1. CALL TO ORDER
Interim Speaker Charles Walcott: “I am supposed to remind the body that no photos or tape recorders are allowed during the meeting. Please turn off your cell phones, please identify yourself and the department when you speak, and wait for the microphone. I’ve also been asked if you would be so kind as to talk into the microphone. We apparently had some problems with transcription last time, and it had to do with the microphone wandering around somewhere outside.

“There are no Good and Welfare speakers today that I know of, but we would suggest a maximum speaking time of about two minutes. And if you begin to exceed that, I will begin to approach, which is a gentle hint that time is up. So with that, we have first some consent items; the approval of the minutes from the 12/11/13 senate meeting, and we just ask for a motion to approve it. All in favor, say aye.

“Opposed? Abstaining? Good. We have consented. We now have the dean’s report. Mr. Dean, sir?”

2. REPORT OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY
The Irving Porter Church Professor of Engineering and Professor of Astronomy, Joseph Burns, Dean of the Faculty: “It is my pleasure to welcome you to the beginning meeting of the spring semester of 2014. I’d like to start off in our normal way of please introducing yourselves to any neighbor that you don’t happen to know, just as we get to know one another a little bit better. I see we are starting to cluster into people who know one another very well. It’s defeating the whole purpose here, you know.

Let’s move on. We were trying to think of what sort of Cornell goody we could bring you, and I was pushing very hard for ice cream, but people kept saying no ice cream; it’s too damn cold, so we slipped back to items from the Cornell orchards. These are Fuji apples. Half of their development passed through Thomas Jefferson, but not through Cornell. Anyway, good apples, and we are looking for ideas for the future.
“I’m supposed to give you some announcements. We have a couple of things that have happened in the last week or so that are interesting, I think. We have first off, the first of the Cornell MOOCs started out on a week ago on Monday with 17,000 people enrolled in Relativity and Cosmology. Not everybody’s active, by a long shot, but I was told by a very harried-looking Professor Turner that there were 2,000 people in his chat room as we met, and he was a little rattled by that, didn’t know how to handle it, so it was a little chaotic, but he said he was learning a lot. That’s great.

“We also have, as you know, for better or worse, a new calendar in place. I know that not everyone is entirely happy with it; but remember, the deal is that this is a trial for three years, and I ask you to bear with it. It will get a lot better on Monday and Tuesday of the coming week, when we’re on holiday, so enjoy that.

“At today’s meeting of the Educational Policy Committee, the final exam schedule was determined, and that will be announced as of Friday, I believe, and that is being done in a new way as well. We waited until we had the enrollments in the courses, and then decided how to optimize things based on the course enrollment, so we started -- we’re announcing this a little later, because we needed to get past the add date.

“I think that’s it for our announcements, but for one very, very important one, and that is that the president announced at the board of trustees meeting the end of January the selection of the Weiss presidential fellows. These, as you know, are the individuals amongst us who are the most distinguished teachers, and that’s what -- we’re all here, we do our research, but really our influence comes through the individuals who are able to change people’s lives, and we celebrate them here.

“This is for sustained record of effective inspiring and distinguished teaching and contributions to undergraduate education, and there are, as normal, three. The first of these is Ashim Datta. At the end, I’ll ask these individuals to stand, then we can applaud them all simultaneously. Ashim is a professor in Biological and Environmental Engineering, been here about 25 years, just shows incredible care for his students, willing to do anything, according to Rate My Professor. It’s just inspiring to hear what he’s accomplished.

“Melissa Hines is the second, coming from the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology. I know from the time when I was vice provost researcher helping out in that office, that she’s been an exceptional leader of the Center for
Materials Research, CCMR; and in that role, she’s been distinguished, especially in outreach and increasing the diversity of our offerings and bringing people into Cornell. And then on the side, I learned that she’s an incredible undergraduate teacher besides. So congratulations, Melissa.

“And then last, Dave Sherwyn, a professor of hospitality, human resources and law in the School of Hotel Administration, a Cornell undergraduate, a Cornell law degree and also an inspired teacher. I know early in my tenure as dean, I got a call from Dave, and he was in Washington, and he was standing up because I was doing something wrong about his students and not treating them fairly; and he’s in there banging, but very, very legally. And I knew I was in trouble, so I gave in. And that shows his effectiveness as a teacher, I’m sure, but you also look on his ratings. They are incredible. If those three individuals, if they are in the audience, would they please rise and let us celebrate them.

(APPLAUSE)

“Congratulations, all. Thank you. Thank you for what you do.

“So then I wanted to move on and tell you about some of my activities since the December meeting, if I could move on to the next slide. There has been -- and I’ll go through these individually momentarily, but we’ve done some work on the campus code of conduct. You have received a copy of that, and there are other hard copies up here, if you’re interested, so there’s some material there. We’ve also gotten just yesterday a response from President Skorton on the faculty senate resolution that we dealt with in December, and then there are three other items that are listed here, which if I have time, I’ll mention as well.

“So let’s move on to the next slide. If you remember the history of this back in November of 2012, there was a confrontation between demonstrators in favor of Palestinian stance and Israeli stance that led to some questions about -- issues of academic freedom and so forth and so on. We, at the December meeting a year ago, formed a faculty committee to figure out what went on there and what issues it raised. Simultaneously, the university assembly’s Code on Judicial Conduct, I think, whatever it is, CJC acronym, was looking at this. They decided to hold off on their resolution until they had received our resolution, our report, and that took place last May. So they read that report and discussed it with the faculty representatives and one of the members of that committee. And since that time, in the fall, they have been working on language to change the campus
code of conduct. And there is a resolution that has been distributed to you, and I'm just bringing it to your attention.

“The way this goes, the university assembly has jurisdiction in this issue, and they have posted what they think the campus code of conduct ought to read. And it's up to us, if we care, to step out and write to them or alert them as to what we think about the proposed resolution. And I know there are some faculty who have already spoken to me who are unhappy about the way it reads. There are others who presumably are happy, but I do encourage you all, if you are unhappy about things like that, stand up and show your colors and volunteer to serve on some of the university assembly's committees, because we had a very difficult time staffing those committees, although, as you'll see, the resolution that you have was, in fact, put over the signature of a faculty member who was acting in charge of that thing. So then there will be a university assembly's vote after the comment period is over, which is in the middle of March.

“Then the next one is President Skorton's response to the faculty senate resolution, and that resolution asked for Cornell to accelerate the rate at which we move to carbon neutrality, moving it up from 2050 to 2035. If you have looked at the -- his response, which was distributed, he has agreed to that and has asked myself and Yue Wang to form a joint committee, somewhat less than ten people, five and five or four and four of staff and faculty. I'm at work at that; in fact, have my first agreement to serve on that, so we hope to have that committee in place. And they will report back as of June 1st, as to strategies in which will allow the university to move to carbon neutrality faster.

