

# Duke University

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## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Arts & Sciences Council

Thursday, December 12, 2016

### Call to Order

**A&S Council Chair Anita Layton:** Thank you for being here, I know this is a busy time for everyone, so I appreciate you taking time out of your crazy schedules to attend a meeting. Thank you! Let's get started. We always begin by approving our last meeting's minutes. They are on Sakai. Any requests for corrections? [There were none. The minutes were approved.]

Moving on ... about the curriculum. I feel this is the only thing we have done this year, or is it only me? We've had a couple of town hall meetings this past week and I missed them all because I was teaching. But I heard they were spirited, which is good because we all care about our students' education.

At the last meeting, I told you how when I was a student here at Duke, I almost missed my Physics final because I overslept and a very dedicated instructor called me at home to wake me up. I've got another story for you about dedicated faculty. Mine Rundel. You all know Mine? Statistics faculty? She was our Stats Council rep last year. She's not here this year because she had a baby a few weeks ago. Cute little boy, Elliott. I see his adorable face every time I log onto Facebook. Elliott's father, Colin, also a Stats faculty member, works with me in the FOCUS cluster that I run. You might know that in FOCUS the faculty and students have dinner together every week. So about three or four days after Elliott was born, the day of the FOCUS dinner, I was sitting down in the room getting ready to eat with the kids and in walks Colin. I was like, "What are you doing here?" And Colin said, "I'm here for the FOCUS dinner." I said, "I know. You just had a baby. Go home." At this point, the kids are clapping and saying congratulations. Then Colin said, "Anita, it's okay. Mine will understand." And I was like, "Dude, she will not understand." Seriously, I've had two kids and if my husband left me with a newborn to have dinner with a bunch of students, there is nothing to understand. So anyway, Colin did not listen to me and stayed for dinner. He is a prime example of dedicated Duke faculty.

So, yes, we love our students, we care about their education and we are definitely passionate about the curriculum. So let's plan. If you know me, you know I live by plans. I don't function well without a plan. I want to talk about a potential timeline for the curriculum. We are at December. Now we are going to have an energetic, stimulating and friendly discussion about the curriculum. Then, a lot of you have provided feedback, so the committee is going to incorporate some of the feedback and the goal is to produce a revised document in January, in time, I hope,

for Council discussion in January. And then if all goes well, we may vote in February. So this is maybe. If there's lots of discussion, it could take longer, but I do hope at some point we wrap it up so we can move on to other things. That is a target timeline. Does anybody want to ask a question or have an issue about this? We have a goal and we're going to get to that goal. Frances, you shook your head?

**Frances Hasso (GSF Studies):** I'm saying it depends. We all want to accomplish goals.

**Layton:** That's right. It's a goal. So let's talk about the curriculum. Suzanne is out of town today, but her team members Lee Baker and Mohamed Noor are going to answer our questions and comments about the curriculum.

**Lee Baker (Cultural Anthropology):** And David Bell will join us as well.

**Layton:** So we have three people. Thank you, David for making this. So this is what we are going to do: we are going to do a 30-minute Q&A. I think after that somebody may need a beer, so we are going to break up, we are going to enjoy the food and we are going to talk and discuss the curriculum some more. So they are going to want to talk to as many of us as possible, so keep your questions and comments brief. You know how to do that, channel Anita. I might have to signal you to hurry up, respectfully and with a smile, and if you have anything other than a question or comment, I ask you to please hold it. I will be happy to talk to you after the session. So Arlie, do you want to say something quickly?

**Arlie Petters (Dean of Academic Affairs):** So I'm not sure if you've heard from me before. I'm the new kid on the block and it has been very interesting observing discussions that have been going on and I thought perhaps I'd quickly share with you my take on everything. First of all, you care. We care as well. I love listening, though I'm not involved in any decision making with respect to what goes in the curriculum. My overall take on it is there are many things about it I like a lot. So from my seat, here are some of the things I care about. You look across the spectrum of all of our students, I want to be able to have opportunities for students of a diverse set of talent to be able to excel. So I ask questions: is this curriculum something that will enable us to ensure that we are offering an education that has a rich collection of pathways to make that happen. Another thing that's very important for our office is are we delivering an inclusive set of opportunities for excellence? Things like this I look for in the curriculum. So the set of benchmarks I keep in my mind and I will say what drew me about this curriculum is the pathways model. I think it's innovative, it's very powerful. I am not going to engage in any of the technical details but I thought I should at least let you be aware of them. It's our job to implement if it's passed. But something else to bear in mind is that whatever may end up being passed or ... you know I end up telling everybody about that joke about compromise: it's when everyone is equally dissatisfied. We will revisit this in about two, two and a half years after -- this is something my boss said we would definitely do -- and we'll have another opportunity to refine further. So I don't want anybody to feel any anxiety that if you pass something you'll be stuck with it forever, because everyone here matters. So I just thought I'd share my two cents about that in a general way. Thank you, Anita.

## Curriculum proposal Q&A

**Alex Glass (Earth and Ocean Sciences):** I have a question and I have a comment. First, my question. It says that the signature course will be taught by Duke's best faculty using similar guidelines from Duke's existing signature courses. I'm not familiar with those guidelines, I'd love to hear what they are. The other thing is that this is a tremendous document. There's been a lot of work and effort put into this, we owe you great thanks for that. The one thing – of course I have to find something wrong with it, I'm a scientist, so – is the science. I think that the curriculum is a very, very strong liberal arts curriculum. I would like to see a larger component of science and I feel very uncomfortable having students ... their choice is essentially to take one class of scientific inquiry or social scientific inquiry. I think that sells both of those areas short. I would hate to have a student go through Duke and not have to take a social science class ever or a student who doesn't have to take a natural science course ever. So I'd love to see those probably separated and put better emphasis on both as individual fields.

**Baker:** Well the signature core thing. We were trying to think through designing courses that would be broad epistemologically grounded courses asking sort of big questions. The idea came from Stanford's "big questions" courses that the first-year students do, and something like that that is intentionally designed to introduce our students to these so-called networks of knowledge. We want some specific criteria and newly designed for first- and second-year students, opposed to having an intro to economics or an intro to cultural anthropology which is really discipline-specific and content driven. We wanted to look at broader questions but in these different areas. I think we'll really want to push these out to the various departments with specific criteria so they can design these courses for our first- and second-year students.

