José María Rodríguez García (Chair) welcomed everyone to meeting. After summarizing the agenda, he opened the floor for approval of the November meeting minutes. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

Nursing School/Trinity Bridge Curriculum Proposal

Rodriguez García then welcomed the proponents of the Curriculum Bridge proposal. He reminded Council that all pertinent materials (including his Chair’s summary of ECASC’s discussion of the proposal) were posted on the Council’s Sakai site and reminded the Bridge Committee that discussion and possible vote on this proposal will continue in January.

Brigit Carter (Nursing Associate Dean for Diversity & Inclusion) thanked the Council for inviting them to speak. Nursing has been working on this proposal for a little over two years now. While she was serving as director of the Accelerated Bachelors of Science of Nursing Program (ABSN), Carter noticed a number of Trinity graduates coming to the program. She thought it would be nice if there were a pathway for Trinity undergraduate students to enter the ABSN, and Trinity graduates who were already in the program confirmed this. Trinity graduate Sedona Jamerson has been serving on the Bridge Committee since its inception and she’s helped them understand how the bridge program could fit into the Trinity curriculum. It was important that the program make sense in working with the Trinity student’s senior year and with their studies in general so as not to take away from their liberal arts education. It also had to make sense in the world of nursing. The bridge committee consulted with a variety of stakeholders to ensure that this was a feasible idea and one desired by both schools. She feels that those in Nursing can work in tandem with Trinity to advise and support interested students.

Alyssa Perz (Trinity Academic Dean and Health Professions Advisor) said she looked at the proposal in terms of how it would benefit Trinity students. The pre-medical curriculum requires anywhere from 12 to 18 courses to enter a medical program, while in contrast a Nursing program is 4 to 6 courses. So one of the great benefits of the Nursing curriculum in contrast to pre-med is that it leaves a lot of flexibility for students to major in other things, to participate in study abroad and to fully engage in a less restrictive
way. Also, she said that in talking with med students who are shifting their academic and professional interest to Nursing, Perz has been struck by the number of first-generation or low-income students who see the medical professions as upward mobility opportunities. The Nursing Bridge proposal allows students to use one of their semesters of undergraduate financial aid along with a fifth year of undergraduate aid so they can complete an entire second bachelor’s degree with federal funding. Otherwise, if they do this after they graduate from Duke, they would have a semester without federal aid and would have to take out a loan. So the program benefits Trinity students in both academic and financial ways.

**Carter** said the financial reason was the main reason they wanted to create this program. Trinity students are already coming to Nursing, so any way to decrease their debt load is so important. She emphasized that this program won’t detract from the Trinity education. The School of Nursing has great esteem for the benefits of a liberal arts education. The Nursing faculty tell their students that over and over again. The undergraduate experience of Trinity graduates combines very well with a Nursing degree, making the small student cohort admitted each year to the Accelerated Program extraordinarily special. Jamerson, for example, came to the Nursing School with a broader academic background and global experience that someone in a four-year Nursing program would not have acquired, and as a Cultural Anthropology major in Trinity, she was able to bring her invaluable knowledge of diversity issues into the classroom.

**Chris Walter (Physics)** asked what type of degree a student would obtain.

**Carter** said that the Accelerated Nursing Program is a bachelor’s program that takes either 12 or 16 months. This program is for students who have completed a bachelor’s degree and then at some point, they decided to go into Nursing. They could receive an associate’s degree from a community college, but most students who have already completed a bachelor’s may consider advancing their education further, perhaps leading to a Nurse Practitioner degree or a Ph.D., so the Accelerated B.S. route is the most logical step.

**Walter asked for** clarification on whether this proposal was for creating a new pathway for a Bachelor of Science degree that one would normally enter separately. Does the proposal on the table create a five-year undergraduate pathway where at the end students will receive their Trinity bachelor’s degree and an additional B.S. in Nursing?

**Carter** said yes.

**Ron Grunwald (Biology)** asked how this relates to existing Trinity policy about using professional school credits toward the Trinity degree.

**Perz** said Trinity students can already use 6 graduate and professional school credits toward their degree, so this would fit within that existing policy. The novelty here is allowing students to use Nursing courses to pursue a future second bachelor’s in another Duke school.

