

Minutes of a  
Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
April 14, 2010

Call to order by Speaker Steven Beer: "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to call to order the University Faculty Senate meeting for April 14th, 2010. I would like to remind the body that there will be no photos taken or audio recordings made during the meeting. I would like to ask everyone to silence or turn off your cell phones, and when speaking to the body, please rise and identify yourself as to name and administrative affiliation.

"We have two Good and Welfare speakers this afternoon, and they will speak on subjects of interest to the faculty when the agenda items as listed on the screen have been covered. I would first like to call on the chair of the Library Board, Professor Mary Beth Norton for our report of the Library Board Committee."

## **1. REPORT FROM LIBRARY BOARD**

Professor Mary Beth Norton, History Department. "I am glad to be here again and to report on what the Library Board is doing. At our last meeting, we had the first of the unit reviews of the satellite libraries that we were expecting. We got an excellent report from the veterinary library. The veterinary faculty, we thought, put together a very fine report in a very short period of time. They surveyed the students, the graduate students, the residents, the faculty and so forth, and even -- and they had then melded these opinions into their own set of recommendations.

"The Library Board had some questions about what they gave us, and we asked for further information. For example, one of the things the report did not contain was a comparison to other veterinary libraries in terms of staffing and in terms of the number of volumes, and we wanted to have some idea of comparison to vet libraries. So the plan now is that the veterinary library people will come back to us, the task force will come back with more information presumably in the next meeting, in a couple of weeks at the end of the month. At that next meeting we will also receive the unit review from the entomology laboratory, which is the next up.

"And the procedure we are going to follow with these reviews is that when our own review of library reports is complete -- and we expect now, on the basis of what happened with the vet library report, that each of these reviews will take two meetings; one to have the first review of the initial report and then we'll ask for further information, and then they will come back with that information -- that the Library

Board will then make a recommendation to the librarian concerning the contents of the report from the unit library, either agreeing entirely perhaps with the recommendations or perhaps coming up with somewhat different recommendations than the unit library has come up with, and then once we make a recommendation to the librarian, she will then make a recommendation to the provost and the provost will make the final decision as to what to do about the particular unit library in question.

“We will probably have added meetings before the end of the term to be able to complete these reviews. We expect to be done with the veterinary library review and the etymology library review by the end of this term and then everyone, including myself, will disperse for the summer; but there are further library reviews to come in, including one about -- involving the possible consolidation of Hotel, ILR and -- now I have forgotten the third one, but there are other reports to come in and those will be considered next year.

“In other words, the plan is for all the reviews or all the decisions that are being made about the maintenance of unit libraries, that is either consolidation of them, the potential closing of them or the retention of them in some form; all those will come through the University Library Board for our consideration and recommendation before they go to the librarian and to the provost.

“So there will be faculty input, not only at the level of the unit libraries themselves of the units themselves, but also at the level of the University Faculty Board. And that is my report. So I'm happy to answer any questions, if I can.”

Speaker Beer: “Thank you very much. I think we can take a little time for a couple questions. Professor Howland? If you would kindly wait for the microphone.”

Professor Howard Howland, Neurobiology & Behavior: “Thank you. Howard Howland, Neurobiology and Behavior. Will the senate have any opportunity to hear the Library Board's report before it actually goes to the provost?”

Professor Norton: “Well, it is not our report that goes to the provost. Our report goes to the librarian. We can certainly do that. It might -- since there's only one more senate meeting of the spring, there might not be a chance. I mean, if we do complete the review of the vet library at the next meeting without -- which is the last week of this month, we could come back to the senate with the final meeting in May. I'm not sure. It just depends, because we don't know how long it's going to take that new information to arrive.”

Professor Howland: "May I suggest, then, if during the summer you may send the report to the UFC that acts for the senate during the summer."

Professor Norton: "Yes, we could do that."

Speaker Beer: "Gentleman about half way back, please."

