

Duke University

Arts & Sciences Council: Meeting #1

Minutes (September 10, 2009)

Introductions & Recognitions

Council Chair Ruth Day called the meeting to order and recognized various people.

Executive Secretary

- Dale Randall: thanks for serving several years
- Alan Biermann: welcome new Executive Secretary

Staff Assistant

- Kathy Peterson: thanks for serving several years (plaque presented)
- Donna Hoover: welcome new Staff Assistant

Executive Committee of A&S Council (ECASC)

Natural Sciences

- Leslie Digby (Evolutionary Anthropology)
- Ron Grunwald (Biology)

Social Sciences

- David Malone (Education)
- (additional member TBA)

Humanities

- Tyler Walters (Dance)
- (additional member TBA)

Faculty Representatives (31 members total)

Natural Sciences (9 members)

Social Sciences (9 members)

Humanities (13 members)

As the newly-elected Chair, Professor Day introduced herself (cognitive scientist, with research on comprehension, memory, and problem solving).

Renewal

Professor Day reviewed and renewed the charge for ECASC, the Council, department representatives, and committees.

ECASC Charge

ECASC receives and generates information relevant to Arts & Sciences, discusses significant issues, and acts on them. It sets the agenda for the Council, oversees standing and ad hoc committees, and represents the Council to the administration and others.

Council Overview

- Elected by the Arts & Sciences Faculty
- Serves as the primary institution for A&S faculty governance

Advises the Dean of A&S about issues such as:

- A&S priorities
- Faculty development
- Faculty research, teaching, & administration
- Organization of Depts. & other faculty units
- Interaction: Grad-Undergrad programs (e.g., TAs, budgets, teacher training)
- Other faculty A&S concerns

Advises the Dean of Trinity College

- Determine & implement broad objectives of undergraduate education
- Consider all matters affecting academic & residential environments of students
- Make recommendations
- Adopt regulations

Department Representatives

The faculty representative from each Department attends monthly meetings (and notifies the alternate to attend as needed). Basic duties are to:

- 1) Report Council work to the Department (e.g., in faculty meetings or by email)
- 2) Bring Department concerns to the Council
- 3) Vote on proposals about A&S policy and procedures

Committees

There are currently eight Committees. They provide reports of their work (yearly and as needed). Committees take various actions, which can stay within the Committee, be sent to ECASC, or sent by ECASC to the Council for informational purposes or a vote.

Committee Structure

Usual Structure

Faculty Members

- Chair from A&S at large
- 1-2 from Natural Sciences
- 1-2 from Social Sciences
- 1-2 from Humanities

Ex-Officio

- 1 Dean's representative
- 1 undergrad (nominated by DSG)
- 1 ECASC (liaison)

Modification of Committee Structure

Modification as needed. For example, for the Study Abroad Committee, add a faculty member from a foreign language Department and Pratt; add Director of Study Abroad and representative from the Vice President for International Affairs.

Deans

Deans often have long-term service with specific committees. They are ex-officio, have full voice, and provide administrative support. The Committee Chair and Dean often work together closely.

Student Representatives

Nominations can come from the Committee Chair, Committee Dean, and/or Duke Student Government (DSG). Students are ex-officio, have full voice, and serve as liaison to DSG. ECASC is currently developing a Student Guide to service on A&S Committees. This year's main liaison with DSG is Cynthia Chen, VP for Academic Affairs.

Committee Reviews

ECASC is currently reviewing all Committees, to determine whether they are working well and whether any should be added, disbanded, revived, or modified. Reviews include Committee membership, adequacy of current charge, basic work, issues this year, challenges and concerns, and whether any ECASC assistance would be helpful.