“The president, as you've seen, will not be recommending to the investment committee divestment, and he plans to come to our senate meeting -- in fact, he had wanted to come today, but was unable to, because of scheduling conflict, and he'll be here next month to talk over these issues and to discuss them with you and give you his reasons for this.

“So very quickly, two last items: One is we are considering a faculty forum. This will look at the issues of our international partnerships. As you know, Cornell is expanding. We have significant partnerships with the Technion and New York City Tech, we have a medical college in Qatar and many relations with China and Singapore and other organizations, other countries. And as you also know, there are many cases where these countries or groups don't share our ethical and professional values. And the question is under what circumstances should the university be linking up with such people and who makes those decisions and
how does the faculty get involved in trying to make sure the university’s making the right decisions. So the hope is to have such a forum, probably in the middle of April, but that's under development with the leadership of Risa Lieberwitz. “The last point is something under development, just trying to show you some of the items that are of interest, and that is it's been brought to my attention and also Bridget Schaefer in the employee assembly, there’s a whole constituency of Cornelians out there who are not blessed to be able to sit in an audience like this, so we’ve got a faculty senate, there's an employee assembly; but there are over 1,000 academics, many of our colleagues, many of our most-treasured colleagues who are doing great teaching, great research, and they have no way to make their voice heard.

“And so there’s a consideration that maybe they should start to either join our respective assemblies or they should have their own assembly or there should be something, because these people are very valued, and I think many of them don't feel very valued by the university. And that should be rectified, so they can have their voice in decisions.

“And then the last thing that I've been spending a lot of time on, as many others have been, is the distance learning report, and you’ll hear more about that in about 15 minutes. Thank you.”

Speaker Walcott: “We have a report, then, from the Financial Policy Committee. Sir?”

3. REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL POLICIES COMMITTEE
The Goldwin Smith Professor of Economics, Lawrence Blume, Chairperson of the Financial Policies Committee: “I'm Larry Blume and I think I'm here as maybe the beginning or part of the continuing program to let you know what's going on in the committees and, in particular, what's going on with us.

“I thought I would begin by briefly letting you know what we are supposed to do. Here are two of the things we are supposed to do. There are four things in our charge and, as you can see, the scope of our committee is in fact not too small. And continuing in comprehensive analysis of the financial condition and policies, I'm sure that everybody in the university wishes that someone could do that, so that's what we are supposed to do. Also, we are to participate with the cooperation of appropriate administrative officers in the budget planning process, or at least this is our charge. Obviously, this requires cooperation, and I'll talk about that in just a moment.
“Two more things: We're asked to consider the financial implications of all issues for which responsibility is assigned to other Faculty Senate Committees and, in fact, we have spent a lot of time this term dealing with issues that have come from you or come from other bodies looking at financial issues on your behalf.

“Then finally, we are expected to examine and make recommendations concerning the financial status of the faculty. So that's our charge and, as you can see, that's a lot to have on a plate for a rather small committee that meets once a month for the academic year. We've decided, in fact, that once a month is not enough, and so for this term, we've decided to meet semimonthly, in order to see if we can accomplish even a small piece of this.

“I want to spend a little time telling you how we have spent our fall, and then a little more time, how we are going to spend our spring or how we'd like to spend our spring. And then I also want to hear from you on what you think we should be doing.

“So there are four issues that we have spent our time on this fall. Three of these you are probably familiar with. I will say something briefly about the fourth. We spent several meetings looking at the divesture issue and ultimately preparing a report that went to the dean of faculty and to the UFC. I don't know what is broader -- we tried to investigate the financial impact of divestment. This is actually a very difficult thing to do. Any of you who have had experience with financial data or talked to a financial planner can imagine that this was a nightmarish thing to try and accomplish, and I think that our experience with the divesture issue highlighted both the good and the bad aspects of cooperation with the administration.

“So on the one hand, we and the divestment group had several interactions with A.J. Edwards, the university's chief investment officer. And in our meeting, we found that he was very forthcoming. We certainly learned a lot about the investment portfolio of the university, things that would be worth sharing with you in an appropriate forum; but on the other hand, the thing that really would have been helpful to get the discussion off the ground is something that just didn't happen, and that would have been to actually sit down and run some scenarios through whatever financial planning tools they use in order to actually come up with reasonable estimates of the impact.
“I wasn't at the meeting where this was discussed, but I can imagine the numbers that were thrown around were all over the map. We could certainly never reach agreement on anything in the committee, but I think that A.J. tried hard and so I think it was at least -- I think it was a worthwhile exchange.

“Start-up New York. So this is maybe something that many of you don’t know about. There is a program to which Governor Cuomo’s name is attached, whose purpose is to encourage the development of business around the state and, in particular, the development of those businesses that have some synergies with New York State’s colleges and universities.

“So universities who wanted to participate in this program were asked to provide a plan for participation. The program basically involves having firms with these synergies approach universities and, if they are approved by the universities, they get some stuff.

“What do they get? They get access to some university resources like some land or maybe a building or two for a long period of time, and then they also get very generous tax breaks for their employees. Generous, I have to say that I investigated the possibility that we could all resign from the university and contract back to the university our services, because the tax breaks or tax-free $200,000 per year, per person for five years sound good to me; but unfortunately, the program doesn't allow it, but that's your committee working on your behalf.

“Part of the enabling legislation required that appropriate bodies within the university vet the university’s proposal, and we did that. Mary Opperman, who was in charge of putting the proposal together, Cornell's proposal together, came to us and gave us a presentation. She’s very forthcoming.

“We made one suggestion at that meeting, and that was that there be more faculty involvement in the ongoing oversight committee for this program, and I was -- I’m pleased to announce that Mary was actually quite enthusiastic about that. And indeed, I think it has come to pass that Rod Howe from Development Sociology agreed to serve as a faculty representative on that committee.

“So I feel we've had a little bit of positive impact here. One of the things that I learned, that our committee learned is Cornell is actually doing a lot of different things around the state with local economic development, and I was certainly encouraged to hear that.
“Let me talk about faculty salaries. Faculty salaries are an issue, I think. It is a difficult issue in the university, and maybe this is where cooperation is a hard word. We had a chance to see a little bit of data on how faculty salaries, and particularly senior faculty salaries, our senior faculty salaries look relative to our peers.

“And now speaking as an economist, I can say the data we saw would allow you to include virtually nothing. And I could tell you all kinds of reasons why, and I won't do that here. It's clear that in order to understand where we sit in the market and how effective we are and how effective in retaining faculty and how effective we expect we can be at recruiting faculty in the future, both junior and senior levels, we need to see more data than, in fact, we currently can have access to.