Unidentified Speaker, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. "While speaking to the faculty associated with the etymology library, the question came up -- and probably that was already answered earlier, but it was kind of a viable question, the question that how much money can actually be saved when these libraries are closed. Is there some rationale behind that?"

"One can imagine that moving those libraries is also expensive, and so the question is what are the trade-off and the benefits and the costs."

Professor Norton: "That's one of the issues the provost and library will consider and the Library Board will be considering. I can say that the -- one of the nice things about the vet library report that we got was the consideration of several different possible scenarios, shall we say, with respect to savings in this way or that way and, certainly, yeah, that's all factored in.

"In terms of money that's saved by closing a library, the most obvious thing that gets saved is staff salary, but there are lots of other kinds of things, too, such as the librarian pointed out to me, maintenance of Xerox machines and other sorts of equipment that have to be maintained if the library is open. Those are not necessarily negligible expenses.

"On the other hand, if there are great reasons for keeping the library open, it will be kept open. I think it has to do with what the reviews show. I think the idea is to examine carefully, given the current budget situation of the university, to examine carefully all these expenses just the way expenses in all the colleges are being examined, to see where savings can be made without losing vital services. So I can't answer in general about savings, but I do know that savings can be had.

"On the other hand, there's always the trade-off. If you stop buying certain books or stop buying certain journals, then can that ever be made up? Maybe, maybe not. That is another issue."

Speaker Beer: "Thank you very much, Professor Norton."

Professor Norton: "Okay."

Speaker Beer: "I would like to now call on Professor William Crepet for a report from the Committee on Academic Programs and Policies."

## 2. REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & POLICIES

Professor William Crepet, Plant Biology: "I have a rather simple report today. Two things came before the committee that were approved. The first of them was kind of exciting; a new concentration in the field of geological sciences. That concentration was Ocean Science and Technology. It consolidates many of the strengths we have at Cornell in these areas, and it has an innovative feature, and that is a memorandum of agreement with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, though it involves graduate students spending a semester there. It would also involve faculty or staff from Woods Hole teaching at the Isle of the Shoals in the summer, interacting with undergraduates and graduates in that setting.

"We felt it was an exciting proposal. It would enhance our program in graduate education and was approved unanimously by CAPP. Chuck Greene was the contact person. I don't know if Chuck is here for this.

"The second thing was just a routine update in Biological and Environmental Engineering, BEE, which was to change the major subject from biological environmental -- change the major subject in the major field of biological and environmental engineering to match the major field name. The name presently is agricultural and biological engineering, causing confusion, because it doesn't agree with the major field name, so the proposal is to make the name the same; that is the major field would be biological and environmental engineering.

"Also in the realm of updates, they proposed changing the concentrations to match what actually goes on at this time, to reflect the realities of their concentrations. And those are straightforward -- I will read the list.

"The new concentrations would include biological engineering, environmental engineering, bio-environmental engineering, bio-energy and integrated energy systems, bioprocess engineering, food engineering, industrial biotechnology, nano-biotechnology, sustainable systems, synthetic biology. Those are the proposed changes. We felt they were routine and a reasonable update. They were also approved unanimously by the committee. Thank you very much."

Speaker Beer: "I think we have time for questions. Professor Cohn, wait for microphone, please."

Professor Abby Cohn, Professor of Linguistics: "Hi. Abby Cohn, Linguistics. I have a question of clarification. What academic matters do we, as a body, need to vote on and which ones do not require a vote?"

Professor Crepet: "Well, for this I always consult Dean Fry, and I understand with respect to those two suggestions, we don't have to vote on a change -- to change them or to update them. Is that not so, Bill?"

Professor Cohn: "So we did need to vote when there was a formation of a new department, and it's also my understanding any time there's an academic program that cuts across colleges, like if we were forming a new major, I would assume that that is also a matter we'd vote on, so I'm wondering whether we are in the approval of a new concentration that might not also be a matter that requires a vote. I don't know if it should require a vote, but I would just like clarification."