**Grunwald** asked if there will be a subset of courses that any Trinity student would have permission to enroll in as part of their Trinity degree even if they aren’t part of this program or are the courses limited to only students in the program?

**Carter** said the Bridge Program is restricted to five students maximum who would also have to be eligible for acceptance into the School of Nursing. The hope is to identify students who are interested in the program in their sophomore year and have them apply their junior year. They will have to be on track for their original degree and be finished with all their pre-requisites for that degree. After they are accepted into the Bridge Program, they would start taking Nursing courses in their senior year, dividing
up the normal ABSN first semester of four courses into two courses in the fall and two in the spring. Then, after the Trinity students graduate in May, they immediately transition into the second semester of Nursing courses. In order for these students to transition smoothly, there will be close monitoring and advice from both Trinity and Nursing advisors.

**Walter** said the program sounds great and doesn’t take away from the Trinity degree. What is Council’s role?

**Rodríguez García** said we are used to thinking of pre-health students as finishing a bachelor’s degree before going onto an advanced degree. However, this program allows students to continue to be undergraduates while pursuing a second bachelor’s degree outside of Trinity. Council approval is needed because the participating Trinity students will continue to be classified as Arts & Sciences undergraduates in the earliest stage of their work toward a B.S. in Nursing.

**Perz** clarified that the new program is calling for students to complete four credits from Nursing taken across the senior year and which will also count as four credits of electives towards the Trinity degree.

**Rodriguez García** explained that the current accelerated program toward a B.S. in Nursing requires sixteen months of work, concentrating in that time span the credits that would normally be completed in two years. This is the meaning of “accelerated.” The Trinity Curriculum Bridge proposal asks that A&S students be allowed to take four Nursing courses simultaneously with Trinity courses in the student’s senior year so that the sixteen months of the current Accelerated Program be shortened to twelve months (two semesters and one summer term) because five years is the maximum length of student eligibility for financial aid.

**Carter** said that it’s important to have support for students who are entering this program. They relied on Jamerson to help them think through how students could navigate the program.

**Sedona Jamerson (Nursing student)** said if the proposed new pathway had available to her, she would have been able to take the introductory Nursing courses in her senior year since she had already completed most of her Nursing pre-requisites and only had a few major requirements left. So there would have been a lot of time for her to take the Nursing courses. Plus, the first four courses in the pathway are introductory courses, not the hard clinical courses. So it’s all very doable for a Trinity student.

**Sherryl Broverman (Biology)** said she’s sensing among some Council members the need for more clarity on what we’ll be voting on at our next meeting. What is the specific language we’re voting on in January?

**Rodríguez García** explained that the Nursing School already has an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program (ABSN) that accepts students from outside of Duke along with some Duke students who have already graduated from Trinity. For the Trinity Curriculum Bridge proposal, Council will be asked to vote on approval of a supplementary program to the Accelerated one already in existence. So the Bridge Committee is asking the Council to authorize Trinity undergraduate students to begin taking Nursing courses during their senior year that will count both toward their original Trinity degree (as electives) and toward the B.S. in Nursing degree they will complete in their fifth year as Duke undergraduates. This pathway is an alternative route to the existing Accelerated Program. It will be restricted to students already enrolled in the College of Arts & Sciences and will be called something like “Trinity Curriculum Bridge Program in Nursing” to indicate that students begin their B.S. in Nursing while still classified as Trinity undergrads. These are the main elements of the proposal we’ll be voting
on at a later meeting and I echo my ECASC colleague Sherryl Broverman in encouraging the Bridge Committee to include all of them in the clear and succinct language of the proposal that will be submitted once again for the Council’s consideration and possible approval in January.

Ruth Day (Psychology and Neuroscience) asked if Duke students who took the bridge program would be even more accelerated since they would have taken courses in their senior year?

Carter said the first year is actually part time for Duke students. The normal ABSN first semester of four courses is divided into two semesters for Duke students. The program only becomes accelerated once students take full time courses after graduation.

