

Arts and Sciences Council
16 October 2008
139 Social Sciences
Chair; Prof. Suzanne Shanahan

At 3:36 p.m. Prof. Shanahan convened the Council, briskly welcomed all those in attendance, and, hearing no dissent, requested that the September minutes be read into the record as distributed.

She then invited Dr. Eric Mlyn (Director of DukeEngage) to address the Council. He was pleased to report that participation in DukeEngage during the preceding summer had been both varied and successful. In particular he was pleased to report on the visit of students to China. Working outside Peking in a school for children of migrant workers had enabled a good many Duke students to immerse themselves in DukeEngage. This program in China had been so successful that it would be repeated in the summer of 2009. Dr. Mlyn then proceeded to project some ocular evidence of that success on room 139's screen, adding that if one cared to do so, one could find numerous similar reports on the DukeEngage website.

Altogether some three hundred and sixty students had participated in DukeEngage—the largest program being active in the Durham area, where thirty-two students were involved. By design, he added, students in the Durham area would continue to be the largest group. In fact, approximately one quarter of the 2008 DukeEngage students would remain in the U.S. Three-quarters of the total who had enrolled this year had been students participating in group projects, and one quarter had worked on individual projects.

One of the commitments that had been made was that DukeEngage would be something other than a program operative in the summer, and the over-all goal was to have about a hundred students involved. The full nature and breadth of the program would be clarified readily for anyone who cared to look at the program's website.

Moreover, “improved efforts” were to be made to prepare students for the projects in which they would be involved, the better to enable them to have richer experiences. And more activities would be planned for the period after students returned to Duke.

As one might hope, those in charge “had done some learning,” and consequently there would be some “changing of the model” for the summer of 2009. In particular, students would be required to stay at Duke from the fourth to the sixth of May 2009 (after finals and before commencement) so as to have a “two and a half day immersive preparation for DukeEngage.” This would better prepare students for whatever experience they were embarking on.

Also on the current agenda was an effort to reach out to the “Greek community” at Duke. About thirty-three percent of the students participating in the 2008 program were members of a sorority or fraternity (mainly the former). And it was hoped that percentage could be raised. Reaching out specifically to athletes was another item on the agenda. At present only about four percent of the participating students were athletes. Timing, of course, was a major problem for athletes, since DukeEngage involved an “eight-week immersive program.” Clearly shorter projects were needed in order to accommodate athletes. Furthermore, a \$200,000 State Department grant was going to help make this possible.

Dr. Mlyn was glad to observe also that DukeEngage already had had fine collaboration in some quarters (perhaps most notably with Dean Margaret Riley), but there was a need to have more Duke faculty members onboard. From the beginning, about two years ago, one of the major concerns of DukeEngage had been involvement of Duke faculty members. Those who had been involved—e.g., Prof. Shanahan herself, who had traveled with students to Ireland in the summer of ‘08—thought the program overwhelmingly successful. Participation was a very large commitment for a faculty member, however, not merely because it extended for eight weeks but also because a significant period of preparation with e-mails,

phone calls, and what-have-you were involved. The compensation policy for participating faculty and staff would have to be revisited, and would include approaches made to third-party, non-profit organizations

Nevertheless, one measure of the over-all appeal of the program might be suggested by the fact that the program managers for 2008 had been able to accept only seven of the twenty-two proposals that had been submitted by Duke faculty and staff.

At this point Dean of Academic Affairs Lee Baker suggested that it might be possible and efficient to create “a team of rotating faculty” members, perhaps involving participants every other year. Dr. Mlyn: That had not been looked into yet.

In response to a question from Prof. Leslie Digby (Evolutionary Anatomy), it was explained that some students had already approached faculty members and submitted “piloting project” proposals. She thought such proposals had the potential of becoming serious and rewarding Independent Studies. Dr. Mlyn: We would love to have such a “connect” both before and after the DukeEngage experience.

Dean Riley (Study Abroad) thought it would be good if participants could be prepared somehow for (or perhaps even *by*) Study Abroad, thus helping to build a more “wholistic program.” Dr. Mlyn considered that “an ideal model.”

Dean Baker noted further that he and Dr. Mlyn had already been discussing the value to a student of constructing a “front end” for a proposal, perhaps aligning Focus with DukeEngage.