Professor Crepet: "Bill? It's a new concentration in an old major."

Speaker Beer: "Any other questions for Professor Crepet?"

"Okay, thank you very much. I would like to now call on two things, Professor Schuster and Professor Walcott. I presume that you are Professor Schuster."

Speaker Beer: "You can stick this in your pocket. A report on updating desktop support, please."

### **3. UPDATE ON COMPUTER "DESKTOP" SUPPORT**

Steve Schuster, Interim Director, CIT: "Are you going to drive my slides for me? Charlie elected to sit in the back. That might be wise."

"So I'm Steve Schuster, the current leader of CIT. I'm also the administrative sponsor of the Reimagine IT initiative in the broader Reimagine process. That means I'm part of the core team. The core team, we have myself as the administrative sponsor, the academic sponsor is Dean Huttenlocher, Dean of CIS; we have an initiative manager, which is Craig Higgins from the College of Human Ecology; then we have Charlie Walcott as our factually representative on that body. We also have subcommittees under that."

"I am going to dig in. I know there are lots and lots of questions about what's going on here. I am going to try to provide some context in the Reimagining activities and dig down into some of these with more specifics. So please.

"I think it's worthwhile talking about why this is important for us in thinking about the scope. I will provide a quick overview of the individual IT activities within the broader scope of Reimagining and, like I mentioned before, there's three of them that I will dive a little deeper into, because I think it will hit you more closely; but I'll talk about the other ones, given some time or questions.

"So why are we doing this? Bottom line, we have around 800 IT staff across campus, and we are not well-coordinated. We don't plan very well. Our processes are inconsistent. At the end of the day, generally, you all and everybody else on campus is generally unhappy with our IT environment. We have to do something. In addition to the 800 staff, we are spending \$78 million on IT. For that type of money, we all ought to be very pleased with what we get. We are not. So we have work to do.

"The scope of our effort, it's limited to staff and expenses that are directly or not directly associated with sponsored funds. So basically, Cornell money is what we are talking about. Sponsored funds are intentionally left out of the scope of this activity.

"Here are our major activities. We know we don't do a good job by way of governance and decision-making. We are not strategically aligned with our investment and with the institutional direction, so we've created a governance body called the IT Governance Council. Four members sit on that, and that's the top of that body. Those four members are the provost; the CFO, Joanne Destefano; the CIA, myself, and Dean Huttenlocher. That's the highest level -- we'll have subcommittees under that body. Those are committees that will look at academic computing, administrative computing needs and general IT campus services. The idea here is we really have no strategic plan in any of these areas; we don't make good decisions; we have little governance, and we need to get aligned here. So that's what we hope to go through.

"The end user and desktop support, I will spend more time on in the subsequent slide, so I'll hit on that in a second. Same with academic computing and the same with application of service development. We also have data center needs. So right now, our primary data center is in Rhodes Hall. We are running out of space. We are not managing our server space real well; so a small initiative, looking at is there cost efficiencies and effectiveness. Changes we can make within that space are another area we are looking at. That's about all I will hit on that piece now.

“So desktop and end user support. Here's our challenge: How can we do things more efficiently while at the same time not reduce -- better yet, at least not reduce, but better yet, increase the support that we are getting for our computer systems around campus. Here are some emerging recommendations. We feel we need to standardize on a smaller set of computers than we are supporting. The bottom line is when we call our IT support staff, it is an exploration to figure out what type of computer you have, what type of OS you are running, what's the age of the operating system, what applications you have on there. That's an enormous amount of time each and every time they visit people, so we feel we need to contain that a little bit.

“We have to update our technology and processes. The typical way our tech support supports us right now is they come to our office. We have to hunt them down, either phone calls or cell phone or pagers, if we are lucky, or run to their office and pull them into our office. There's new technologies out there that we think could do a heck of a lot better. It is time to refresh, so remote management, remote troubleshooting and things are processes we need to explore.