“A senior faculty member in the university who's on the committee, who's been very active in financial affairs over the years told me that over the last several decades, there's been a decline in faculty participation, both in the budget planning process -- apparently there are committees that used to have faculty representation that no longer do -- and also in the kind of data that we're allowed to see.

“So I was told that the data that we saw, which we were told was the best data that we could look at, was in fact nowhere near as detailed as this committee's predecessors have been able to see a decade or so ago. And it's going to be hard, I think, for faculty to have any input without more. So this is something that we have to think about and work on.

“Now, the last issue that we've spent -- well, we haven't spent much time, other than in the fall, though it was our intent to, and it is our intent to spend a lot of time on this in the spring, is the working of the new budget model. And as you can imagine, this is an immense thing.

“I have to say that even though we have heard a number of presentations on it and we heard a number of presentations on it last year, many of us are still struggling to understand how this will work. And I understand we are not the only people in the university who feel this way.

“We have learned a lot about the details of how the model actually works, and we still have some more details to learn, and we hope to do that maybe at our
next meeting; but after that, what we really want to get to is the issue of how does this impact us. How does this affect program planning and things like that.

“So it's our hope that we'll be able to invite academic staff, deans of colleges, hopefully the provost and dean of the graduate faculty to come and talk to us and to get some understanding of how the planning process works, because there seems to be a great deal of confusion about what's coming down the pike. “That's what we have done, that's what we have been doing, but it's not all we should be doing. If you remember the charge, we are supposed to comment on lots of different things. Already I have heard two things at this meeting that arguably the FPC should have something to say about.

“For example, the financial impact of MOOCs and other distance learning proposals is one thing. What is the financial impact on the Ithaca campus and on the programs that we're involved in, of all the university activities abroad that we just saw a slide about a moment ago.

“Frankly, we are spread too thin, and there's a lot to do and we're choosing pieces. We shouldn't be choosing alone. We would like to get guidance from you. So one of the things I'm here to do today is ask you to tell us what you would like us to look at. After all, we are your committee.

“The final thing I want to say is that in addition to telling us what you would like us to work on, also it would be good for us to hear -- since we are at least at the moment pursuing talking about the new budget model, we would like to hear your experiences with things as they come down the pike.

“We would like to know what's working, what's not working, what you think the model is doing, whether it's doing that or not, because perceptions are at least as important as reality when it comes to planning. So please let us know; email me or to Dean Burns, who will then forward them to the committee. We'd like to hear your concerns. Thanks.”

Speaker Walcott: “We have time for a question or two. Yes. Hang on, Professor Stein. There's a microphone coming.”

Emeritus Professor, Peter Stein, Department of Physics: “I have so many clothes on, I have to push them all off to stand up. I was intrigued by something you said regarding number three, namely faculty salaries, and I remember I was
much engaged in this issue some long time ago, call it 15 years ago or something like that.

“I guess maybe this was before the Internet or something, but the discussions we had required a very, very simple metric, and the simple metric was the average salary for a Cornell faculty member and the average salary of a faculty member -- that is to say Cornell was divided into two; the endowed college and the statutory colleges, and then a list of institutions that both the administration and the faculty agreed were comparable was drawn up.

“Then there was the AAUP’s numbers for the faculty salaries, and there was a comparison made between Cornell and the average of the ten comparable institutions. And that seemed at the time to be an acceptable metric for how we were doing, and we started out at the bottom of that list, more or less, and started making our way up. And I just wondered why that wasn't an adequate way of looking at it.”

Professor Blume: “Two things. The first is we are seeing less data than that now. We are no longer -- the data we saw was not disaggregated by endowed versus statutory. That's one thing. Other thing is to really make use of a metric like that, you are actually making an implicit assumption that the picture, the demographic picture of the senior faculty or whatever faculty group you are looking at is the same across universities.

“For example, if our senior faculty is younger than the senior faculty at other universities, you would expect our salaries to be below average and you wouldn't say we were underpaid because of that. On the other hand, if we're top-heavy relative to our peers -- now, that kind of data, we all know how to get that, but another way in which that number might not be informative is that different universities have made bigger or smaller investments in different disciplines, where the market salaries are different.

“Those are the kinds of things you would want to untangle, if you really wanted to come to a conclusion that we, as a group, are underpaid or, God willing, overpaid. So that’s my take.”

Speaker Walcott: “I think we probably should move on. Thank you very much.

“We are now going to move along to hear from the Distance Learning Committee, and Richard Miller is going to present the committee’s report.”
4. **REPORT OF THE DISTANCE LEARNING COMMITTEE**

The Wyn and William Y. Hutchinson Professor in Ethics and Public Life, Richard Miller, Department of Philosophy: “The ad hoc Distance Learning Committee was a joint faculty administration committee. Its members, most of whom were faculty, were nominated by the dean of the university faculty after discussions with the provost, who appointed Vice Provost Laura Brown as chair.

“We were not given an iota of independent authority, but we were empowered by a committee charge reflecting the initiative of the UFC, for which the faculty on the committee were continually grateful. The charge and its presentation to the senate told us to respond to the benefits and promises, costs and pitfalls of the many forms of online distance learning by writing an informative report, including both policy recommendations for Cornell and illumination of controversies and open questions concerning what may become a transformation of American higher education.

“From our first meeting on May 14th through the February 3rd meeting, in which our final report was approved, we met 16 times; but as we sometimes tell relatives who envy us jobs in which we only spend a few hours a week in the classroom, this was a very small part of the story.

“The meetings discussed reports of five working groups, leading to multiple drafts of the final report, in which the drafting committee took account of extensive comments on each prior version. We hope that the report will stimulate discussion at Cornell, in which the creativity and knowledge of the faculty and administration will add to the benefits and mitigate any harmful side effects of the online revolution in higher education.

“Please consider sending the report to people who are not at Cornell as well. To introduce today's discussion, I will describe some facts, distinctions, recommendations and open questions that we take to be especially important.

“We did not end up with any one definite judgment of online distance learning, and hope that you will not either. Rather, we were profoundly impressed by the diversity of distance learning. Still, one form played an especially prominent role in our discussions, because of its transformative potential and costs. These are Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs, that are offered by edX, Coursera and other consortia.
“They have massive enrollments of a median of 33,000, in one recent survey, though average completion rates are about six percent. They are primarily aimed at students in institutions of higher learning or prospective students, though a recent survey of Penn Coursera MOOCs found the 83% of enrollees already had degrees.

“They have high-quality production values, elaborate formats and interactive segments meant to increase viewing and engagement. This makes for a high cost of production, as compared with other forms of distance learning; about $70,000 in non-faculty labor cost in fairly recent Cornell estimates for a relatively simple edX MOOC, but the per-enrollee cost is low.

