

REPORT ON THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

“Next on the agenda is report on the College of Business from Chris Barrett, who is deputy dean of the new College of Business.”

Deputy Dean Chris Barrett: “Thank you very much, Bruce. To be a bit more specific, I'm here to report on the deliberations of the Faculty Governance Committee of the College of Business, which is occupying itself of matters I think are the greatest interest to this body, to just explain first what we have been talking about, and then I'll get to what some of the provisional arrangements that we are proposing are.

“The body is co-chaired by Deputy Provost John Siliciano and myself. The Acting Dean of the Faculty Mike Fontaine represents this body there. We also have three tenured faculty from each of the three schools, the Dyson School, the Hotel School and the Johnson School. And for the last several of our gatherings and the upcoming two meetings we have already scheduled, we have also been joined by two non-tenure track faculty from each of the three schools, as we begin to expand beyond tenure matters into broader issues that concern our non-tenure track colleagues as well.

“As you can all appreciate, the central challenge we face is in balancing on the one hand the need to preserve the unique high-value mission of each of the three schools, and on the other hand, to integrate the faculty so that we can enjoy, as a university, the synergies that come from being able to integrate some of the common functions we have to build somewhat larger scholarly communities, to be able to cross-list courses and offer somewhat more diverse and expanded curricula for our students and to be able to engage with outside clientele, external stakeholder groups in a range of ways that we are limited by size in some fashion in a few of these areas.

“So that's the core challenge we face, that just the prospect of trying to resolve those two competing demands causes some anxiety necessarily. We all appreciate that. And that's why this body has met now 13 or 14 times. We have another couple meetings coming up, so please give a pat on the back to your colleagues for enduring this marathon. They are all doing really remarkable work. We are very appreciative for the dialogue.

“We meet at least weekly. More recently, we have been meeting multiple times a week. Each of these bodies goes back to their faculties almost every week to confer with them on the things that we have been discussing to get their guidance, their concerns. Ultimately, our deliverable is a set of recommendations to the steering committee for the College of Business, so that combined with the inputs from other committees will inform decisions that the university senior administration will make.

“We have had extremely robust internal discussions. I think Mike can attest to that. The key thing here to keep in mind is we all have a shared aspiration. Everybody in that committee comes from one of these schools, with the exception of Mike and John, and all are passionate about the mission of their school and their particular programs. At the same time, we all see

the gains that can be enjoyed by finding some creative and appropriate union of the three schools.

“So what we started by doing was just familiarizing ourselves with each other. So we started by describing our own school's core values, missions, visions, some of our history.

“And in doing so, we pretty quickly discovered a number of things where multiple schools immediately saw some gains to be had from closer integration of faculties, around graduate and professional programming, especially at the one-year MPS level, around curriculum for Ph.D. students, which is difficult to put together in several of the schools around career services, which is very uneven in its offerings for our undergraduates across the two schools with undergraduate programs and across the different graduate and professional programs in all three schools, strengthening centers and institutes that all have reaches outside the university, but thematically, that cross all three schools.

“It was very quickly apparent to all of us as we learned more about each of the schools how much there is to be gained by creating a much tighter integration of the faculties, provided we don't compromise the fundamental missions of each of the three schools. So we are aiming to be better, not bigger, but better.

“From that, we began to explore so what really are the central themes of this enhancement of being better, not just bigger. And really, the drum beat underneath most of that conversation wound up being leveraging Cornell's excellence and contributing to Cornell's excellence; that if we just aim to become another business school like some of our larger brethren, we're not going to differentiate Cornell, this will not be a value addition proposition for our students, it won't help us to attract the very best faculty in the world; that what we really have to do is leverage the things that make Cornell very distinctive among the best research universities in the world.

“So leveraging the fact that we've got a College of Agriculture and Life Sciences that doesn't exist in the other Ivies, leveraging the strengths in Computing and Information Sciences, Architecture, et cetera.

“A second thing that came out very quickly, and it was interesting how as we first went around the room, each delegation of school faculty would comment on how fearful they were of the dilution of teaching that would occur by blending with the other school's faculty, that each school's faculty takes great pride in relatively high-touch, by business school standards, at least, relatively high-touch work with students, and emphasizing student engagement and student satisfaction. So we all began to take comfort in the fact that all of us seemed to care about this a great deal.

“And thirdly, although only one of the three schools falls within one of the contract colleges and has a very formal extension mission as part of Cornell Cooperative Extension, it equally became very immediately apparent to all of us how much engagement with external

stakeholders matters to each of the three schools' faculty and research and outreach programs. So we began to see quickly synergies in these areas.

“So with that preparatory work, and because form follows function, we then began to think about if we're going to realize these synergies and protect the unique missions of the three schools, let's now get down to the business of the architecture and the processes, because that's the hard work of what faculty governance had to do. So we began with four core principles that we all rapidly agreed, and I should add that thus far, in all of our deliberations, we are at about 15 single-spaced pages right now in the document we are assembling for the steering committee and for review by the school's faculties.