“We are going to cluster IT resources. A clustering is -- we feel we need to standardize on a lot of this, so driving consistently as an IT community, but we also can't break the individual closeness of the people that support the units they are in. So this is really, really a balancing act, because we know there's local efficiencies and focus that we simply can't break. And hey, at the end of the day, there's certainly faculty -- maybe some administrators, but faculty that are simply going to have special, unique IT needs. That have to be supported and we have to figure out how that works. Now, it might be that if it's for sponsored research, that higher level of support needs to be on that -- some of those funds, but we need to work that out, at least think it through as we move forward.

“Academic computing. So Anne Kenney, myself and a small group have been really thinking about how to rationalize and better collaborate how we support academic computing on campus. The bottom line here is we are doing little, if any, real strategic investment in the way that we are moving academic computing forward. And that, I think, is a problem. So some of the emerging recommendations; the libraries, the Center for Teaching Excellence, CIT and all the local units need to define what our roles and responsibilities here are, and then what is the path -- what is the strategic direction that we want to move forward. So one example is that perhaps the library should take a more direct role; so like front-end support and CIT takes a very back-end infrastructure role in how we are supporting faculty and students in this space.

“And I have already mentioned the strategic plan for academic computing. We are not thinking strategically, not thinking about what our investments should be as an institution in this space. We are doing it in a very ad hoc way, and I think that's presenting lots of challenges and problems for us.

“Next, please.

“So application and service development; again, every unit, CIT and every college and every local unit -- any administrative unit does their own development in their own way. Sometimes it's sustainable, sometimes it is not. Lots of times we don't have the staff that's refreshed and up-to-date in things we are doing, so how do we ensure that we are strategically aligned, that we can optimally perform what we need to do and that is sufficiently maintainable.

“All too often, we have applications and services that are stood up across campus, then that person retires or that person leaves and the system's no longer sustainable or maintainable, so we have to address those pieces. Emerging recommendations that come out of this, we have to move from a build-here-first approach to a purchase approach. There are lots and lots of solutions, lots of capabilities out there that we just have to examine better. Building things ourselves is not always the best way to do it, and we have to examine - can we buy this system before we look at building it ourselves first. Again, we are looking at clustering IT resources, again, to not only standardize what we are doing, but also preserve local efficiencies.

“And then we need to really think about pieces that we're missing in providing services across campus. We don't do good quality assurance testing. We don't understand how it fits into an overall architecture, we don't understand what it means to do actually through a release process, so lots of times we end up with half-baked solutions or solutions that don't meet the needs and requirements of our users, so our requirements collections or gathering is not sufficient. Then we have to think about an outsource management component as well. So there are functions that we just have to invest in as an institution.

“So time line. We meet with our steering committee next week to flesh out all the recommendations across this set. We expect those recommendations to move to decisions in the May time frame by the President and the Provost. We are looking at at least initial changes happening in the next academic year, 2010 and '11. Right now, we are focusing an awful lot in the way we are doing application and service development, understanding that, boy, we can't rip out end user support without better processes and better technologies in place. The worst-case scenario is we change everything and your

support goes into the tank, worse than it is now; so we have to really think about that. This is absolutely a multiyear process. We hope to have most of these recommendations and decisions completed in the first couple of years.

“There will indeed be a staff reduction that goes along with this. We are working through those numbers now and what that means. In an organizational institution this size, 800 feels heavy.”

Speaker Beer: “We do have some time for questions. Professor, wait for a microphone, please.”

Unidentified Speaker: “I was interested in your comment on outsource management. Are you talking about cloud computing and moving everything off-campus?”