Grunwald said the Bridge Program proposal makes sense from a School of Nursing perspective, but his concern is its impact on the Trinity degree. Although formally we allow students up to 6 graduate or professional courses, that is hedged, number one, by the fact that it’s a relatively uncommon experience; number two, that it’s case by case; and number three, that the student’s academic dean must approve the courses based on what’s appropriate for the student’s interest and what’s appropriate for the Trinity degree. The concern was that the Trinity degree not be compromised by professional training courses, which have a different focus. What it comes down to is that it may not appropriate for this body to vote on approval of this program without knowing what those courses are because Council is in effect voting to approve four specific courses pre-empting the role of the academic dean to make those approvals on a case-by-case basis. Once a student is admitted into the program, they can do to their dean and say they have to take those four courses and the dean can’t really say no at that point. He felt like Council would have to say that the four courses are appropriate to any and all students in Trinity College, knowing that Nursing would limit admission to a select few.

Carter said she sees that going in a different way. Nursing already knew there was a strong need for open lines of communication with multiple stakeholders, but academic deans must also be included well before students are admitted into the program.

Grunwald said he appreciated the effort by the Nursing School to ensure that students are appropriate for their program, but the dean’s approval of any course in the undergraduate catalog counting toward a degree is an approval that the courses are appropriate for a Trinity degree. In practice, they may never say no, but in theory they should be able to say that a course is not appropriate for the degree. So if Council approves this program, it effectively circumvents the dean’s approval. Council is being asked to approve those four courses as appropriate for all students.

Perz said the four courses are defined and in the proposal. One of the things they are asking Council to do is exactly what Grunwald described, which is to say these four courses are approved for students in this Bridge Program. She believes similar things happen in other 4+1 programs. There certainly are graduate and professional courses in the undergraduate bulletin and that means they are approved. As far as the undergraduate deans role, the main concern is have these students met the requirements for a major as well as their Trinity requirements? They do not anticipate that the Nursing courses will carry Trinity codes, so they will only serve as elective credits toward the 34 in the degree. So it’s an unconventional way to approve a graduate or professional course, but it’s something Council has the authority to do as a way to facilitate Trinity students moving through the bridge program.

Broverman said that ECASC had extensive conversations and supported the proposal going forward.
Cary Moskovitz (TWP) wondered if it might be useful to have the Courses Committee for approval? They’ve dealt with similar issues in the past to ensure courses contain sufficient intellectual effort to count toward the degree.

Broverman said students can currently take up to six graduate and professional student courses. Those courses didn’t all go through the Courses Committee, yet any student can take them. Why do these have to?

Grunwald said any student can take those courses with approval of their academic dean. The approval implies that the dean might say no.

Rodríguez García said that Council will continue the conversation in January. He is asking the Bridge Committee members to communicate with Trinity administration to determine the best mechanism to ensure accountability of those four Nursing courses to Trinity. One possibility would be working with the Courses Committee; another would be to identify an ad-hoc committee of academic deans in charge of vetting the courses on a yearly basis to ensure that all the courses being offered to our Bridg students are appropriate by Trinity standard. He encouraged Grunwald to email his concerns to him, Perz, and/or Dean Petters so that these concerns may be addressed to the satisfaction of all Trinity Council reps before the Council convenes again in January.

Classroom Space and Infrastructure Report

Rodríguez García then turned to the next item on the agenda, the Classroom Space and Infrastructure (CSI) Committee report.

Carol Apollonio (Slavic & Eurasian Studies) began by reminding Council of the CSI Committee’s charge. The goal of this ad hoc committee was to gather information about decisions made by the University about classrooms and the faculty role in that process. Their main work this past three months has been to gather complaints and input from the faculty, then summarize that data and make recommendations. The last charge for the committee was to establish general procedures or mechanism for incorporating faculty voices in the administrative decisions regarding classroom space and infrastructure. That point is beyond the scope of what the committee could do today, but perhaps after the report is finalized, some further decisions can be made.

She thanked the members of the committee who were present at the meeting: José Miguel González, Catherine Mathers, Steffen Bass, Ed Gomes, and Jerry Conrad. Other members are the Trinity faculty Martin Miller and Tina Williams and staff observers Jill Foster and Kim Travlos, who all gave generously of their time. Special thanks were given to Matt Serra, Saheel Chodavadia and Evan Widney.