**Mohamed Noor (Biology):** Let me comment on the other half in regards to the sciences, etc. So I'm going to answer you two different ways. First, as you saw and as Lee alluded to, the document is focused on epistemology rather than areas or subjects or things like that. If you look, for example, how a sociologist approaches a question, look at how a biologist approaches a question, there's very high similarity in terms of you develop your hypothesis, you test the data, basically you approach the question albeit not identically but in a very similar way. So our thought was that that was a natural grouping. Additionally, in relation to that part of it, the data analytic part of it would encompass a lot of science, potentially as well too, with mathematics, statistics, etc.

**Glass:** You mean five, is that the fifth one?

**Noor:** I don't remember the order they were in.

**Glass:** Modelling quantifications?

**Noor:** Yes. That was the one, exactly. If you don't mind, I'm going to nitpick your words a little bit. What we're trying to avoid is this idea of, "we don't want students to have graduated from Duke without being required to ..." Basically we are trying to eliminate that aspect of it.

Our idea is that this is really a chance for students while they are here in college to explore things in a mentored way, they are eating with their advisors, they are discussing different topics and they are seeing where they can go. The idea is by providing more flexibility you can explore in more areas as opposed to this constant checkbox of, “Oh I need one more SS class. This one is an SS and an NS and it meets on Fridays at 4 p.m. Check. I’m done.” There’s never really any thought behind it. The idea is to really be thinking about, “I don’t know anything about history. I don’t know anything about physics.” This is a kind of approach that we want students to take in a mentored way as opposed to just checkboxing. We don’t want so much of they are required to do this, now they’ve done it and they don’t have to think about it anymore. That was the rationale from which we were approaching that.

**Alex Rosenberg (Philosophy):** I’ve heard the expression “curated” used several times with regard to the kinds of criteria and benchmarks involved in choosing and monitoring the first year courses that the curriculum is centered around. I’d like to hear a little bit more about the structure of the curating and the process.

**David Bell (Romance Studies):** There’s a broad approach to the structure of this curriculum and there’s an implementation process and I think that is really a question for implementation. We do feel that, broadly speaking, these courses should be broad, should be epistemological in their perspective, should show connections. Those are broad principles we’d like to see respected in these courses. How do you arrive at implementing that is a kind of second stage question.

**Rosenberg:** Can you imagine every department offering such a course?

**Bell:** Yes, I think we can. There’s often pushback and criticism from faculty that there’s too many centralized committees making decisions about what one can and cannot do in the curriculum, and we would really like for departments to take this opportunity to assume the responsibility for formulating courses that might be appropriate for this kind of first- and second-year experience. So it’s a more distributive model, we hope. There have to be some broad criteria to connect it, obviously, but we want departments to be creative and to think really carefully about what might be appropriate for this.

**John Martin (History):** I want to echo the concern about not having science in the curriculum for all students to explore – a natural science. I think that a commitment to a liberal education includes the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. That reflects the structure of Arts & Sciences, we have those three divisions. There may be epistemological overlap between the natural sciences and the social sciences but there are also epistemological differences. We have a rich literature of discussion about the different kinds of questions. I would imagine a course well-presented in the natural sciences would not simply be an introduction to a particular field, but would really engage students in an exciting way in the epistemologies of that field. The broader context of this is we rank internationally as one of the least scientifically literate societies of the western world. I think our not requiring a natural science -- apparently I’m out of date for using the word requirement, but I’m 65 years old, I believe in requirements. I think they’re a good idea. I don’t think we should duck the idea, as faculty, of saying “these are things we require.” We can get away from the checkbox mentality

with excellent advising and discussions but I do believe we should require our students to experience a humanities course, a social science course and a natural science course. Those are three traditional, wonderful, different ways of opening up our imaginations to the world. They are different from one another and the natural sciences – I’m an historian; I’m not pleading this because I’m a biologist or a physicist – the natural sciences are critical today, that undergraduates at top institutions come out with the confidence that they understand scientific methodology so that when they are on the school board or the hospital board and they’re lawyers or teachers, they have the confidence to engage in public discussions about science, which is going to shape the 21<sup>st</sup> century in ways that are impossible for us to imagine. I would urge the committee to reconsider the epistemological framework you currently have and to consider the possibility of a humanities, natural science and social science curriculum.

**Frances Hasso (Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies):** Since we have had so many meetings, I have one kind of question, which is where are you on number one, the Duke experience? Thoughts now? What has shifted? Where are you on number two, which has been focused on a lot in the discussions right now, the signature course? And where are you right now on I guess the third point for me is the number of credits to graduate. On one, when I think about priorities, I want to say priority wise that it’s very important that Trinity Arts & Sciences is actually in charge of whatever it is that is that first-year experience and I don’t like that word, but that’s okay. But I would still like to argue for a one semester rather than year long, a high quality – and I think this has been raised by other colleagues – around a theme, maybe an annual theme and people apply and maybe every department offers at least one so then students are taking some kind of experience like that and work with student life around those issues. I’m not convinced of the quality and value of two half credit but I don’t know what they mean. Regarding number two, I am sympathetic to the comments that have been made. I don’t think requirements are a bad thing. I think young people need them and I think it’s our job. That’s what we’re hired to do and that’s the difference between us and students. So I am arguing for maybe six requirements – two natural science, two social science, two humanities. Keep foreign language, I’m curious where we are with foreign language and keep writing. And then for the number of credits to graduate, I was just worried about practically because I don’t know this at the advising end, is what would this plan do for students in terms of overload, not overloading. So where are we?

**Baker:** The first question on the Duke Experience, we have Denise Comer who has been chairing our committee, and I don’t know if you want to take a minute to update us on some of the feedback?