Steve Schuster: “I can't see moving everything off-campus, but it's something we have to think about. Our cloud computing is either the infrastructure that is the cloud or applications that are the cloud, and we have a whole gamut in between all that. We have to think about that as a tool in our tool kit, as a piece of our solution and understand that we don't necessarily have to build everything and house everything here. So that's part of something that we absolutely have to examine. Obviously, thinking about data latencies and policy and compliance issues with legal issues, all those components have to be considered, but that's absolutely a piece of what we are looking at.”

Unidentified Speaker: “Is there a cost reduction that you would see in terms of going to cloud computing, at least for part of the structure?”

Steve Schuster: “So the hype says yes, but we all know what hype means. There's a lot of bundled costs in these cloud computing solutions, so it might look really cheap, as you think about moving applications up into the cloud. Where they get you is actually the bandwidth charges, as you access these, right. So we really have to examine what the hidden costs are there, we have to also have to understand what our service level agreements are with the vendors, and we can address all that through contractual needs; but the hard part also is how does that integrate in with our architecture, right. “So if I start outsourcing or moving into the cloud, can I still use CU web log-in? Am I going to use different things? How does that work together? Because I don't want it to appear to be multiple hops. We have to think about this as a cohesive environment for us. So yes, it is absolutely on the table and it's absolutely something we are looking at.”

Speaker Beer: “Gentleman in the plaid shirt, with the blue jacket.”

Professor Carl Franck, Physics Department: "I would also say the problems I have had with computers, I always found the CIT help desk fantastic and saved me many times.  
Steve Schuster: "I very seldom hear that. Thank you."

Professor Franck: "One thing I would appreciate is knowing to what extent we could have a wireless campus. A lot of ways, when I go home, life is a lot easier in my wireless-routed house, and I'd sure appreciate it if we had that all over the place here."

Steve Schuster: "Totally agree. I hope what you are seeing is an expansion of our wireless footprint. This takes time to roll out. The other thing I'm surprised I didn't hear also -- maybe you are not in the situation -- the whole Ethernet project. This is all time and upgrade pieces. We know without a doubt -- a year ago, we were thinking of wireless as a supplemental network; that it really wasn't a primary network. That has shifted. Wireless is actually, for many cases, our primary network and we are treating it that way, so I think you will see expansions as we go out with access points. We moved to Chantry, which is a phenomenally good product as well. So we have upgraded those pieces. So thank you for your compliment, too, for the help desk."

Speaker Beer: "Senator Cohn?"

Professor Cohn: "Thanks for a very refreshing report. I am wondering what sources of information you are using for your end user support and, depending on the answer to that, have a couple suggestions for you."

Steve Schuster: "So what sources we are using?"

Professor Cohn: "Where you are getting your information."

Steve Schuster: "So we have been all over campus. Of the two primary teams -- and the two primary teams are the end user support one, and the development one. The development team caucused everyone on campus, everyone they could get a hold of, they get with Gartner, with other vendors, they chat with our peers multiple times, then they sat back and now let's figure this out.

"They did exactly the opposite thing on the end user support. They sat down -- so the interesting thing is there was no CIT involvement on that end user support work group, zero. So they looked at it from really a college support perspective. We pulled from college people and said what are the challenges you are working with, then they went out and started trying those pieces."

Professor Cohn: "So I would like to suggest the faculty, per se, have probably been under-pollled, and I'm just giving you one data point: I have not been asked for input and I would absolutely not want my college level support IT people speaking for me about what my needs are, because there's an enormous gap between what I wish my support were and what I'm getting. And I would strongly encourage you to think of a direct mechanism to poll the faculty -- as you have noted, there's been a mismatch where faculty are getting their support, what our needs are. I would suggest either making a very open invitation for us to provide input or actually doing some kind of survey and giving us, through a survey, a rather open-ended opportunity to give you input."

Steve Schuster: "Your feedback is wholly accepted. As I mentioned, we will go through the requirements with -- we have collected that, kind of finished the design phase now. As we work through the implementation, there will be opportunity for more involvement and I will explicitly look and make sure -- Craig, did you have something to offer?"