Apollonio then quoted from the academic strategic plan which states Duke’s commitment to “create a supportive environment for research, learning, and academic communities.” The strategic plan recognizes that in order to build a thriving academic community, “Duke must continue invest heavily in academic space, particularly in terms of updating our classrooms.” It pledges that “we will build toward the goal of having all classrooms support 21st pedagogies. Classrooms should facilitate flexible, technologically enhanced learning and teaching and should be able to capture and disseminate digital content. They should also facilitate movement between large and small scale learning opportunities and allow for blended classroom opportunities.” The CSI Committee’s work was informed by those goals.
Regarding the charge of gathering information about the university’s decision-making process related to classroom space and infrastructure, CSI found that four administrative offices handle teaching spaces: A&S Facilities, Trinity Technology Services, the Registrar’s Office, and the university Facilities Management Department. Regarding the second charge of clarifying faculty role in that process, CSI found that faculty don’t participate in an integral way in decisions about space. The CSI thinks this can change. It is hugely important for more faculty to get involved so that the teaching that occurs in these spaces actually drives the decisions about the spaces.

The third charge was to collect faculty views through a faculty survey, through Council reps, and during Council meetings. They also received individual emails from faculty. All this information is captured in the report. The CSI was heartened to learn there’s a lot of unanimity among faculty regarding things that concern us the most. Student concerns, available through a Google link in the report, also mirrored many of the faculty concerns.

Apollonio then summarized an overall view of the CSI. Duke has put a lot of energy into building new campus facilities that enrich many aspects of student life, including the football stadium, the Brodhead Center, and the Ruby, as well as collision spaces and residence halls. Off-campus initiatives are also an important part of the Duke brand and include Study Away, service learning, and the Duke Farm. These activities are all taking place outside of classrooms. A lot of energy has been brought to encouraging faculty to embrace new pedagogies, including technology. The actual spaces where faculty teach classes haven’t kept up, however. This may reflect the Duke focus of education outside of classrooms, so the committee hopes to readjust that focus.

She then turned to the summary of findings. The problems can be divided up in big, medium and small; easy, doable, and complex.

The small but important problems should be easy to fix as early as this year and include things like whiteboards and blackboards; chalk and marker supplies. Are the boards clean? Are technology accessories present? Is the phone number for help prominently displayed?

The medium and important problems include furniture, room location, and technology. There’s remarkable consensus about the type of furniture faculty want – they want movable furniture and flat tables. This is all detailed in the report. Another problem in this category is the equity issue regarding non tenure track faculty, especially those in the Writing Program, and in foreign languages. These faculty reach all students, yet a lot of these classrooms are less than ideal in space and/or location. This is worth attention.

The big, important and easy problems include consulting with faculty who teach large lecture classes. There are less faculty who do this, but given the number of students taking their courses, their input should be sought and taken into account.

The big, important, and complex problems include administrative procedures. Who owns classrooms? How are they designated and scheduled? The committee also noticed strong feedback about recently renovated classrooms. Smith, for example, is very beautiful but has terrible acoustics problems. The HVAC is so loud that one cannot hear what is being said in the classrooms, and if one cannot hear, then learning is not taking place.

The committee recommends the following:

- Incorporate faculty voices in the design and execution of planning and policies for classroom spaces.
• Implement regular end-of-semester “classroom evaluations” by faculty and students; input thus gained should inform administrative decisions about maintenance, furnishings, and upgrades.

• Use the rich and remarkably consistent specific comments in our CSI report as a basis for decision-making relating to classroom spaces in the future: flat tables, moveable furniture, whiteboards, technology, etc.

• Add new designations (TBL, high-end tech, etc.) to course coding for the registrar for purposes of scheduling classes.

Apollonio then listed the winners of the Rooms of Shame contest: runners up are Gray 228 and Languages 320, and first place going to Social Sciences 136, an old acquaintance of Council reps. She summed up by saying the full report is long and detailed but is worth reading.

David Malone (Education) said he was amazed by all the small issues that faculty have and he thanked the committee for receiving the feedback in a positive way. Apollonio said sometimes the “small” things like having access to chalk or markers in a room make a big difference.