**Denise Comer (TWP):** We discussed in committee – and I should thank my committee members, too. The first-year committee was John Brown, Linda Franzoni, Michael (illegible), Adriane Lentz-Smith, Dan McShea, Larry Moneta, Christina Williams – we met frequently to talk about that. But I’ve heard the feedback about the year-long question and what we’re now thinking is that we are open to the possibility of reconsidering it for the revision, whether it’s a year long or one semester. I will say that I am inclined to experiment, give it a try with the two half-credits and my primary reason for that is that one of the main driving forces of the first-year experience is network building and relationship building and really giving students a chance to think across disciplines and how many different disciplines can look at a common question from

very different disciplinary and epistemological perspectives and I think that takes longer than four months to really seep in. So I would be inclined to think about it being a year. The scheduling of having a faculty commit for a whole year instead of just half a semester -- one way around that would be to invite students to switch in between fall and spring so if the cluster is centered around a common theme like water, they could take a fall semester half-credit course from biology and then in the spring, they'd still be in their cluster of water but they will take a half-credit class in dance. Meanwhile there's still the ongoing common experiences and networking with student life.

**Baker:** There's a couple other questions I want to answer. On the Duke Experience too, I think we are, I mean while it's true Trinity College will be taking the lead, we will need the faculty of Sanford, Nicholas to also participate, maybe Pratt, but we also have to design it to be inclusive of all the Pratt students as well.

**Hasso:** I was more meaning student life versus, I wasn't think of Pratt or (illegible), I was more thinking about distinction of an intellectual project versus student life project.

**Baker:** That's a great question because we've had a number of "not our peers" have these sort of intro, onboarding courses that are driven a lot by Student Affairs, teaching them a whole range of wellness, and that's not the idea we want here. This is much more academic and focused and introducing students explicitly to these networks of knowledge. So I hear you, that was never part of the plan, but we recognize that there are students that use these common courses as intro to student life as opposed to academic.

**Bell:** On the credit question, it's 34, we're not going to touch it.

**Baker:** That's where it is now. And I really do want to say that we really were trying to think differently and for those people who believe honestly in requirements, this is not that type of curriculum. We looked at the psychology, understood that requirements are not a good way to motivate students, and for them to affirmatively put together an education in which they are engaged, you will have more engaged, sustained outcomes. People will be more enthusiastic, they will have more agency, and that's the big philosophy. So this is a real paradigm shift and paradigm shifts are never really popular at the beginning, but we're trying something different and it's not relying on the traditional distribution requirements that many curriculum have. So I just wanted to put that on the table as well.

**Noor:** Just building on what Lee just said, too, what ends up happening, I see this myself as an advisor when my students come in. They come in and the first question is, "Does this fulfill the NS requirement, does this fulfill the SS ..." it so much dominates the advising meeting as opposed to, "Tell me what you've done. Tell me what you're interested in. Oh, that Bass Connection, tell me about that." With having so many requirements as we have right now, it just dominates the advising session and students are hyper focused on it. So by trying to reduce -- and we're not eliminating because there are some requirements -- this is a change in response to feedback we got from all the departments -- there are now requirements in there, but we're trying not to have so many requirements in so many different areas. But allow freedom for them to explore and be flexible, especially in regards to what their past experiences are that are not

transcribed. So for example in the context of science, it is possible that some of these people have been working in a lab just volunteering. They actually know science pretty well, so insisting they take a class in science as opposed to something in classics which they've had no background in, we're limiting the degrees of freedom in which they can really explore. That's at least my personal perspective.

**Chris Walter (Physics):** I think I mentioned before in this room that I believe in the classic idea of a liberal arts education where people are exposed to classics, history and science and I'm a little bit worried. I talked to Lee about this before. I think the intro class where you're exposed to epistemology of how to think about problems seems to be a good idea, but then on the upper level classes, there are no requirements. I agree that students get too caught up on what boxes to catch up, so we can back away from that. But my worry is that, aside from these soft how to think about solving problems classes, certain students won't be exposed to the wide range of liberal arts education. I'm less worried about the science students taking humanities classes, but it's honestly based on my experience, but I think there's a large group of people in the humanities who might never take the science or the math classes. I think it's problematic for a few reasons, first of all, for the classical reasons we heard before, but we heard in the last meeting about how we're supposed to be training leaders for the future. We heard about one of our alumnus who is now a governor and I think that more and more people in leadership positions have to understand some of the details of science and how to think through scientific questions and especially how those things are matched together with ethical problems to make good decisions. I mean, especially when you think about things like biology or energy or physics, these are things that people really have to understand something about and now to think through those problems and they can make important decisions based on what's going to happen in our society. So I sort of view that as one of my jobs and so maybe we should be offering different sorts of classes, right? We could offer classes that address that sort of thing and so I think the idea behind this curriculum is that if I think a little more creatively and I offer that kind of class, then maybe a student will want to take it. So I talked to Lee Baker about this after the meeting before last time and what he basically told me was, "Of course, we're going to look at what happens and if something is wrong, we can fix it." That seemed okay to me, then I started thinking about it more after I walked out of the room. So let's imagine a scenario where we approve what we have now and two years from now we look at what students are doing and we find out a large fraction of humanities students are never taking a real natural science class and we decide that's a problem. Now I don't really understand how the assessment or revision process will work here because we're setting up a very structured environment that will incorporate the ideas you have, right? In the end, we can talk as abstractly as you want, but students are going on ACES and they're going to be filling out things and there are going to be boxes, right? And you've seen what we've gone through in the past two years to try and discuss this sort of problem. So if we find out that that's not happening, and to the extent that only a few of us think this way, to the extent we all look at this and decide this is something we should do, you look at this and decide it's a problem, I don't see how we don't bake something in the system now so we can fix it. I just don't see that two years from now if we find out that 25 percent of the students are never taking a natural science course, how we make a change in an incremental way that fixes that problem without having a large change. Maybe you would like to comment on how you would imagine revising things if there's a problem.

