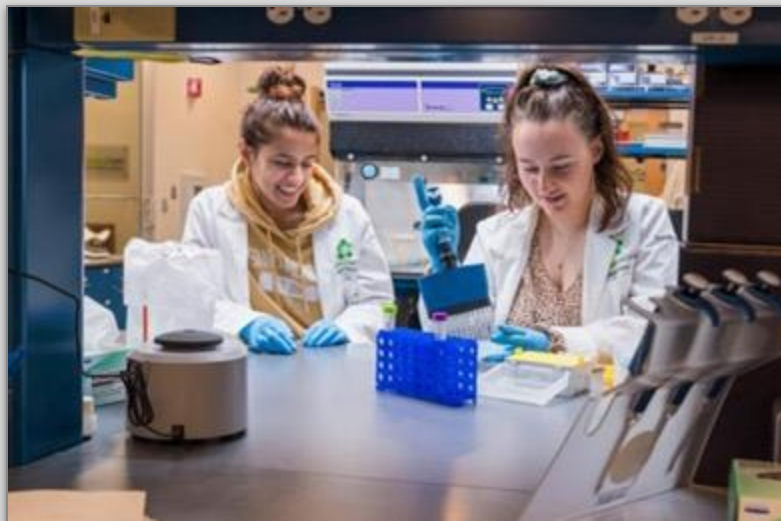


# Ammon Pinizzotto Biopharmaceutical Innovation Center





# Chemours Discovery Hub



# FinTech Innovation Hub



# And coming soon ...



Buccini Pollin residential community



Securing American Biomanufacturing Research & Education (SABRE) Center



# Bringing new things to life around The Green



# Bringing new life to storied buildings







# Inspiring Record-Breaking Philanthropy



# Launching the historic *Delaware First* campaign



# Generous Blue Hens spark new philanthropic push



# Philanthropy fuels UD's vision for the future





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# Leading Calmly & Compassionately Through Crisis

# Fostering a culture of civility and respect





# Protecting the flock, leading UD students to success



# Prioritizing a safe, discrimination-free campus



- Working closely with leaders of religious and cultural groups on and off campus
- Ensuring safe and peaceful campus events
- Developing relevant programming and educational opportunities
- Upholding the principle and practice of free speech for all
- Advancing civil discourse and respectful dialogue

# Upholding academic freedom and free speech

## the review

### Guest Editorial: A great university upholds great principles

A few weeks ago, legendary First Amendment attorney Floyd Abrams spoke to a packed Gore Recital Hall about the truly unique nature of American free speech. He cited many relevant examples from today's headlines: the presidential campaigns, political protests, journalism, social media and more. However divisive or outrageous some speech might be, Abrams said, America is "exceptional" for its willingness to pay a steep price — namely, the potential to be deeply offended — to maintain free speech.

At the University of Delaware, we embrace this same principle of free speech. A great university is an open marketplace of ideas, where students can — and should — encounter the often-conflicting opinions and perspectives of peers, professors and diverse thinkers from all ages and cultures. This is how we learn, grow and gain a clear understanding of the world and our place in it.

This is Free Speech Week, an annual celebration of this principle promoted by The Media Institute, a nonprofit research foundation. It follows last month's Banned Books Week, which was organized by the



University President Dennis Assanis

Oct. 18, 2016

## the review

### Opinion: Upholding the principle — and practice — of free speech at UD

Free speech is a bedrock principle of democracy, essential to the ongoing public conversation that drives our nation's system of self-governance. It gives us all the opportunity to express our ideas, question our leaders and advocate for the changes we would like to see in the world.

Here at the University of Delaware, each has the responsibility to foster an atmosphere that promotes the free exchange of ideas and opinions. Everyone has the right to benefit from this atmosphere. And this requires us to be willing and able to grapple with facts and ideas with which we disagree, that challenge our worldview or that make us uncomfortable, or even at times angry.

The start of a new academic year is an opportune time to reaffirm our commitment to free speech, and October gives us two weeks that highlight and celebrate this important topic. Banned Books Week is Oct. 1-7, when we can promote the importance of reading and stand up to attempts at censorship. And Oct. 16-22 is Free Speech Week to raise awareness of the critical value of free speech and a free press in our democracy.

So, if the principle of free speech is so important, why do we need high profile annual events to remind and encourage us? Frankly, it is because the practice of free speech, especially when it conflicts with or challenges our other core values, can be extraordinarily difficult.

Throughout our University's history, multiple scenarios that present such challenge — from controversial speakers to unwanted community groups staging



Stand Up for Science, March 2025

Oct. 4, 2023





## Building on Our Strengths

# Rankings continue to recognize UD strengths



**#1**

**Physical Therapy  
Program**

*U.S. News & World  
Report  
2025*

**#27**

Ranking for  
undergraduate  
entrepreneurship  
program in U.S.  
*Princeton Review  
2025*

**24**

**Graduate  
programs ranked  
in top 100**

*U.S. News & World  
Report  
2025*

**UD ranked  
among nation's  
Best Colleges for  
Future Leaders**

*TIME Magazine  
2024*

**#26**

**Ranking among  
Top Colleges  
in the U.S.**

*Wall Street Journal  
2025*

**Named among  
top 1.6% of  
universities  
worldwide**

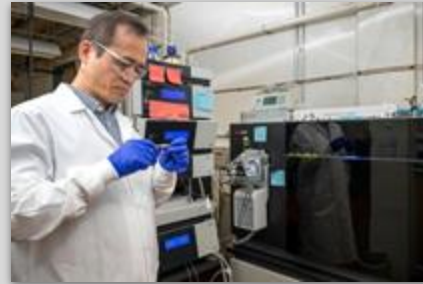
*Center for World  
University Rankings  
2024*

# Outstanding Programs





# Inspiring Places



# Dedicated People



# Thanks to the Faculty Senate



2015-16



2016-17



2017-18



2018-19



2019-20



2020-21



2021-22



2022-23

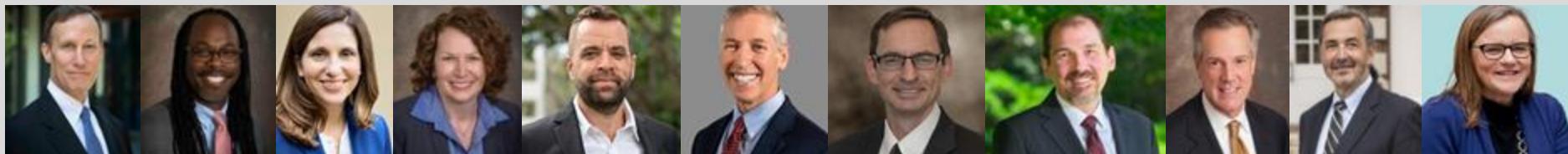


2023-24



2024-25





# Thanks to our state and federal leadership





# Thanks to the Board of Trustees





# Thanks to Eleni



# What's next for Dennis and Eleni?



# General Faculty Meeting

President Dennis Assanis

May 14, 2025