Prof. Ruth Day (Psychology) raised the question of whether or not any formal mechanisms existed for evaluating the success of DukeEngage. The reply was affirmative, but came with a caveat. Though evaluations could be very helpful before, during, and after participation, and such evaluations had indeed been requested, the number of responses had been disappointing low. Obviously Duke needed to work on the problem.

Moving on to the next slated subject, Prof. Shanahan turned to Vice Provost Judith Ruderman, inviting her to offer any remarks she might have insofar as she had served as the “point person” in the matter of Duke’s accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Vice Provost Ruderman began by saying that she realized many of those in the room that afternoon were likely to feel that the periodic SACS ritual was a bothersome burden. She wanted to go on record, however, as saying that it also had a “yield” for Duke, and she hoped that everyone present could find some value in the enterprise. As the University’s liaison between Duke and an accrediting agency chosen by SACS, she had now accepted twice the basic fact that “Every ten years we get reaffirmed” (which sounded, she realized, a little spiritual). The process this year, however, had proved to be much harder than last time, probably because of what one might term “a push on the federal level.” Nevertheless, every time our accreditation was investigated and reaffirmed, we learned something about ourselves. And it was a fact that we really were in need of being accountable. Some parts of the process were onerous, to be sure, but the fact was that assessment would not be going away, and she personally had come to see that it was a good thing for teaching and for Duke. Only by serious assessment could we discover and demonstrate our worth.

Finally, all the massive reporting having been achieved, she wished to give warm thanks to everyone who had helped in some way to make the report. The whole investigation process had taken a year and a half, but now, finally, it had been made manifest in over five hundred pages. Sometime in November we might expect to hear how Duke University had fared this time around.

Prof. Ron Grunwald (Biology) had noted and now mentioned that for any one section or part of the business, reviewers might come back for “peer review.”

Vice Provost Ruderman: It was a fact of life that if we were found to be deficient somewhere, SACS would not wait for another ten years to tell us. They could come back to us in two years or so to check up on any weakness.

Senior Associate Dean Lee Willard underscored the potential value of the assessment process for departments. All departments were in the process of developing mechanisms targeting their own particular focus or area of interest. It was to be hoped that this process would be a benefit rather than a burden, and that it could help align departmental emphases with student learning.

Dean Riley: Was this processing mainly about undergraduates? Answer: No, indeed. Certain parts of the review dealt with all sectors of the University. It might be said, nevertheless, that the reviewers did seem to be most interested in undergraduates.

Prof. Tina Campt (Women's Studies) was thinking about how to convey to the faculty the distinction between assessment and compliance. An important purpose of the whole process was to enable us to demonstrate something to ourselves and to all of our Duke colleagues as well as to the public.

In answer to another question Vice Provost Ruderman observed again that the reviewers might indeed come back to review certain things. Whatever that might mean, it was worth realizing and remembering that all of the reviewers who reviewed us were (and would be) volunteer faculty members somewhere. In any case, our goal was not really compliance but attaining and retaining a measure of quality.

Associate Dean Ingeborg Walther, recalling a workshop she had attended in times past, reiterated the good advice that one should guard against resenting either the reviewers or the reviewing. Outside reviewers could sometimes come forth with something useful "both for you and your program." In fact, if at some level we were not participating in reviewing for ourselves, we were on the wrong track.

Another speaker noted that there sometimes was a feeling that "We are answering to *them*." Literally true or not, the more important fact was that we must demonstrate to ourselves and anyone else whatever it is that we are doing. "We really are holding ourselves to a standard of quality."

Prof. Day observed that the Arts and Sciences Council's own Curriculum Committee had accepted questioning from SACS and developed accordingly.

Prof. Shanahan agreed that revisiting sometimes could be helpful—in fact point the way to make something better. Whatever one's thoughts on the matter of assessment might be, however, the review was a huge undertaking for the University, a genuine example of “phenomenal heavy lifting.” All things being considered, “we certainly need and want to thank all of those here at Duke who have done the work required by SACS.”

Prof. Shanahan then turned to Prof. Mary T. (Tolly) Boatwright (Classical Studies), who had been slated to comment this afternoon on one of Duke's current quality-enhancement plans.

Prof. Boatwright observed first that she was only fifty percent of the plan's leadership, her partner, Prof. Prasad Kasibhatla (Nicholas School of the Environment), being in India at the moment. It was she, then, who would be serving as the spokesperson for “Global Duke: Enhancing Students' Capacity for World Citizenship.” At present, to tell the truth, there was still some pondering to be done about the segment of the title preceding the colon. Whether it would be changed or not, however, the idea was to stay very much aware of not focusing on Study Abroad but of thinking about the interdependence of our own country with the world at large. At the moment, though she might have preferred to have a Roman soldier or two adorning her very plain picture show, the latter would suffice to help convey the most important points of her presentation.