Rodríguez García said Council will continue discussion of the report and possibly vote in January. Delaying the vote until January won’t detrimental to the actionable recommendations included in the report since Trinity administrators have been ex officio members of the CSI and they’re by now fully aware of faculty concerns and desiderata. They will able to take them into account when making decisions on renovation projects for Summer 2019.

First- and Second-Year Experience

Rodríguez García then welcomed A&S Dean Valerie Ashby and Dean Arlie Petters.

Valerie Ashby (Dean) began by thanking the CSI committee for its work, saying the report and presentation were very informative. She apologized for not being able to attend a meeting earlier in the semester, but when President Price asks her to travel, she must go. He has also asked her to serve on three Board of Trustees committees, so that additional duty has also complicated her schedule. However, she has been meeting regularly with Rodríguez García and has attended ECASC a few times, so she has been aware of Council’s work this semester.

Ashby reminded Council that last January, Trinity started focusing on improving the introduction to the discipline classes for every department or field in Trinity. Liaisons were chosen from every department plus NSOE and Sanford. They were asked to present thoughts on how to improve their introductory courses and were given a deadline by the end of the spring semester to present those ideas to the deans. Petters’s office organized several meetings in the spring to assist the liaisons and Matt Serra’s assessment team also provided information to help programs figure out how to improve their courses. In terms of discussing ideas, some departments involved only a few people, others involved the entire faculty. Ashby left it up to the individual units to decide what worked for them. There were no rules on how they did this, Ashby just wanted departments to try to identify some suggestions – and they all did.

Arlie Petters (Dean of Undergraduate Education) summarized the big picture. A&S received 44 submissions. Those were divided into zones depending on the degree of maturity of the proposal. The first zone had nine units who have already had begun implementing ideas. These units constitute 43
percent of seats served. Petters said he has already met with 25 departments and plans to meet with the remaining departments by the end of the spring semester. Several departments have similar concerns, like Computer Science and Math, so he is suggested they connect to discuss their issues and ideas.

He reminded Council that every program has two liaisons, one for assessment and one for curricular, and it’s important for Council members to integrate with those folks.

Ashby said this topic was addressed at the department chairs retreat, so every chair should be well aware of what’s going on. Also at the retreat, three chairs from Classics, Computer Science, and Psychology presented proposals. These were three of the nine proposals that were ready to go and/or were moving forward. Psychology and Neuroscience had actually already been doing the items addressed in its proposal. Ashby said it was awesome to hear the chairs share with others about creativity and individual concerns. The three departments above also presented at the recent Trinity Board of Visitors (TBOV) Undergraduate Education committee meeting. That committee was excited to learn about these activities. Ashby’s goal is to get TBOV members to financially support this project.

Ashby then recommended that some of the departmental liaisons come talk to Council about what they are doing. She finds the work very inspiring. For some, it’s how they are teaching, for some, it’s what they are teaching. For those with large introductory courses, it’s about how to high quality across thousands of students. While she is leaving specific actions up to individual units, Ashby’s goal is consistent excellence. We won’t have the same quality for every class, but it’s clear from the data that there’s a difference between the teaching of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and professors. Math, who relies on TAs for its introductory courses, agrees so it is looking at how to work with TAs to help them out. Other departments are thinking about new creative courses and the content about what they teach, as well as how to describe what they teach to reach out to students. They are not reducing the academic rigor, but rather coming up with the most engaging ways they can think of to get students involved.

Rodríguez García asked if it would be possible, for the sake of having a more robust faculty governance, to invite members of Council or ECASC to serve ex officio or as observers at the liaison meetings convened by Dean Petters, both in the assessment liaison group and the first- and second-year experience/curricular group. That way, the information might circulate better and create a better collaborative community since faculty and administrators don’t want to second guess each other. Both Ashby and Petters welcomed this idea.

Ashby said that there is a need to work on more communication in all directions. She reiterated that she doesn’t want this to be the dean’s thing. She wants faculty to own it, so the more engagement the better.