“One special concern is faculty time required for producing and maintaining such a course. Before Cornell began creating edX MOOCs, a rough estimate was 200 to 300 faculty hours of production and ten hours a week for subsequent maintenance, helped by at least one TA. There were recent suggestions that these may be underestimates.

“Exclusive reliance on a consortium MOOC for teaching a course is made possible by chat rooms and discussion boards for thousands of students and grading by computers or fellow enrollees. On May 21st, a week after the DLC’s first meeting, the provost announced that Cornell had signed a two-year contract with edX to produce eight MOOCs.

“One recurrent topic for the committee -- and we hope for further discussion of our report -- is the nature and extent of the benefits of edX and other consortium MOOCs. In themselves and compared with alternatives, the very large enrollments bring reputational benefits, visibility of Cornell and our excellent teaching is enhanced. Courses may play an important role in recruiting to particular departments; for example, in computer science.

“Our views of the educational benefits of consortium MOOCs were diverse. These partly reflected differences in the fit of the teaching goals of different disciplines, with a MOOC form of short segments of lecturing, alternating with online tests and other interactions, combined with massive online discussion.

“At present, the fit seems good in several fields in science, technology, engineering and math, such as computer science. Not all is good elsewhere, especially in the humanities, where MOOCs are often regarded as superficial and inadequately engaged with learning needs. Some of us thought there was a
realistic prospect of overcoming such deficits. Others were agnostic or quite pessimistic.

“As I noted before, we were deeply impressed by the diversity of distance learning, which stands out against the background of this account of consortium MOOCs. Some of these forms are well-established at Cornell, extension and professional development online courses, which often have relatively large enrollments and sometimes can be viewed for free.

“Cornell winter and summer session online courses, which are not free, offer credit and are kept small to enable student-instructor interaction through e-mail and discussion boards. We think that these well-established distance learning options make valuable contributions to Cornell’s educational mission and should continue.

“Two other forums hold progress at major educational benefits, with much less expense than consortium MOOCs. Videoed lecture courses with little or no augmentation are presented for free to large audiences at such ensembles and open Yale courses. Many of these ensembles can be accessed by iTunes U, which has 200 million downloads per year.

“Another option is an online learning module, much shorter than a full-fledged course, offered both for online access by individuals and for use in courses that are largely face-to-face. In general, we were impressed by the usefulness of all forms of distance learning and so-called hybrid learning, in which much face-to-face interaction occurs.

“These views of benefits, costs and alternatives led us to some recommendations. We hope that Cornell will continue to expand technical and other support for distance learning in a way that encourages innovation and diversity. While we understand the special demand of the new edX contract, we hope for a balanced approach in which excessive concentration on edX MOOC production is avoided.

“Our range of views about the prospects and pitfalls of edX MOOCs allowed only for the following consensus: Cornell should proceed strategically and carefully in considering whether and at what rate Cornell edX offerings should occur after our current two-year commitment of eight courses ends.
“Of course, it’s an open question, whether the conclusion displays excessive reluctance to embrace transformative benefits or excessive reluctance to warn about costs and dangers. Our interest in the diversity of forms of distance learning also led us to discuss how Cornell might enhance the outreach of forms of distance learning that do not have wide-ranging access platforms. These include non-edX online courses and learning modules.

“We recommend an active cooperative effort to seek such means of enhanced access, including outreach via a Cornell portal, providing information about the entire suite of Cornell’s distance learning activities. What form should this portal take and how comprehensive it should be are open questions.

“There are questions about course credit. We recommend that academic credit not be granted in any Cornell degree program for a MOOC as an entirely online course relying on automated grading or peer assessment, including Cornell edX courses and Cornell-sanctioned MOOCs.

“Despite diligent searching, we have found no such course that is equivalent to the level and rigor of an on-campus, for-credit Cornell course. At the same time, we all support Cornell’s well-established uses of online courses and granting credit, as in the school of continuing education and summer sessions.

“Here, the difference is in scale. Personal involvement of teachers and goals that I mentioned at the start turned out to be deeply important, but what about the licensing of Cornell MOOCs, including Cornell’s edX MOOCs, for credit at other institutions? Here we can only share our worries and invite further discussion.

“Although Cornell has not been presented with the prospect of such licensing, it is a significant possibility for edX participants. Anant Agarwal, the president of edX, identified a large flow of licensing fees for for-credit use as edX’s major ultimate revenue goal. Presumably, this will take place at two-year colleges and at state universities as a means of cutting costs to replacement of face-to-face instruction, with instruction that is exclusively or nearly exclusively online.

“The only careful comparison we have found of these alternative types of instruction provide significant evidence of inferior learning outcomes for exclusively online instruction, especially among students from low-income families, African-American students and students with generally low grades.
“We are also worried about the obvious impact of such a shift on faculty employment and graduate students’ prospects. At the same time, a great expansion of higher education in the United States is sorely needed, and may not be feasible in any case, not politically feasible, without a substantial reduction of per-student cost at non-elite institutions. Cornell can withhold permission for licensing, if edX accepts the reasonableness of that choice. What should Cornell do? What should the prerogatives of the Cornell MOOC instructor be? Should licensing hinge on faculty approval at the non-Cornell institution? We could not form a policy consensus and encouraged further discussion.

“I encourage you to talk about the deep questions of how to use MOOCs and distance learning, to do research on the improvement of quality of education at Cornell and to improve classroom teachings. We have to encourage experimentation and cooperation, not just through facilities that we fund, but through appropriate intellectual property rights regimes.

“These deep questions, of course, lead us to a need for an appropriate structure for making and implementing policy concerning MOOCs, a structure that includes both cooperation among faculty, the administration and support staff, and also an independent voice for each part of this process, including an independent voice for faculty.

“Here’s what we recommended: A three-part structure. There would be a Distance Learning Committee, maybe faculty members and chaired by one, which would lead in the shaping of policies and best practices to advance the educational benefits of distance learning. This mostly faculty, faculty-chaired committee would also guide the selection of courses and projects for targeted funding.

“Second, the distance learning administrative group would consist of members of the administration, leaders of technical support and the dean of the university faculty, that would finalize decisions concerning the selection and continuation of initiatives that use central funds, allocate resources to facilities that provide university support for online learning, and determine the scope of distance learning, including the overall direction of innovation and future plans.

“The distance learning implementation team would be charged to design and actively manage support for distance learning. We’d like to hear from you. Does this structure give faculty an adequate, independent voice? Does it support
independence at too much cost to effective collaboration? Should additional new positions committees or working groups be set up?

“It was very humbling to investigate the new prospects opened by distance learning. All that we are sure of is the need for experimentation, to see what works well. We expect that distance learning will be very active in, say, five years; but even in five years, it may look utterly different from what we see today. This report is meant as part of an ongoing discussion of how to meet this challenge.”