Sample Issue: Economic Climate

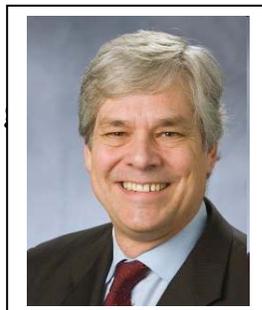
An important issue this year is the impact of the current economic climate on faculty. There have been many problems between faculty and administrators at other institutions around this issue. Although the economic situation at Duke is difficult, the current faculty-administration situation is better than at many other institutions. We are currently working with Deans George McLendon and Lee Baker to reach cooperative solutions. Nevertheless, the faculty continue to be concerned about a wide range of issues, such as faculty and student research support.

Sample Issue: Faculty Governance

Most undergraduate academic programs at Duke are in Trinity College plus Pratt (engineering). Meanwhile, additional coursework is being offered through professional schools including Sanford (public policy), Nicholas (environment), Fuqua (business), Divinity, and the Medical Center. How should the undergraduate curriculum be coordinated across these units?

Priorities Poll

Who sets the agenda for addressing faculty issues? Who sets priorities for the issues selected? ECASC has the responsibility and authority to do so. Although this practice will continue, this year we want more active faculty input. Therefore we will distribute a "Priorities Poll" to faculty representatives. In consultation with their Departments, they will rate the priority of various topics and make additional suggestions.



Dean's Address

George L. McLendon
Dean of Arts & Sciences

The text of Dean McLendon's Annual Address to the Council is posted on the Council website. Below is a list of main topics, followed by Q&A with Council members.

Main Topics

- Recent accomplishments (faculty hiring, undergraduate research experience, modified leave policy, new & renovated facilities, financial aid changes, re-accreditation)
- Administration changes (coordination across units)
- Current economic challenge (not as bad here as at other universities, must remove \$12 million from core budget, establish faculty Budget & Priorities Committee, hire at slower pace, etc.)
- Re-examine role of non-regular rank faculty
- Overall – great university with short-term budgetary challenges

Q&A

Micaela Janan (Classical Studies)

Q: When you are speaking of the possibility of reviewing nonregular faculty and making decisions about moving some to regular rank and others might be dealt with otherwise, did you include professors of the practice?

A: No, professors of the practice are regular rank. Lecturers are regular rank. Nonregular ranks usually carry the title of "visiting." "Instructor" is a title we give to a person we anticipate being here on a short term basis.

As an example, in Spanish, we do not have enough faculty to cover all of our needs so we find native speakers who are purported to be excellent instructors. Many of them are excellent. In such cases, everyone is better served when you have experience with someone who the students love and they love the students, to move them into a lecturer position or something like that.

Q: Is it possible for professors of the practice to be awarded tenure?

A: No, but professors of the practice may effectively have tenure. I know of no case where an associate professor of the practice or a full professor of the practice did not receive a renewal of his/her contract.

Bill Donahue (German)

Q: Could you say something about the 12 to 13 million dollar cuts and what we are going to do?

A: You can get some savings by slowing down but that is not enough. About 5 percent of the faculty turn over in a given year. That is about 30 positions. We are not going to hire nobody. So if we get back 15 of those positions, we might save 1.5 million dollars. It will not save 15 million dollars, so that alone cannot do it. We are looking at a rich menu of things. We saved 1.5 million dollars by taking out our old phone system and installing voice over internet protocol phones which work in my office better than my old phone did. There additional opportunities to save money in those kind of below-the-radar services. Another question is do we have the right staffing for issues that we need to face?

Erik Wibbels (Political Science)

Q: Related to the last question, can you give a strategic vision that will guide the decisions on what programs can shrink and which ones can grow because hiring is not going to end? A second question is -- what are the rules that govern access to the endowment and can this access be used in a counter cyclical kind of way?

A: The answer to the second question is that the Trustees have already done that. What they have said is that you have go get this amount of money out of your budget. You can spread that out over a couple of years. If we had to do it in one year, we would have a tremendous problem. There would be no hiring, there would be layoffs, and more. It is their responsibility to manage the endowment over the long term.