Craig Higgins, CHE "There is also faculty focus groups -- Craig Higgins, initiative manager for the IT group. There is a faculty focus groups formed across campus through the initiative coordination office under Paul Streeter that will solicit some of those things in a broad way. Just wanted to let you know about that too."

Professor Cohn: "I really don't think that cuts it. Focus groups really under-attend to the range of concerns that people have. Some of our concerns are even at the level of the department or even sub-department, and I think you would be very wise to give us all the opportunity to give you as much input as we would like. And if you don't get much input, then that's a signal that it is not an issue at that level, but I really encourage you to let every faculty member in some form or another tell you about their concerns."

Steve Schuster: "I think that's fair."

Speaker Beer: "Professor --?"

Peter Stein, Physics: "Peter Stein. I used to be in Physics. Now I'm a free agent. I have a couple of comments to make. One is that I want to second what my colleague Carl Franck said. I think the help desk is really good, really first-class. It is the best help I ever get over the telephone, talking to anybody, and I think that outsourcing, that would be a disaster. They are smart, they seem to know what they are talking about, the response is good. It's the best support I have gotten over the telephone that I can think of."

Steve Schuster: "Thank you."

Professor Stein: "The second thing I want to say is I have been working with computers for more years than you think computers have been around, and one of the things that I have heard consistently was something that I heard on the slide over there. Well, we have made a mistake. We used to write our own software; now the person's gone. We haven't gotten documentation for it and it doesn't work. We have a lot of patches going in and it is so complicated, nobody can fix it. We learned our lesson, we will buy commercial software packages in the future and let them maintain it. I have heard that many, many times in the past and, apparently, you haven't learned the lesson. It's -- well, I just wanted to comment on that."

Steve Schuster: "I appreciate the comment. Let me clarify. We can't and will never be in a situation where we outsource everything. We have to, as much as we are looking at cloud computing, consider outsourcing as an option. I would say consider it and really look at the cost benefit of doing so.

"The other thing, the failure to maintain our systems, the poor documentation has nothing to do with outsourcing, has everything to do with the way we develop and deploy services. I don't care whether they are outsourced by way of development and we integrate or we develop them here locally. We have to get better at our processes in documenting and making sure your systems are maintainable. I don't care who develops them. Those processes have to change or we'll end up in the same situation regardless, but I understand your point. We have to look at the suite of options available.

"There will be times we simply have to develop. Developing is expensive, not only in maintaining, but also meeting the requirements. When we develop our own systems, we believe that we can develop systems that meet sometimes our antiquated and terrible business processes that are inconsistent across campus, and it just reinforces what we are doing. Sometimes we just have to implement things. We have to consider that as an option. And I would say we have to consider it as a first option as opposed to just a final option."

Professor Stein: "One more comment and a suggestion? One thing that I think you are missing is an agile front end on the web, when you go into CIT. When you want to find out things about the computer you have or office or anything like that, you just go into Google and start typing and you get an answer. And I think that we probably at Cornell have a series of problems like that; that if you could go into the Cornell web site and just talk to it, you know, just type in what your problem is with key words and

have some kind of a program that found answers to that or found other things that people have found, that's, I think, something we really need. I find that they never change the interface that you meet when you go onto it. Situations change, and the things you get on it are yes, we have a big problem now or something like that."

Steve Schuster: "I agree, by the way. That is something you and I wholly agree on."

Speaker Beer: "One more question from the left side of the hall."

Professor Greg Poe, Applied Economics & Management. "You say you are going to standardize computers to choose three types. Have you considered the ways of funding computers? Because as we are doing it, I think we are very odd mix and match, as everyone gets the money here or there, and if you are going to standardize something, it implies you might actually provide funding for computers?"

Steve Schuster: "That was a little off the cuff there, but I'm thinking a good way of standardizing things is have central provision of these. Some schools do, and Cornell has historically not.