Speaker Walcott: “Now we’re going to open the floor for discussion. Does anybody have a first question? Yes, please. Wait for a microphone.”

Professor Valerie Hans, Law School: “I’m glad you kept that slide up. I was curious about the idea you have for collaboration and a faculty voice and why it seemed appropriate to you to separate the mainly faculty committee from the distance learning administrative group. Had you thought about a joint committee of some sort with faculty input that would make for more effective faculty voice, faculty collaboration?”

Associate Professor David Delchamps, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering: “We did talk about that, and the reason we came up with the sort of tripartite set-up was we thought that a joint committee might not end up having the appropriate level of faculty interaction.

“In fact, we even discussed the idea of having the administrative -- have there be a co-chair of these two groups or something like that, and we decided it was better to have faculty thinking about these educational issues and, for example, having the administration thinking more about things like should we sign a contract with edX and use central funds for putting those MOOCs out there.

“So we thought about that and we thought it was good to have essentially purely faculty group involved in looking at the pedagogical side of the questions we’d have to address.”

Professor Miller: “I think some of this reflected a guess, and perhaps you think the guess isn’t worth its cost about different kinds of things that faculty and administrators have typically come from and return to. The faculty do. The people in the administration, they have the ultimate authority over funds and facilities and overall commitment. They work full-time on their allocation,
so I think there’s a potential in the face of it for faculty to have difficulty voicing their independent views, unless they have an independent organization.

“Also, there were particular disciplinary, particular questions of educational benefits, in which it turned out to be very important to have intense discussion among faculty, especially because of those enormous differences in benefits and different disciplines faced by faculty in different departments that they rarely communicate, so that was our guess.”

Professor N’Dri Assie-Lumumba, Africana Studies: “Innovation and experimentation is an important component of any innovation, but how do you conceptualize it? What are the educational issues, academic issue, pedagogical issues, but also ethical issues? When you are experimenting, who will be the guinea pigs?

“And if there are issues, how will you address those? And have you started; and if so, what are the criteria, parameters that are included in the experimentation phase? Thank you.”

Professor Delchamps: “The use of the word "experimentation" came largely from our asking the following question: What constraints currently exist on faculty for doing these distance learning activities? That is, say, a faculty member makes up some kind of online course, and he or she leaves Cornell, or two faculty members co-make up such a course and one of them leaves Cornell, who could use it, that sort of thing, and the kind of constraints the people were operating under.

“We discovered unlike Stanford, unlike Penn and a lot of other places, the existing Cornell policies are pretty good in terms of allowing a lot of freedom of experimentation, and I think our vision of the experimentation didn't really involve a lot of guinea pigs -- you know what I mean, figurative guinea pigs.

“For example, Dick brought up these modules, significantly different from full courses, on pressing public concerns, like a four-week discussion about something, you know. This is an experiment. This is something we don't have, say, in our course catalog at Cornell right now, but it might be something worthwhile to do.

“And in some sense, I don't see there being any net minus to that, except possibly in these higher-educational sociological questions like will faculty members at a state university be put out of work by the existence of such modules. Those are
consequences that some of us felt we should step up and talk about, and others felt were beyond our control. So I don't know. Maybe Dick and Mike want to add—"

Professor Miller: “Just a tiny bit of clarification. I mentioned about differences between different kind of distance learning became very important to us, and so-called hybrid learning, say the use of an online module in a course anywhere seems to alter the good. It’s not that different from using a book.

“I think the major, large ethical question we were looking at was what happens if you license -- you approve licensing of MOOCs -- look, in the real world, a working-class campus in which it’s going to be used. Yes, to expand things, but to expand things for exclusive use of online, which as far as we can see, is inferior, though perhaps better than nothing. That is a big ethical question.

“I suppose you could see those kids -- of a certain age, those kids as being real guinea pigs. Otherwise, with intellectual property rights, there’s usual questions of how to stimulate innovation into university cooperation, but accept that we’re not paid and our buildings are heated by Santa’s elves, that there has to be a return on what Cornell provides.”

Associate Professor Michael Fontaine, Department of Classics and Associate Dean of the Faculty: “The guinea pigs at the moment are not going to be the students. It’s free. They can sign up and quit. It costs nothing. One of the issues we talked a lot about is going to be with your colleagues. For example, if you get chosen to do a MOOC and you get course release to do that, well, who’s going to teach the required class you typically do? So that is where it’s not really clear where things are going to go.”

Speaker Walcott: “Another question? Yes, by all means.”

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: “I’m glad you made that last comment, because that’s exactly the question I wanted to ask. I speak as the co-author and co-teacher of someone developing a MOOC, and I can tell you that the faculty time involved in that is really quite substantial. And faculty time is not free, as we all know.

“So I’m wondering what is the financial model for faculty time, as opposed to all that other stuff that the university has in mind? You can imagine different models of different extremes. One extreme is to say this is like a textbook and
faculties get royalties, then faculties are expected to perform all of their duties on top of doing the MOOC, just as you would if you were doing a textbook.

“The other model is this is like doing a course, although I can tell you it’s probably like more than one course; and therefore, compensation actually has to come down not to the level of the college, but to the level of the department. Did your committee talk about that at all? Do you have something to say?”

Professor Delchamps: “My department was similarly affected. One of our star teachers won a MOOC, and he is not teaching the 4000 level course he generally teaches in the spring. The other guy who could teach it is on sabbatical; therefore, our current seniors don’t get it. End of story.

“Another faculty member in my department has a proposal in the pipeline. What happens if he gets funded? What kind of teaching relief does he get? And basically, I think the DLC tossed that very hot potato to colleges and deans and said it’s really up to you.

“I will say, having been on the selection subcommittee of the group, the group that looked at the proposals and thought is the institutional support there, is the planning around pedagogy there, that sort of thing, we looked at that.

“We looked at whether the dean of that college is providing TA support, or is the chair of that person’s department providing relief time? We know it takes many, many faculty hours. So yeah, I think you are right; that the level of the department is going to be where it bites, seriously.”

Professor Miller: “I think we all have the view that a full-scale MOOC merits course relief. It’s just too much time taken and too much time that otherwise would be taken away from research that people should be doing.

“What’s a special worry in a way is not the production of the MOOC -- that it's exhausting, it takes a lot of time -- but the maintenance of the MOOC, those discussion rooms of thousands of people that are said to involve about ten hours a week. So that’s like teaching a course that you’ve taught before.

“We see that as the major cost for Cornell. Notice full-scale MOOCs. It is not there for learning modules. It’s not there for open courses, because nothing’s done to maintain an open course, once it’s posted.
“As Dave said, what’s now wisely part of requests for proposals is that the department chair and the dean must approve, but we’re worried that’s not enough. It’s, in human terms, hard to say no.