“And thus far, we are in unanimity on everything that's in there, which is kind of astonishing for anything. I can't get unanimity among my kids for the grocery list. So I'm kind of astonished, but we have four core principles from which we have built the current set of draft recommendations. The first is continuities of the school's missions, that we have three distinct schools that each are very distinguished in their own spaces, and we don't want to compromise that. The brand value is high.

“Second is continuity of faculty expectations, and I emphasize that as distinct from continuity of school mission. They are related, but they are distinct. We hire individual faculty into position descriptions with particular expectations imposed on them by the position into which they are hired, and reinforce through the process of annual reviews.

“And what we need to guard against very fervently is inadvertently switching the expectations on faculty, especially existing faculty midstream. But I emphasize, this is not just a matter of existing faculty. We equally need to be careful as we think about a tenure and promotion review process.

“For example, faculty hired to reinforce the mission of the School of Hotel administration or the Dyson School, that as they go through the process and begin to get evaluated in part by colleagues in sister schools, that there not be subtly the transplantation of a different set of expectations onto this faculty member.

“So continuity of faculty expectations from the time of hiring through review processes is a really central principle of all the processes we have been developing.

“Third is cohesion of the college. The whole value of this exercise comes from integration of intellectual communities in teaching outreach and scholarly functions.

“And fourth is fairness of process and outcomes, trying to promote as much as possible eliciting the most robust data we can, especially thinking about tenure review processes and other review processes. So eliciting as much robust data as we can from informed colleagues across the college, but also being as transparent as possible in that review process, in keeping with the principles, the continuity of school missions and faculty expectations.

“So what has come out of these processes of deliberation is a matrix management design, with three strong schools, the three existing schools, which will remain; with cross-cutting strong discipline-based areas, so think things like accounting or marketing.

“We are still in deliberations on the exact identity and number of those areas. We had a tentative list, we went back to schools' faculties, we got feedback saying we like this, we don't like that. Of course, people didn't like different things, so tomorrow's meeting actually is largely about reconciliation of feedback on areas.

“And in the processes, we seem to have earlier this week reached a unanimous agreement on draft faculty hiring periodic review, reappointment, promotion, tenure review processes.

“In those processes, they will work as we proposed anyway to the steering committee, largely as these processes work in multiple unit colleges today; that is, the school dean, think department chair in many of the units, is the first to write a formal letter of recommendation, informed by external letter-writers, but equally informed by tenured faculty members in the disciplinary area of appointment.

“So marketing faculty member in Dyson would have input from other marketing faculty in the other two schools, just like they would have input for marketing faculty from outside of Cornell. All of that is considered by the tenured faculty in the school, which feeds up to the school dean, who makes a recommendation to the college dean.

“A crucial feature there is at the very outset, it's incumbent upon the school deans to be especially clear about the responsibilities of the position, because Cornell has just one tenure standard: Excellence in fulfilling the responsibilities of the position. And the continuity of faculty expectations principle is all about respecting and enforcing respect of the position description, so that's one of the crucial modifications in the process that we are proposing.

“There are lots of other details that follow from that. I'm happy to field questions. Much of this is still in dialogue within the committee and going back to the school faculties this week for further discussion. We are talking tomorrow again about the faculty policy committee, an elected body of faculty intended to provide input into the dean's deliberations about policy matters.

“We haven't finished up numbers, et cetera, but the idea is that that is an elective representative body of the faculty to the college. I'm very happy to field questions, in so far as there's time left.”

Speaker Lewenstein: “We have time for one quick question and one quick response.
Professor Benschel.”

Professor Benschel: “When the plan is finished, will you bring it back to the faculty senate?”

Deputy Dean Barrett: "So we will be bringing the plans to the faculties of the three schools. We have been bringing it piecemeal. The full faculties of the three schools will see the full document as soon as we have a draft completed, we expect next week, that goes to the steering committee.

"The steering committee is deliberating on that and all the other committees' drafts. What gets released publicly after that beyond a sort of shortened version, and I'm not quite sure, to be frank, but we know it is going to all three school faculties."

Professor Bensel: "-- bring it back to the faculty senate?"

Deputy Dean Barrett: "I frankly don't know. We haven't talked about that explicitly."

Acting President and Provost Kotlikoff: "I will say the report will be available to the faculty senate. If you're asking is it brought back for ratification to the faculty senate? No, but Richard, your point will be available -- we will submit it to the faculty senate."

Professor Bensel: "The question is whether we get to comment and recommend before it's enacted. That's the question."

Acting President and Provost Kotlikoff: "So this gets back to our continual dialogue about Article 13, and whether this -- this is now a recommendation that will be made from the faculties of the schools about their own college.

"And so whether this is now a matter for consultation by the faculty senate and deliberation and response or not, I think, again, well-meaning people can disagree about that, but I would suggest the main thing is we will provide it to the faculty senate. The faculty senate is then welcome to consult, pass resolutions, make any judgment that they would like."