In terms of the strategic choices, we do not do a lot of that. In the first strategic plan I was involved with, we went to all of the departments and asked them to tell us what they would like their students to know ten years from now. What are going to be the cutting edge questions? We got back some very interesting answers. We did a meta-analysis to look for things that helped more than one department at a time.

The meaning of departments is becoming less clear. Many people in Political Science also have appointments in other fields. We are going to do something like that this time. The reason we are asking for all of this information is not because we want to give you something else to do. It is so we

have more information in order to understand where limited resources can have the biggest impact. A guide would be if you were to put in a request, we would like to see a request for a person who might be at the intersection of political science, public policy, and the environment. That is likely to be a stronger argument than to say that we have an incredibly strong American government group and we would like to add one more person.

Ron Grunwald (Biology)

Q: What is your sense of a timeline if we are to be feeding ideas and suggestions to you?

A: We will be meeting weekly and so this is a continuous process. We have found that seemingly little things like the change in the telephone system can have significant effects. The faculty tends to be a great source of insight for those kinds of issues. The bigger administrative choices are going on in parallel with that process. For example, we ask have we put together a staff model that optimally serves each of the units. If we haven't, we probably need to. So one of the things that is going on is, from Sandy Connelly's office in collaboration with the HR folks, we are doing unit by unit checking just to make sure that we do have the right mix of people.

Q: Will that committee have a finite lifetime?

A: No, unless people on the committee decide that it is not useful. If the people on the committee are saying "I don't know what I am doing here" then they will probably create a finite lifetime for it. But honestly, I think it will be a really great thing for governance if we have a committee like that ongoing. It has a student representative, it has a staff representative. Your department manager is the staff representative. I can imagine it being a standing committee of the college. If you are getting good advice in hard times, I would think you would be getting even better advice in less challenging times.

Leslie Digby (Anthropology)

Q: You mentioned that you only have to handle half of the budget problem this year. Does this mean that we will have to do another 12 to 13 million dollars next year?

A: No, that is spread out.

Q: So that means that we do not have to do that 12 million right now?

A: No.

Stephen Jaffe (Music)

Q: Can you tell us what are some of the suggestions that faculty committees have come up with?

A: Consider as an example our email service which goes down very often. I notice that most students have gmail accounts and they never go down. Could we get a more reliable email service and at a lower price if we subcontracted to an external vendor? We could save millions of dollars if we decided to outsource that service. This is actually not a simple problem because there are all kinds of issues about archiving data, who controls which data, and those are serious issues. But to say we are not even going to look at it would not be wise or prudent.

Q: Do you anticipate operating cuts in the manner of the 5 percent cuts last year?

A: I can be certain there will be some kind of recision because otherwise nothing will happen. But exactly what the number will be I do not know.

Lee Baker (Trinity College)

Q: I think it will be important for you to share some of the distinctions between the provost decisions like home internet access for our research accounts and the decisions that they control and our responsibilities.

A: There are some decisions that are made administratively like we are no longer willing to pay for home internet. Honestly, the amount that I save on our behalf was so small that I really did not care. But across the university, it apparently added up to a sufficient amount that that decision was made on behalf of the entire university by the Executive Vice President. There are a number of decisions like that that are just handed down and they are what they are.

We are not going to have furloughs. We are not going to reduce faculty salaries.

William Donahue (German)

Q: I wonder if we could think about differential approaches to departmental cuts if they have to happen or when they have to happen. We have to accept the provost's rules but I wonder if we could open up to negotiation the A&S rules and give departments the opportunity to, rather than accept restrictions that were outlined in that July 1 memo, maybe take a higher cut across the board. In some

cases it might even be better.

A: I think that is a wonderfully creative suggestion. Because in the end, you and your colleagues are much better able, if I say save X amount of money, to figure out what the best ways to do it are for your unit.

Close of Meeting

Professor Day thanked the Dean and invited everyone to a reception in the Allen Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan W. Biermann
Executive Secretary