“Also, there’s a big picture in which little by little, a college may find that popular courses that are important for the college as a whole are not being taught in the classroom because of the drainage on the time of those teachers. So that, I think, is our big cost worry, and that’s an area where I think we all think probably more policy is needed.”

Speaker Walcott: “Risa?”

Professor Risa Lieberwitz, ILR: “First, thank you to the committee for putting in an obviously enormous amount of time, when you could have been creating a MOOC.

(LAUGHTER)

“I think that the point about licensing is really important, and as Dick, you pointed out, the ethical issues of our relationship with other universities is part of that as well. So I have a couple of points, questions that I’d really appreciate hearing your responses to.

“One is maybe you could describe a little bit more about just what are -- who does control the decisions about licensing; that is, who owns the licenses rights, who makes the decisions about whether a MOOC can be licensed. And the other point is how important that Distance Learning Committee will be in looking at those kinds of questions, those ethical questions about our relationship to others in our profession, not only here, but at other universities.

“And so it seems to me that Distance Learning Committee could be really important for creating relationships outside of Cornell with other schools who might be affected by these issues to really think collegially with other people in the profession and to use that to shape policies around what we think should happen to these courses.

“I have a huge concern with that issue that you started to raise about the kind of continuing stratification of different universities if MOOCs are used in other universities, licensed universities for credit, as well as a way to undermine tenure even further and to have kind of the star system of somebody in a MOOC and
the work horses being created in non-tenure track faculty to kind of service that model. So that's a number of things I hope you can comment on.”

Professor Miller: “Well, what we are permitted to do is to offer our views about licensing for edX MOOCs. Our views have to be regarded as reasonable and as presumably values their good relationship with us.

“On the other hand, it’s a great big mystery how the enormous investment that edX, as a group, and participating universities have, how that money is going to be returned, how it’s going to be sustainable. And Agarwal identified that as the only plausible way, so it’s not clear what it’s going to be like down the road.

“We certainly see discussions with faculty elsewhere and simply offering our views as, among other things, academics and people with no financial ax to grind about the benefits and limitations of consortium MOOCs.

“As a very important public role that we should play -- and really, there aren't groups that we've encountered who are playing it in just those terms, but we're, I think in part, because we are professors, too -- I'm the worst defender -- we are sort of fitting this structure, and the committee's done a lot of work. And we'll tell you the answers to your questions, but I think here's one of many areas where what do you think is important.

“Charlie, is it okay if I ask Risa?”

[Question posed to Professor Lieberwitz]  
“What do you think we should be doing? Should the policies -- should the MOOC instructor get to decide?”

Professor Lieberwitz: “Well, since you asked, I would like to see -- what I would propose is to consider a faculty policy that comes perhaps through this Distance Learning Committee and/or through the faculty senate to control that issue of licensing.

“And I would further propose in terms of the normative aspect of it that we should not license -- if we don't think that MOOCs are appropriate for credit, then we should not permit them to be licensed to schools that are using them for credit.
“It seems to me that there's an even-handedness that should go there, plus that we're really thinking about the profession that we don't want to contribute, even unintentionally contribute to undermining the role of tenure in the profession; but clearly, that's the direction I would go, but I think that the faculty committee that looks at this really does need to delve into it and struggle with those issues.

“And along that line, I think that a committee like a Distance Learning Committee should include critics, as well as people who think that MOOCs are positive and can be very, very good. We really need critics there to test the issues. And it seems to me that your committee was trying to do that in a very, very important way to test the issues, but that Distance Learning Committee has got to be inclusive of people who are very, very critical.”

Professor Delchamps: “I, for one, had visualized that faculty committee, that DLC, the top item, as addressing these issues as time goes by in the light of ever-accumulating piles of data. How are the learning outcomes for these things? We've seen already in numerous situations where a purely online experience gave way worse outcomes than a hybrid experience, and those are studies that exist.

“If you've been following recent events, Sebastian Thrun, who started the whole ball rolling with his AI course at Stanford, has kind of backed off quite a bit, based on this kind of experience with distance work, especially for low-income, especially for educationally disadvantaged, et cetera. And to be quite honest, I'm wondering how Georgia Tech is going to manage to offer their all-online master's degree. I can't imagine doing that.

“I think bottom line is, I envision that faculty committee as addressing these issues; but as I always tell my students in engineering, the stuff you are going to be working on in five, ten, 20 years, we don't even have words for it yet. And I think that's going to happen in this. MOOC is a relatively new term, and I think the kinds of questions we are going to be trying to answer and even phrase are going to be hugely different in five years from how they are now.”

Professor Lieberwitz: “Can I add one thing? I think really important is I don't think that we should contract out control over our intellectual property to edX or any other corporation. I mean, it seems to me for the provision of that they'll listen to us and what we want is just an enormous mistake. And to give up our control over our product, I think, is a real mistake.”

Professor Stein: “I feel embarrassed about this question, because I’ve asked it many times on this floor over many, many years, and I still don’t understand the answer. I can’t figure out what the business plan is. We live on the tuition of students. Why are we giving this precious thing that we give them out for free?

“On the other hand, I must admit, I didn't understand how Facebook could make any money; but boy, I sure was wrong on that, but before answering these detailed questions, I don't know how to put it into perspective.

“Obviously, we are putting in resources, big resources into this operation. And by that, what I mean is the kind of thing you talked about, namely not having a professor to teach a particular class, and we have a limited amount of stuff we can do in our heads here, and if you are doing a lot of this, then it must mean you are doing less of something else that we have always valued before.

“So somehow, it seems to me I ought to be able to see the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, but I almost get to think that the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow is we’ll go out of business, because we’ll find a free way of giving students the education that we're now charging for.

“I must remember the last time I walked out of a meeting like this and asked the same question to a friend that was outside. I said exactly what is it are you selling, if we are going to give away our education. And he said well, it's the contacts you make in the fraternity. So I got depressed and left, but it is a serious question. I have not really heard an answer to this question.”

Dean Burns: “My answer is very simple. We are not in the business of making money. We are in the business of education, and this is education. It is a different way of doing education than what we are used to; but if I could sell my stuff -- that is my brain, my view of the universe -- to 40,000 students rather than to 14, I would go for the 40,000.

Professor Terry Herter, Department of Astronomy: “We actually are the Relativity and Astrophysics MOOC. One of the things I don’t see here is being proactive external to the university in shaping thought on some of these questions and how we’ve become part of the dialogue.
“Personally, as an instructor, I would use anything I can to get in the head of students, and I view MOOCs or whatever online is a tool for doing that. And also, but the cautions that come, I think 6% completion rate, it’s horrendous. I don’t even consider that -- I’m not sure whether you can consider that useful for what population you are reaching, so you actually have statistics.