**Bell:** Were you hear when Curriculum 2000 was implemented?

**Walter:** I came in 2004 so I guess not.

**Bell:** Well I was one of the framers in 2000, in an ancillary way, so within two years there were pretty major problems and there was a revision. So Curriculum 2000 was not like it is now, 16 years later, within the first two or three years. There was data gathered and there were decisions made on what to change. Any curriculum that is implemented is going to be an experiment and yeah, it's a tough question to figure out how to tweak it, but some trends may develop that we need to face, but it's an experiment. It's not like it's written in stone from day one.

**Walter:** That's what I'm kind of worried it is. It's not like changing the requirements. I don't know what you did with Curriculum 2000, but you can't say, "Let's have three more of NS instead of Q," it's "Let's have requirements" versus "let's not have requirements." That's a pretty big difference.

Noor: Can I make a really quick comment? I'm actually not sure why that's not possible. I'm not sure why we can't add requirements after we didn't have requirements.

**Walter:** If you think that's the case, that's fine. I'm only asking the question ...

**Noor:** I'm trying to understand why that couldn't happen.

(Cross talk about grandfathering)

**Matt Serra (Assessment):** It's a very difficult question to answer not knowing what issues might come up. Once those issues come up, there are lots of right individuals to think about whether it is really a problem, should we wait two more years and see, is it something we should jump on right away. The same thing happened with Curriculum 2000, there were some issues of restriction, not enough freedom for students to even be able to accomplish what they needed to do to graduate with the required number of requirements and so things were changed and changed rather quickly. But we waited about two and a half to four years before we started looking hard because we didn't know what was going to come up. So it's a very good question, but a difficult one to answer without knowing what those issues might be.

**Baker:** I just want to say if our students aren't taking any languages and are not writing and are not taking natural sciences, then by all means we need requirements. It's a bet we're making. I hear you. It's not a bet, it's going to work. But if for some reason ....

**Noor:** I'll eat a bug if it doesn't work.

**Micaela Janan (Classical Studies):** I'm going to go back and pick up on the issue of requirements versus expectations. If you are concerned that in two years they will not be taking languages and natural sciences, then require it. And I understand that, in addition to these fields of inquiry, as was eloquently expressed at the town hall on Monday, there should be a requirement for instruments of inquiry, of which foreign languages is one, of which math is



another. As was said then, learning about Russia is not the same as learning Russian. Learning about math is not the same as learning math. And they are instruments of (inaudible) in addition to the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities. Also, if you are convinced on the literature of requirements versus no requirements, please list the articles and books that you have read. We are researchers too, we'd like to evaluate. If there were no controversy in this area, there would be no publication.

**Carol Apollonio (Slavic and Eurasian Studies):** We've heard so much about encouraging students to explore. That's fundamental to this new curriculum and I buy into it, I think all of us do. But my experience has been as an advisor for many years that there is an enthusiasm for exploration and intellectual curiosity and students come in just brim full of this desire to explore, and then something happens within the course of the first year, and all of a sudden my novelist, my composer, my artist suddenly declares, "I'm not going to state a major." I say, "Why are you doing this? You got a D in that class." And they say, "Well, I think it will help me get a job." And I don't believe restructuring the curriculum is going to do anything to solve that. That's credentialism, that's 18 year olds' psychology, their brains aren't closed up until they are 25. So we are relying on these 18- and 19-year olds to make wise decisions to explore for the sake of intellectual gratification as opposed to the other kinds of gratification they are appealing to. I know a lot is going to be depending on advising. This is a discussion we need to have and I don't think it's one we can have where we just say, "Well, we're going to do the curriculum and then we'll turn it over to advising." Because I think a lot of advising experiences I've heard about are the student takes a goal to the advisor and the advisor helps that student achieve the goal by choosing the right courses. That also is not exploring, either. So there's a number of questions that are fundamental to the rationale of this curriculum and need to be addressed.

**Owen Astrachan (Computer Science):** I have a couple of questions and a comment. First of all, the idea that there's going to be an experiment is what I heard without setting a hypothesis going in seems contrary to at least one way of doing it. If you were having hypotheses going in, you would know what you expected to expect so that you could tell if the hypotheses were in fact verified. It shouldn't just be, "Let's just have it and kind of see what happens." That, I hope, would not be the case.

**Bell:** That's a caricature of what I said. I'm sorry.

**Astrachan:** I get to pick on the wording. That's fair. There was a question about 36 and 34, it would be nice to know before January if we could, although in January is fine. What other things have changed? So, for example, I'm curious about whether the theme idea has changed and I have another idea that seems like a little bit of an unfunded mandate that departments are going to be asked to do many things, come up with maybe not the best people but the best courses since the "best people" has gone away, I understand, but now it's going to be "best courses." These half-credit courses that might be part of the first-year experience ... all these things are going to happen on top of our other responsibilities and the idea that we are just going to assume that the sausage is going to get made without being curious about it and without asking questions as to how will we get that done and when will we be given resources to do that seems not like, "Let's just embrace the beauty of this new curriculum" when we don't know how

we're going to get it done. I don't think that's an implementation thing that is something we can simply ignore.

**Noor:** I'd like to make a couple of quick comments. So part of the reason for being here is to get feedback. So, short of having a real-time wiki, we can't give constant feedback of "Well now we're here, now we're there." At some level, we are accumulating information now. We have a meeting tomorrow. We've had other meetings as well. As was in the timeline, there will be a revised version showing what all the post changes are at that time. So the problem is people didn't know about the 34 – 36, but again we're working on this too. We can't give real-time updates short of having a wiki online for that.

**Baker:** I also want to say we are getting very different input from very different places within the entire university, and it is a challenge to integrate it without changing the overall philosophy and framework of the curriculum. I don't think we necessarily have an appetite to compromise, compromise, compromise so everyone's a little unhappy but we can live with it because it's not that type of ... it's not like legislation. We want a curriculum where the whole really is greater than the sum of the parts and so to keep the integrity of the basic philosophical foundation while accommodating and getting this input, it's more than a notion, as Dean Ashby likes to say. So we're really trying to work hard. I think tomorrow will be a difficult meeting, but hopefully a gamechanger, but we're going to be making a lot of choice points tomorrow. And finally, implicitly in this document is a hypothesis. The idea is students will be more engaged and more committed to committing to their education if they feel they have the agency to craft it full stop.