Day asked if prototype models of the new course could be posted on a website so others can see them and be inspired, and perhaps also add something about what they used to do when they taught the introductions to their disciplines versus what they are doing now. The proposals could be divided based on content or process. This could help stimulate faculty who can’t sit in on process directly.

Ashby supported this suggestion and said that Trinity’s new communications director will work with these types of things.

Daniele Armaelo (Biology) asked how creating new courses and revamping the spaces of instruction along the lines mentioned today might enhance the integration of all students regardless of background.
**Petters** said that they are taking this issue seriously. Vice Provost Abbas Benmamoun’s office has had workshops on inclusive classrooms. The issue of climate is important, though the issue is not as pressing for some departments as others. He said that the big service units care greatly about this.

**Ashby** said another issue is losing minority and female students, and some departments want to address that issue.

**Ara Wilson (Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies)** said another issue ties into the future of faculty hiring. With greater emphasis on contingent hires, there’s the possibility of less stability in the faculty ranks. It would be nice for students to take a course in the first year and then be able to find that instructor in their senior year.

**Ashby** agreed and said that several things are non-negotiable for her. One is that the faculty own the curriculum, as well as their choice of colleagues and their choice of grad students. She said the ratio of different types of faculty has evolved without a lot of attention. The non-regular rank faculty numbers have increased significantly in the Humanities, but not so much in the Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. Some of this has been driven by the increase in courses, and some by the need for more language teachers. The curriculum is not disconnected from the departmental faculty, so this is an opportunity for each department to look at how they want to deliver their courses. She has budget constraints on how big they can grow, but departments can decide if they want more tenure-track faculty teaching in the first- and second-year courses. This is up to departments on how they want to divide up courses. Departments have to tell her what it needs to look like for them and she will work to see what makes the most sense to each unit on an individual basis.

**Catherine Admay (Sanford)** said another issue is the bar for getting tenure. It’s problematic to put junior tenure track faculty in huge classrooms because that takes away from their time for research and publication. Can Duke change the tenure requirements to give more credit towards those who teach these large courses?

**Ashby** said Duke bases tenure on excellence in teaching, research, and service. She understands that a professor won’t get tenure without outstanding research, but she always wants to hire someone who has a desire to also be an outstanding teacher and server. She always loved to teach large classes and her department supported her in that regard, so there are ways for departments to assist junior faculty who want to teach the larger courses. This could just be a question of support. Ashby said she is happy to look at proposals on how to weigh tenure requirements differently though that’s a challenge due to different departments having different criteria. The other challenge is APT requirements, and she’s not going to be able to change those.

She added that the conversation about teaching is significant and matters. At the 3rd year review, chairs are now giving serious feedback if need to help with that area.

**Walter** said that when people come up for tenure, feedback from students is important but too much feedback is problematic.

**Ashby** agreed that course evaluations are an issue. When Harris Cooper served as the interim dean of Social Sciences last year, she asked him to help her think about this issue since his scholarship is on how to do a better evaluation. He directed her attention to the rigorous research on four other ways to evaluate courses, but none would guarantee you’d get what you want to know. Ashby wants Trinity to do better in the teaching evaluation area, and she would love to work with ECASC to think more about this issue.
Rodríguez García said he and ECASC are in the process of reactivating the dormant A&S Undergraduate Teaching, Academic Standards and Honors Committee and hopes to have it up and running in January. ECASC’s hope is that this group will provide both a central space for future discussions on teaching cultures and policies as well as fulfilling the role of intermediary between the expectations and desiderata of the faculty at large and the implementation of policies by Trinity’s senior administrators. He’s also hopeful that the committee with concern itself at some point with the assessment of teaching if the new membership should think that it would make sense to add this concern to the committee’s purview.

Ashby said she has the literature that Cooper collected and would be happy to share it with that committee.

Wilson said a recent article in The Chronicle of Higher Education found there’s no good replacement for teaching evaluations.

Ashby agreed, adding her Office has scoured the landscape of higher ed for alternatives. She wants to be thoughtful about any changes and get faculty input. She does not want a repeat of the recent change to the teaching evaluations that occurred without any input. However, she said, she does not want to just change things up for change’s sake.

As time had run out, the meeting was adjourned.