“So I think how do we be not just internally responsive, but also be proactive in shaping the dialogue. Much of the dialogue has come, and you read by proselytizers, and it really shapes the dialogue in a strange way. And that’s why we worry about dangers of trying to replace teachers and instructors on campuses that said we can do everything, which is really silly at some level.

“So I didn’t quite see in the plan on where we’re proactive externally. Cornell develops a policy and publishes it where we feel it can accomplish this, these courses can accomplish this, but we really feel instruction, if you could talk about discipline or whatever, needs to go beyond that. So that’s sort of the question I have.”

Professor Delchamps: “One part of your question about the completion rate, we decided as a group that we weren’t so worried about that, because people can enroll in a MOOC and not ever intend to complete it. Oh, I might just want to see that four-week module in November on whatever, rent, economic rent, something like that. And so one could join a MOOC and never intend to complete it; but the other thing you say about outreach and about helping shape the policy debate about being thought leaders or something about this, I think this has hardly gotten off the ground yet. And I’m hoping we are that way, and I can see some innovations already in our report; like for example, most of the universities that have joined MOOC consortia essentially said okay, we are joining this consortium here; faculty, pony up some MOOCs; and left it at that; whereas we are thinking of these alternative things, like these modules and that sort of thing. So I think leading by example is something that I’m hoping we’ll do, but I also think that leading by talking is something we do, and I think that what happens along those lines depends on things we don’t know the answers to yet.”

Professor Miller: “I think Dave’s emphasis on diversity also connects with the question Peter Stein was asking. Full-fledged consortium MOOCs now, they aren’t a very rich educational experience by their nature, except maybe in a few special disciplines. It’s not just fraternities. People learn from interactions with their teacher, they learn from interactions with one another.
“In the humanities, they often don’t learn -- and elsewhere as well -- from ten-minute bits, sometimes they are six minutes, alternating with a bit of interaction, alternating with high-production value shots of the kids in the lecture room that brings in a lot of people. That’s not where it’s at for learning. It’s not that chopped up.

“So I don’t think in any way Cornell is endangered by MOOCs. Are these a new and powerful form of education as they will develop? No one knows. And the expense is so big that perhaps we can’t steer that, but we’ve identified a number of alternatives, such as learning models to MOOCs, that we can manage and Cornell is managing.

“Cornell had a recent request for proposals for innovations in online learning. My guess will be as Cornell, by showing alternative ways of doing things, that will have an impact. And as politically responsible people, we’ll get the word out about what we know. That, I think, is the future that’s bright. I, myself think consortium MOOCs are a very limited format; they are going to play a correspondingly limited role.”

Speaker Walcott: “Professor Datta?”

Professor Ashim Datta, Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering: “So I have been fortunate enough to get one of these modules funded, and so as I’m worrying about getting the work started, something that you just brought up in terms of licensing got me thinking. So are we giving away the content to edX, like the way we give to the publisher? I didn't think about these issues; so just curious, if you could answer that question.”

Speaker Walcott: “How much are we allowed to say?”

Professor Miller: “This isn't an edX MOOC -- you are asking if it were an edX MOOC?”

Professor Datta: “I'm talking about the modules in edX.”

Professor Miller: “Well, edX -- there's edX Edge. I don't know how edX Edge goes. It's not really part of the main body of the edX contract. Do you know, Dave?”
Professor Delchamps: “There were just a few allusions to it in the contract because it was a work in progress, as edX is, but that was even less completed a work in progress, so yeah. Ted?”

Ted Dodds, Chief Information Officer, Cornell University: “EdX has no licensing rights whatsoever on using the edX Edge platform to develop anything -- I’m sorry if I’m interrupting. What you have been describing, Dick and others, is within the contract we have with edX for the four and now eventually eight MOOCs, that there are some licensing provisions within that. Those licensing provisions do not extend to the edX Edge developments or anything else that we might do with that platform.

“And I would also say that under no circumstances in practicality can I imagine edX doing something with licensing Cornell intellectual property without the express agreement of Cornell.”

Professor Robert Thorne, Department of Physics: “I wanted to just agree with Joe. I think the focus here should be on educational outcomes and not on impacts on faculty; and that should be the first focus. And I was just thinking about, so a few years ago, the State of Texas decided -- they looked at programs in their smaller colleges and decided to shut down a bunch of major programs -- including Physics -- major programs that had small enrollments. And these were typically at primarily minority-serving institutions in the state, primarily minority-serving institutions. And our professional society spoke strongly about the impact on faculty and on Physics, but the fact is that these programs that had a handful of majors also had really, really miserable success rates in their core introductory service courses. And so if you think about the students at these institutions, the best way to serve them would probably be to have the limited faculty, their focus entirely on these intro courses that are the primary gateway into the STEM pipeline, and then to use something like edX MOOCs, in combination with on-site tutors, to provide support for the very small number of students who could benefit from more advanced training. So I think this is a really exciting development that, if properly managed, could have really positive impacts on populations that are currently very poorly served by the traditional way that we academics have delivered education, the traditional models that we use of department-focused models.”

Professor Fontaine: “You make an interesting point. One thing we did not talk about is what our own professional organizations would say about MOOCs. Mine has said nothing, probably because we’ll never offer them, but it would be
interesting to know -- I mean, the closer you get to the hard sciences, the more viable these things are going to be, where the answer is definitely right, definitely wrong, so it would be worth asking.”

Assistant Professor Lauren Monroe, Department of Near Eastern Studies: “Mike, you say as sort of an aside that your department would never offer them. And that’s, I think, true in my department also, and I think that the impact of especially the MOOCs have on the way the university projects itself to the public is a concern in that it really leaves the humanities, to some degree, in the dust.

“Speaking for myself, I teach classes in Hebrew bible that can be controversial, where part of the way that I teach is to build trust, and I would never do that in a massive online format. So I think that if this is something that the university is committed to testing, that there need to be ways of working with faculty in the humanities so that Cornell doesn't present itself to the public as a university in which the humanities don't matter.”

Professor Delchamps: “One comment on the Humanities being left in the dust by the MOOC revolution, so to speak: One of the early MOOC controversies involved a course by Michael Sandel, Harvard professor, Philosophy, on Justice. That was the title of the course, a MOOC on justice. And the consortium was peddling it to a state university of California to use for all their justice course. And the faculty wrote a long open letter that we read, and a lot of other people read. And if you look at the enrollment rates for the Humanities MOOCs -- and a lot of good ones have been generated, like Princeton, one called The History of the World from 1300 to something, some date -- it’s surprising how low the enrollments are.