**Hasso:** But is there research? I would like to see the research. I would love to see that.

**Karin Shapiro (AAAS):** I had one point that was very similar to Owen's and something I've raised before. I'd really like to understand what the signature courses will look like. There does seem to be a sense of a blank check here. What is your best vision for that? If we could have some sort of meat on that bone. The second question I have is raised by the idea of wanting students to experiment. But I know we are leaving in place the possibility of students doing a major, minor or certificate so they can deeply professionalize and not get the broad liberal arts experience and that concerns me. So I'd like to know how we are going to square this idea of experimentation and taking the course in classics and taking the additional course in physics with the idea of somebody who really wants to do global health or whatever that might be. So there seems to be a tension that's built into the design and I'd like to know how you're thinking about it. Thanks.

**Bell:** So we endlessly discussed how to force breadth onto individual students which means defining breadth and it's really, really hard to do. If someone wants to double major in biology and chemistry, is that breadth or not? Once you start trying to make distinctions and you start trying to say, "I don't think a student should be able to double major in biology and chemistry," you have a difficult time justifying that decision, really. Also, I'd say keep in mind the fact that of graduating undergraduates, only about 25 percent will actually have a position that is directly related to their major, and most of them will change jobs 10-12 times in their career. So you could bring out a number of ... I mean I have a student in Bass Connections that I was co-directing for a couple of years who was a neuroscience major and she decided that she would

actually get a job for the summer in a big accounting firm in New York City. She went and talked to the HR people in the accounting firm and the guy said to her, “I don’t care whether you have a background in accounting, I could teach you that. What I really want to know is if you’ve done something intelligent as an undergraduate.” So I understand the liberal arts position you are coming from, but when you start trying to define what’s too close and what’s not and how to define broadness, you really run into problems.

**Shapiro:** So your points are well taken and I get that. I do wonder in the way that we’ve got the major, the minor and the certificate, if you have a major and one other, then of course you are freeing up time. It’s the sense of students having to do everything because everything is offered. That’s the issue, not the closeness of biology and chemistry.

**Baker:** Many students use... there’s going to be many that are pure credentialism, they just want one more star. But what we were pleasantly surprised was when students talked about their certificate, whether it was human development or ethics or doc studies, it’s a structured way of exploring. So they were saying, “Yes of course I’m exploring through these doc studies courses.” Which isn’t quite the same as the uncognate courses here and there but that was a sincere method of exploration for them which was different from their major. So that was kind of a surprise and I don’t want to dismiss that as just a different mode of exploration.

**Noor:** One quick final comment on the point you made about some students doubling down in one area and not having any breadth at all. With regard to that, we really were designing this curriculum so that it was not made for students who were trying to avoid everything and basically be like the bottom of the barrel. You could take any curriculum, you could take Curriculum 2000 and find a way you could navigate through it and have basically no breadth. There’d be ways of doing it, you’d be ticking off all these boxes but in reality you’ve learned basically nothing. Well, not nothing but... The only way to have a curriculum where you guaranteed that students had breadth would be if you absolutely require everything from the start, saying here’s the list of classes you’ll take, kind of like Engineering does. Just kidding. But really the idea is that there’s supposed to be these facilitative discussions and really trying to reach out to students. By raising the bar, we hope to help them reach for the bar.

**Linda Franzoni (Pratt):** I have a question and also a comment. The question has to do with the 34 versus 36 and if you’ve made a decision, why? Because we got very excited about 36 and we are thinking about going to 36, but if there is some reason not to, you need to tell us because we ... in fact I did a benchmarking study and it looked to me like we are very low compared to peers. So I would advocate for the 36 but you can tell me why not. So that was the question. The comment is that when it comes to the freshman course, the Duke 101, I was on Denise’s committee, that course needs to be for all students – Pratt and Trinity students – because it’s their first semester freshman year, they live together in the dorms, they are going to be lifelong friends with these people, Pratt, non-Pratt. So whatever happens with that, we need to be part of the conversation. We thought on our committee having a half credit for the whole year would make it a little more flexible for those of us with a more rigid curriculum. But if it goes to a full credit one semester, we need to be part of that conversation because I don’t know how that will work for us.

**Sarah Beckwith (English):** I wanted to really reinforce what Carol was saying, I think it's incredibly important. I'm sorry if I'm coming in on the tail end, this might have been discussed endlessly at the town hall meeting, which I wasn't able to come to. But the advising question is completely crucial. Are we still thinking of non-faculty advisors because it does seem to me that this is make or break for this curriculum. If we devolve the responsibility of advising to an army of non-faculty people, it will both be an intensification of the corporate university and an intensification of the model of consumer choice amongst the students, those being the default models. So the kind of learning a student does in a liberal arts curriculum is very, very connected with intellectual intimacy with faculty so I wanted to ask where we were with that question?

**Baker:** This kind of ties back to Owen's as well, which means yes, we're assuming that this will be much more intellectually engaging to be an advisor and be advised because you have a lot more creativity to put together individual programs. I hate to say it, we don't want to go to the professionals but the faculty will have to step up a bit more.

**Beckwith:** In my department when we discussed this, faculty wanted to step up. They thought it was so central to the design of the new curriculum that, as I said, we thought it was make or break. People really wanted to step up.

**Bell:** There's a lot of fear among faculty now that if you actually advise under Curriculum 2000 and you make a mistake on a check box, you end up with a senior who hasn't had a requirement that's really hard to do as a senior. So a lot of the hesitation on the part of faculty is the liability of making mistakes under this present check box system. I'm really heartened to hear that, actually.

**Baker:** And thank you so much for those comments. In order for this model to be successful, you're right, advising is critical. We've been saying that from the beginning. The team has been working closely with faculty and we're trying to ramp that up and we've been working hard on that.

(An unidentified person asked about the answer to the 34)

**Baker:** So we got a lot from the natural sciences, "My goodness, they can't do an overload." They were arguing for 32.

**Bell:** To put it crudely, it was kind of a human cry of upping it to 36 that really was a wave that came over us.

**Walter:** Between that and getting rid of being allowed to use the AP credits ... all those students would have to overload all the time which is already a problem.