To be reasonably brief, the overall goal of Global Duke was to achieve four major outcomes, namely:

1. The development in students of an awareness of significant contemporary and historical issues and their global scope, including appreciation for the history, values, and priorities of individuals and groups in other regions and cultures; also, the development in students of awareness of factors that influence these perspectives.

2. The development in students of a view of themselves as local, national, and world citizens, with a corresponding empathy for people from different backgrounds.

3. The development of bonds within the student body through shared experiences in these domains.

4. The development in students of an awareness of significant contemporary and historical issues.

The chief means to achieve these four goals consisted of three “prongs,” namely a Global Semester Abroad, a Winter Forum, and a Global Advising Program. The first two of these would have specific learning objectives, and the third would be geared to facilitate the objectives of the first two—as well, of course, as the broader objectives of Duke’s Quality Enhancement Plan.

The Winter Forum was designed as a campus-based means of achieving goals in learning, and its away-from-home counterpart would be the Global Semester Abroad. At the moment, unfortunately, in spite of Duke’s manifold resources, there was nothing one could call a campus base to assure the systematic provision and sharing of curricular and co-curricular means to further the development of Duke’s undergraduates as “global citizens.” In any case, the Winter Forum (structured as a conference or retreat) would provide a two-and-a-half-day “intellectual experience” that “foregrounded a major global subject” and enabled exploration of it by means of “interdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives.” This was to be achieved in the period immediately before the beginning of the Spring semester in January of 2010.

Aided by a projector and screen, Prof. Boatwright proceeded to explain that the operation of the Winter Forum would be managed by an ongoing collaboration of the Dean of Undergraduate Education, an Advisory Committee, and such members as were responsible at the time for the intellectual content and structure of the forum. Furthermore, she added, “vertical integration” (i.e., participation by faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and staff) would be

encouraged. Meanwhile, five major objectives of the Global Advising Program had been targeted as Knowledge, Planning, Integration, Preparation, and Outreach to the entire University.

At present, she reiterated, there was no centralized site where faculty, students, and advisors might get together or obtain information. Perhaps the Global Advising Program within Duke's Advising Center (currently under the direction of Dean Michele Rasmussen) might be a possibility to consider.

In answer to a question, Prof. Boatwright responded that the applications for the Quality Enhancement Plan should be submitted by early February, 2009.

To a question posed by Prof. Grunwald, Prof. Boatwright said that the program was aimed primarily at sophomores. All told, however, as many as four hundred Duke students might be involved.

Vice Provost Ruderman noted that four hundred was a very ambitious number, and it would be very difficult now to alter the calendar.

A representative from History requested a few words explaining the differences between the GSA (Global Semester Abroad) and Study Abroad. Assistant Dean Michele Rasmussen explained that Study Abroad did not depend on a particular theme that was to be pursued in various countries.

Dean Riley: And Study Abroad did not necessarily involve "cultural immersion."

In response to a query, Dean Baker said he thought it unlikely that a half-credit might be involved.

Prof. Grunwald wondered whether a simple unifying subject was to be targeted—perhaps something like "Global Food." Reponse: No theme or themes had been determined yet. In any case, any program would have to be rigorous in order to merit credit.

Prof. David Malone (Education) inquired whether the program involved was the sort of study for which funding already existed. Prof. Boatwright: "No, but my understanding is that we have been told that we should not worry about the

money.”

Vice Provost Ruderman, however, interjected that “More recent news is that we should worry.” She cautioned that the planners would have to be very careful, especially given the current financial climate, concerning management of the matter.

Speaking of money to be raised for students, Prof. Shanahan noted that the Executive Committee of the Arts and Sciences Council had been asked to review a proposal and consider the establishing of an Arts and Sciences Faculty Scholarship fund. Members of the Council should be thinking about whether they wished to contribute to such a fund.

Prof. Grunwald observed that the sort of scholarship now being proposed should not be confused with scholarly awards; the scholarship contemplated was to be a response to need.

The scholarship proposal having been introduced and the responses to it being few (at least for the moment, the time being late), and all agenda items having been addressed, Prof. Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dale B. J. Randall
Executive Secretary