“Now, is that a symptom of ineffectiveness in a MOOC or just a symptom of lack of interest in our sort of STEM-oriented society; I don't know, but I agree with you. We actually had a visitor talk to our committee who used to be on the faculty of University of Michigan. He's a humanist, and he teaches courses in literature. He's an English professor, and he has a MOOC that uses a lot of popular culture type things, comic books and things like that, and we tried to pin him down a little bit on -- like this question that Dick raised, if students in the Humanities are expected to engage lengthy, difficult texts and complicated arguments over the course of many days, weeks, whatever, does this work when you have eight-minute sound bites.
“And first time we asked him that question, he really didn't answer it. He said this is what I do in my course. Then when we asked him again, he kind of leaned forward and said, the kind of discourse you're talking about, you're right. It doesn't lend itself well to the MOOCs; however, here's all these great things we can do with them in the humanities. So I think a lot of talk is going to happen about this, and different people have different opinions.”

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: “Can I just make a quick response too? The committee's not at all against us humanists. We just can't figure out how to do it. You could teach basic Hebrew, but if you teach it once, you are giving it away for free. There's a definite right answer, definite wrong answer. And when you don't have anyone in beginning Hebrew next year or anywhere else in the world, that's going to be a problem. And the more advanced you go, you discuss questions, how are you going to do that with 50,000 people? I don't know.”

Professor Monroe: “So I feel like there needs to be some engagement in faculty and humanities, to think about how we might be able to participate in a way that feels consistent with our pedagogical needs and practices.”

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: “That would be something very good, I think, for that upcoming arts and sciences colleges meeting we have. It would be worth bringing it up there.”

Professor Ephrahim Garcia, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering: “When I was a teenager, I think I saw my first MOOC called Cosmos by Carl Sagan, but you can't replay the videos, once it blew through. If you missed it Sunday night, it was over; but anyway, I think MOOCs are exciting. I think this is great. I think in engineering technology, there are lots of opportunities for very short MOOCs.

“We are not giving away our education. We are giving away a taste of our education. We are not giving away everything. We are showing off the other Carl Sagans that we have around campus and these great courses that are embedded in this university. So we're not -- I don't think we are giving our stuff away.

“We are saying look, this is a great place to come get an education. This is a great place maybe for some kid in New York to come be a faculty member one day. So that's what we are doing here with the MOOCs. And I think we can lose sight of that.”
“And I would just ask the question, where in the DLC, the distance learning administration, where is the connection to the strategy. Like the business model, I agree with, has to be thought about, that Professor Stein talked about. So where’s the connection to the business model? How we are going to leverage this sampling of great Cornell classes with impacting us as a physical campus? Because I like the comment on 14 versus 40,000, but it was minus 18 degrees today driving in, and we’ve got to heat these buildings. So somebody’s got to pay for that.”

Professor Delchamps: “The administrative group is going to decide how we can make an impact, and the DLC is going to decide what courses we use to make that impact.”

Professor Garcia: “But there’s a larger strategy here, I think, in terms of how this is going to impact the university over the long haul, how we are going to leverage this to make ourselves even stronger as an institution. Yeah, it’s keeping up with the Jones, but I don’t care, quite frankly, what Stanford does. I think Cornell’s always been at the forefront of bringing science and technology and education of all sorts to the masses, in ways that are better than many other institutions, so I think we should continue that tradition, and I think the MOOCs do that for us.”

Professor Miller: “Just want to note that creativity, I think, has been evidenced in the discussion so far from people in very different disciplines. For example, in effect, in different ways, people have been emphasizing the need to attend the hybrid learning. The big success stories in engineering, you know, the kid from Ulan Bator going to MIT to become an electrical engineer, they always involve distance learning and very intensive tutoring.

“You were talking, as a humanist, about the need for a kind of person-to-person interaction over time, in which certainly a learning module could play a role. Learning modules are vastly under-explored. You mentioned revenues, and I think we all think that that should be part of cooperation between the Distance Learning Committee, say, and the distance learning administrative group.

“Things have to be sustainable. There may be ways in which, for example, one version of a learning module is just there for free. A more ramified version is there for a fee, as books are, to use in classes. Libraries already list online
material, perhaps via publishers. That's the way to do it. So we want to be creative.

“Of course, that also means paying close attention to intellectual property rights. So that's why our administrative structure is somewhat fancy, because of precisely issues like that.”

Speaker Walcott: “Professor Howland.”

Emeritus Professor Howard Howland, Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, and CAPE representative: “I have two concerns. One is that there's a great deal of experimentation going on, but I don't see many ways of judging what happens. When you write a grant, you say I'm going to try this, and such and such is going to happen or it's not going to happen, but this seems to be sort of free-form. That's one concern I have.

“The second concern I have is I don't see how you can take this statistic of 30,000 people, and then 6% actually completing the course and say well, that's -- I'm shocked at that. I mean, what you are talking about is a bunch of students who could have filled, say, our biggest lecture hall one and a half times. Those are the people who completed it, right? And a heck of a lot more money went into getting a MOOC going than that. So that worries me.

“And the third thing is we're not the only people looking at this. Our students are looking at what's happening. They pay tuition, and they have already paid a high price to go to a university where half of the work goes into research. We've convinced them that that is a good idea and it's worth doing for the country.

“That's great, but here's one more thing we're saying. Now, guys, we've got this other thing we are going to save the world with; and you may not see your teacher as often, but we're really doing great stuff. I just don't think it's going to fly in the long run.”

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: “I'll just say we discussed all those concerns too.”

Speaker Walcott: “We have time for one final question.”

Dean Burns: “This is not supposed to be a definitive report. It's a living document. It's up to you to see what it changes. I mean, your concerns in Near Eastern Studies, absolutely true; but how can you get this one new ingredient,
how can you use that in your -- maybe you don't make the same thing you used to make or maybe you don't use that ingredient, but it's an opportunity, and it's up to us to decide how to use that opportunity. And I hope that we all contribute.”

“And the next thing I think we need to do is we've got four MOOCs out there, or will have four MOOCs out in the beginning of the -- starting in March. The other three come out sometime in April. We ought to bring back those four professors, if they're all alive, and ask them how they are doing and what happened. Let's learn from this.

“And I know Kent's got real deep pockets, so it's costing money.”

(LAUGHTER)

“Isn't that what we're all about? We're supposed to be running experiments. In terms of the overall Cornell budget, this is not a very large amount of money. Let's do it, but do it seriously.”

Speaker Walcott: “Final comment from the panel?”

Professor Miller: “It's all so new. I got a grant, some money to teach a learning module. We are very proud of having invented the phrase. The reality going with it hasn't been determined. How to see if it's working, we really don't know. Certainly the number of people taking the course should probably be a better reviewing of the course, for example, by faculty elsewhere, even in evaluation.

“I think it's just begun. That was our big lesson. We thought for our against edX; that is the question. We discovered it is not the question. There's just so much to be invented, so let's talk about that.”

Speaker Walcott: “With that, I think we should adjourn.”