**Baker:** But we're thinking it's a reset, so five classes is not an overload. But the lab scientists said, "Well if you take five lab science classes, that's an overload." So...

**Hasso:** Why isn't five classes an overload in a semester?

**Baker:** We would redefine it. A lot of universities, five is the typical course load.

**Astrachan:** No, that's not true.

(cross talk about hours)

**David Malone (Education):** I want to speak in support of this proposal and I've written some notes so excuse me if I look at them. I believe, as Alex Rosenberg said a month ago, that this proposal has the potential to transform the Duke undergraduate experience. I'm going to get personal for a second, which almost always is a bad choice, but I'm going to go there anyway. This is my 33<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching at Duke and Duke's the only institution I've ever worked at and I spent as a POP my entire adult life around Duke graduates and as Carol said, I see a great amount of curiosity, wonder, motivation and focus when they enter. When they graduate, I think many of them have lost that and I think we can do a better job. As Sarah said, it's upon the faculty to step up and do this. Second, which is very personal to me, my daughter went to Duke and she just graduated. She had a transformative experience. But she had the honor of having Sherryl and Owen and Alex Glass and Wahneema Lubiano and Michael Hardt and Bethzaida Fernandez. She had teachers who were electrifying. My fear is that, talking with her friends that graduated, not everyone has that kind of experience at Duke and I'm concerned that there's a large portion of our student body – I don't know what percentage – that I kind of think of as buds to blossom, that in some ways might be captured by credentialism and instrumentalism and pre-professionalism, but we have an opportunity to invite them into something else. I agree with what Owen said about the implementation: it's crucial. I also agree that it's scary to go forward with this; we don't know the details. The deans keep saying build it and the resources will be there but I think we need to dig a little deeper to ensure that. All this talk about the need for requirements – I don't view this as a proposal without requirements. I went to an undergraduate school, there were no grades and there were no requirements. This is not that. And that was not right for me and it wasn't right for most of the students who were with me. So is this proposal perfect? No, I do not think it is. I was at that humanities meeting on Monday. There was a great deal of passion there and energy and concern, and I think we need to recognize that because in that room were many of our "best" teachers and we need to figure out a way to honor their concerns and bring those into this proposal. But, as Lee said, there's something whole about this proposal that we can't allow it to die a death of a thousand cuts because it won't work that way. So I'm going to try and encourage all of us to try to come together and figure out a way to get this done so we can capture a greater portion of our students to have that transformative liberal arts experience.

**Catherine Admay (Sanford):** I wanted to come back to the signature course and getting the meat on the bones. Because I looked at those pages, I'm responsible for circulating to Sanford, I looked closely at the examples that were given and one of the ideas that Sanford had was what if we could use one of our intro courses, PubPol 155, or our ethics course, PubPol 302. Would that be a course that we could, without too much work, offer as a signature course? And I'm not sure, from having listened to this conversation. I saw in the report that intro to computer science and intro to cultural anthropology was on the list as examples, so it seems like it would be the case. If it's not the case, if we can't use some of the courses that we've already developed and for which we've already staffed, how are we going to come up with the staffing for both the

signature core and the common experience and we only have so many professors, regular rank and non-regular rank. This is the implementation point again, right? The bones on the flesh. What is the plan to come up with so many teachers to teach so many courses?

**Noor:** Great question. We were definitely not assuming this would be a whole suite of new classes that people would be teaching on top of what they were already doing. Definitely not that. We're definitely interested in tweaks in some of the existing classes, not just the existing signature core classes but some other existing intro classes. We're definitely assuming there's going to be a fair bit of that. That said, we're envisioning – and another group will make the decision on this – that there would be an opportunity here for people if they wanted to say, “I want to draw in a broader group, our major is not getting a lot of people, maybe we can draw something collaboratively with another department that would draw more people and maybe we get more people excited about our subject and decide to major with us.” So we're assuming some tweaks of potentially existing classes, but also opportunity for people who really wanted to go out there and do something completely different maybe to up their enrollment. Maybe they can do that.”

**Baker:** And in terms of the process, Inge Walther had a great process with her signature courses. We kind of thought something like that as a model. The person power we have not fully articulated; we kind of ball parked it. But again, we've looked at the first-year seminar and Writing 101 and we've backed up the envelope a little bit. But that's something we'll be working with Arlie, with Valerie and hopefully the deans of other schools that teach undergraduates and institutes who we also assume will want to contribute to the signature core.

**Valerie Ashby (Dean):** We are having serious conversations with Sally about what kind of costs to implement – and that's the whole breadth of cost, from thinking about what that might be for advising, if it requires some additional advisors, the model of advising, if there are any courses that need to be implemented, whatever that is. This is not going to come, as you all know, you've seen Trinity's budget ... it's not there. There's no room for us to do this. She is the next (inaudible) as we see what kind of frame you guys put on this, that will take us we imagine a couple months to walk through the process of what in here is working with a lot of you, what is it that's going to be required people wise, everything. Then we are submitting that to her and she knows that I'm coming, at least for the Trinity part of this to fully implement because ... my message to her at this point is, “I don't care what they pass, we're going to do it well, which means that well might cost you a pretty penny, you know that.” It's not a part of the strategic plan, I think it's been financed at \$135 billion – the broad Duke strategic plan – it's not in it. These are going to be separate dollars we are requesting with a very specific set of line items. And Arlie, who is not here, he just had to leave, has started looking at just the preliminary proposal you guys have submitted and it's hard to nail down things until you know if and what it will actually be, but just starting to look at the person power that is going to be required in his office. The academic deans, is it going to require more DAE's? All of that. It will be a very detailed process that we go to and we don't have the dollars to do it and Sally knows I'm coming. Let's say you pass this in February, before the end of the semester we should have framework completed and know exactly what it's costing and submitted that to her and be able to say back to you, “Okay we have the funds to do this and this in this particular way.” I know people want that assurance that financing is going to be there to support it and I haven't heard

anything from her except yes and she knows that she's saying yes to an unknown, but you have to say yes. It's a priority. That's all I can say about it right now. I wish we could get further in front of it but Arlie's team has started. The advising piece is going to be huge and I'm so happy to hear we want more faculty advising. If you've been doing advising by just checking boxes, it's not actually advising. But if you've been doing kind of mentored engagement with your students, that's the advising we want, and by the way we do have some great staff who do... I'm going to bring up Lee Willard as one person in my office who has won advising awards. So she's fantastic at the engagement piece. But we will need more faculty to also be engaged. So that's about all I can put around it.

**Admay:** Can I ask a follow-up question? I was really interested in the question we got earlier about hard-baking these things in so that if they don't happen we could ... would it be possible for us to vote once on the concept and vote another time on our sense of the implementation of the concept?

**Ashby:** I personally don't have any issue with that, I don't know ...

**Layton:** So there's a procedure of voting I will talk to you later about. Right now I'm thinking vote on the whole proposal, but splitting by component I need to talk to you about.

**Admay:** That's a way to put something on the table for us to feel comfortable that we're not voting on something...

**Layton:** Voting on principle?

**Ashby:** No, no, no. She's talking about voting on the implementation piece. Let me just taking the voting piece off right now because I can't answer that until Anita answers that. But principally I want you to know I care about how you think we're implementing. Actually not only care, I need you to help me think about implementing. So there's no day that we're going to take what you voted on and go in the Allen Building and come back out and say "ta da." That's not going to happen. So the engagement piece I can guarantee you the level in which it fits into the way you guys decide to vote and/or not vote. And the other piece I can assure you of is the assessment piece. That's the piece we're actually working on the hardest right now because we know what would that need to look like in two, two and a half years? What questions will be the tweaks? How would you stage that? Because if it passes, there's going to be a real assessment and a real opportunity to shift. That's actually what Arlie's office is trying to figure out now. What's that mean when you assess a curriculum mid-stream? So principally I'm 100 percent there with you. Why would we not want that? But then I have to figure out how to do it.

**Esther Gabara (Romance Studies):** I wanted to take a step back away from the question of requirements or no requirements and frame it in terms of a vision for diversity and to the diversity of the incoming undergraduate student. I think of this in terms of how do we make sure that students who didn't have the opportunity to volunteer in a science lab or get language options because their high school doesn't do it or does it very poorly. How do we think about a curriculum that is based on thinking of their success and giving them the opportunity to get what

they need that first year or two of study that they have the opportunity to choose a major that will make them fly, or whatever corny image you want. That is what I don't hear a conversation about yet in this room because I think the example even because I'm curating a show, the word "curating" – that relies on a sense of connoisseur, like we all know as connoisseurs that we are going to choose well from the fine works of art that are displayed. But some of us are just not connoisseurs, so how do we make sure, maybe set aside curating and think about creating a structure by which those folks are really given – and not inviting because this is a structure. In this case, I don't want to hear about inviting. I actually want to hear how the curriculum sets into place those first two years and I obviously am thinking a lot about language – not foreign languages but language because this is a multi-lingual place we live, languages aren't foreign they're multiple. But not only that. How do we address high schools where physics ... there's no lab resources. If we are reaching out to those students, how do we reach out to those students?

**Noor:** I'll just give you my personal view. I think the proposed curriculum actually does that better than Curriculum 2000 because we have this set of requirements that they are expected to do in the first year or two to give them the maximum breadth and for all these areas of knowledge right off the bat as well as the Duke Experience, the writing aspect, it's all right there in the first. With the current curriculum, you don't have to do that in the first year. You can say, "I'm going to take my NS classes second semester senior year. Oh, oops, I loved it, too late now. I'm out the door." So I would actually argue that this curriculum is better than Curriculum 2000 in that regard.

**Gabara:** With the exception of languages.

**Noor:** Again, languages is assumed in one of those epistemologies.

**Baker:** The other thing and again, I don't have the research in my hand, but we did look where structure works well is for first-generation students, students who didn't go to a fancy prep school. Community colleges rely on them quite a bit in terms of the structure. However with our experience with our Washington Duke scholars and with our Cardea fellows and with others, having recommendations, templates, not requirements but "Here's what you need to be doing. This is what a successful Duke student looks like based on your interests" actually goes a long way in terms of not having a hard structure but sort of real guidelines to enable students to progress towards their degree in a sort of enriching kind of way. Whether it's through orientation, whether it's through changing the culture, whether it's more/better advising, having not rigid structure but guidelines we believe is going to be part of everything from orientation all the way through. So they'll have guideposts or they'll know what to do if they don't have any idea. We're not going to let students just wander aimlessly through the curriculum.

**Gabara:** I know but the questions ideally those would be the same kinds of guideposts for all of our students, right? And with a mind to the diversity of those students, right? So then leaving requirements aside, I still feel like the way I'm reading the ... in the structure of it there isn't as much of those guideposts as maybe what I think would be of aid or help to all of our students.



**Inge Walther (German):** I'm also on the IDC Committee. I just wanted to say that to respond directly to what you were saying that one of the considerations, one of the things we've talked about a lot on the committee and this was in response to something that I believe it was you, Alex, something that you said in a forum years ago that really hit me is that we are getting students now that are coming to Duke that are more diverse than ever. We have more international students than ever, we have students from various different backgrounds, more minority students and so on. So I believe it was you who made that comment. We were trying to take into account designing structures for students to take them where they are when they come in. I was just speaking to a colleague who's advising an international student who's fluent in three languages already. She's required in our current structure to take another language and she's taking X language 101 and she's bored to tears because she says it's moving way too slowly for her. She's already fluent in three languages. So we need to rethink when we say we want a foreign language requirement for whom and for what? Natural sciences the same way. We have students coming in with huge experience with lab work who have worked in labs already before they've come to Duke. I do believe we have a responsibility for taking students wherever they are and moving them further and forward but I think that's really important to keep in mind.

**Josh Sosin (Classics):** You guys have done a ton of work and (inaudible). So one of the things I notice here is it seems to me one of the features of this discussion that makes it so hard is that I think if you were to poll us, I think there would be widespread agreement on a number of basic essential principles. Students' interests should be wider rather than narrow, students' intellectual commitment should be more adventurous and far reaching rather than impoverished. A diversity of student body and a diversity of intellectual opportunities for them are good. There are a whole host of these things where I think we could find rapid agreement. What I think makes this so hard is that there seems to be rather less clarity on causal pathways, that is things that are producing certain ill effects that we all agree are there -- credentialism is not good, I think most of us agree about this -- and what mechanism instills that in our students? Is it even a little bit the current curriculum? I'm going to guess the current curriculum has very little to do with the emergence of that set of behaviors in our students. So this lack of clarity on basic causal pathways, on basic terms leads us to have discussions that I think are ... well, they are spirited and everyone's intellectual commitment is true and all of that, but they don't actually get to the essential problems. They also allow us to say things like, for example, it's not clear that requirements are the best way to motivate students. I remember getting in trouble for using a screwdriver as a hammer for the very same reason. It's not clear to me that requirements as described were meant to motivate students. Awesome teaching is meant to motivate students but requirements are meant to open doors so that the awesome teaching is a more real possibility. So if I could try to boil this down to a suggestion, it would be: when we come to this next draft, it would be incredibly helpful at least for this reader, to have the clear description of what the kinds of problems we mean to address are, which of the specific proposals means to target those problems, and what the solution pathway looks like, and why that's preferable to any other adjustment to the existing thing or any other thing you could imagine. That might allow us not to just talk about the proposal that are on the table as if they were somehow intrinsically good or not good. 36? 34? I don't know. But those numbers have to be optimized to a certain set of goals and what I don't see in the proposal is a clear description of how any of these things is optimized to a set of goals or problems that we all basically agree upon. If the next draft can get

us to there, then we won't just be throwing a dart at the dart board and picking 34 or 36. We'll be able to speak in specific ways about how one number better meets the goals that we do agree upon. Otherwise it just feels like we are just flailing around and nobody's wrong, but that doesn't mean we're going to produce a curriculum that (inaudible).

**Sherryl Broverman (Biology):** Obviously you guys get questions over and over about the signature courses. It's the great unknown. I've been to multiple town halls, meetings with Suzanne, ECASC, where they said FOCUS is probably going to be part of the signature. So our signature areas are our requirements, de facto. They are telling us to look in these individual areas, so FOCUS might be part of it, languages might be part of it, writing might be ... are going to be part of it. I have also seen a graphic you guys have produced where the signature areas are spread out over the first two years so it exposes people to new areas and new ways of thinking so they make the most refined decision when they come to their major. I can imagine a student getting four signature courses in one semester: first semester fall, two FOCUS courses, a writing class, a Spanish class, depending on how they are curated. Is that something that's going to be ... I know that's an operational question. Is that going to undercut the philosophy of a continuous range of exploration given and it comes down to how many courses are curated and what. Is it going to be intro to cul anth, but I've heard these all mentioned: freshmen seminars, sure; writing, yes; languages, yes. So I could imagine someone getting four first semester and then proceeding as if. Have you thought of that?

**Baker:** Yes.

**Broverman:** Is that okay?

**Baker:** Yeah, I think it is okay. Anyone who's taught the FOCUS program, you want them to be as engaged as much because they're just taking everything in and the idea is for them ... the signature core is also an invitational core. So we're inviting them to then discern these networks of knowledge, what they're good at, what they like, check in some more...

**Broverman:** I teach FOCUS and it's transforming. I'm saying that's okay?

**Baker:** I think we had decided one of our ways of language instruction is that every language course would be part of this signature core, so that would welcome them in and then they have them and through this magic of great instruction, they continue because it's so compelling. So I think that would be okay. We haven't talked about it as a committee.

**Broverman:** It seems philosophically different. We keep talking about the first two years and those first two years could be compressed into one semester but if that's okay ...

**Baker:** But we didn't want to then force students to do it all in one. We've had that conversation, too.

Noor: There's what satisfies the requirement and there's what students actually do, right? So in a sense if they take the four, they're not going to spend the next two years taking 20 PE courses ... no offense to PE fans. The idea is that the exploration is not just through the requirements.

The whole reason we are opening this up is so they can explore, they can take an upper level classics or an upper level physics or whatever it is they like, so that this would continue even if the requirement is fulfilled.

**Broverman:** I should have prefaced this by saying I love the new curriculum. Anything that allows more ... I tell students to be intellectual butterflies and they are shocked of the idea that they could flit ... flit's a horrible word, it makes it sound like they are not deeply immersed ... but sample new things, try. It's so antithetical to the way they come in.

**Bell:** We haven't said anything about the pass/fail options also. We want to implement four pass/fail options so that people can actually explore things they may not think they are strong in and not be punished for it.

**Baker:** But we've got that back from six. Who was asking where we are in terms of ...? That's pretty much going to be dialed back to four, two of them have to be in the first two years. They can't take their four their final semester their senior year. That pass/fail piece is an integral part of I think an answer to Esther's question about the structure. That will enable ... it takes the down side risk of exploration hopefully out of the equation.

**Ed Iversen (Statistical Science):** Another mudane question, but following up on the pass/fail option, in disciplines where the course work is sequenced, many of our courses are prerequisites for subsequent courses, if we've got a lot of students that are exploring on the pass/fail option, the courses may become a little crowded and those students may crowd out, students who would ultimately want to be majors (cross talk). It would basically push some students off track to sort of finish on time.

**Bell:** I think that's an important question for someone in statistics like you.

**Iversen:** It's a problem today.

**Bell:** So again, we have to figure out how to deal with that. It's an important point.

**Admay:** Well wouldn't one of the things be to choose not to allow the credit/not credit option to attach?

**Bell:** Yeah, I think eventually there are going to have to be departmental decisions about ...  
(cross talk)

**Unidentified:** Departments can decide which classes are pass/fail, right?

**Bell:** Yes.

**Admay:** And isn't it credit/no credit, not pass/fail, where this credit thing makes it disappear?

**Bell:** Yes.

**Layton:** Alright, I want to eat, so the meeting is adjourned.