"Funding is something I try to stay away from, because it takes us down paths quickly. That would solve not only the problem, the challenge of standardization, it would also solve another problem that we sometimes have, and that is the belief that the computers at the institution purchased for us are our own. And we run into that quite a bit. So this belief that this computer that my institution has purchased for me is something that I own and I should be able to do anything I want to with it is a challenge for us, right. "There was something that I didn't highlight on the slide, but I'm hoping you picked up. As we think about standardizing and managed desktop and really try to be more efficient, that doesn't mean taking away things like administrative control and being able to install things. It means just managing things a little better. I don't know how to address the financial aspect of it; but certainly, there has to be this belief that it is an institutional asset, it is institutional funds that pay for it -- I don't know how to draw these lines because they are a little bit odd on where they are, but that's certainly a possibility as we start looking at budget and funding models moving forward."

Speaker Beer: "Is it a quickie?"

Professor Kathy Gleason, Landscape Architecture: "Yes."

Speaker Beer: "Okay. Professor Gleason."

Professor Gleason: "We had the opposite problem where we had budget cuts, told we had to buy our own computers. I found out I wouldn't have support and the computer would essentially be for my departmental work."

Steve Schuster: "So, one, I'm surprised to hear that. Two, I'm disappointed to hear that. Prior to me leading CIT, I was the security officer here. So I worry very much about the Cornell work that we do on our personal machines. When Cornell owns the machines, we can put -- we stand a better chance of putting some rules around the use of those and what data we have on there and where the data are. When you own that, I really stand no chance of being able to set up those expectations, so that process worries me a little bit. I hope we don't get to that situation. Could you send me an e-mail and let me know where you are? I would like to at least discuss what that means overall."

Professor Gleason: "I am in a field that doesn't -- there are not a lot of grants available in that field, so the assumption we buy on our grants doesn't completely apply in our department."

Steve Schuster: "I think through the IT governance council is exactly the mechanism to think about the institutional directions and some of the consequences of some of these funds and where we should just put a stake in the sand and say this isn't the way to address our budget issues. So yeah, please."

Speaker Beer: "Thank you very much, Mr. Schuster, for a very enlightening report and discussion. I would like to now call on Associate Dean of the Faculty Fred Gouldin for a report from the nominations and elections committee."

#### 4. [NOMINATIONS & ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT](#)

Fred Gouldin, Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty: "Thank you very much. So I'm basically going to give you a list of faculty that have agreed to serve on various committees for the faculty and also list the names of the committees that they will be serving on.

"So first, on Elections and Nomination, Nicholas van de Walle has agreed to serve a three-year term; Steve Sangren agreed to serve on FABIT, and that will be a three-year term. For the Emergency Grant Fund Committee, Mike Walter has agreed to serve. Looks like his term of service is indefinite. He has my condolences.

"Then for the North Campus and College Town Council committee, my colleague in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Michel Louge is serving a three-year term. And the University Hearing Board, a number of faculty are serving there: David Galton, Dale Grossman, Jim Jenkins, Michel Louge, Porus Olpadwala and Deb Turnbull, Ralph Obendorf, and also Dean Fry indicated Katherine March would also serve on that committee. So that completes my report. I assume there are no questions."

Speaker Beer: "Thank you. It would be appropriate to hear a motion to accept the report."

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "So moved."

Speaker Beer: "And is there a second?"

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "Second."

Speaker Beer: "All those in favor of accepting the report from the Nominations and Elections Committee, please signify by saying aye."

(Ayes.)

Speaker Beer: "Opposed? Abstentions?"

The report is accepted, without opposition and unanimously."

Professor Gouldin: "Thank you very much."

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Speaker Beer: "Like to now consider the minutes of the March meeting of the University Faculty Senate. I would like to indicate that there has been a correction to the minutes in the characterization of a vote that the speaker was in error in characterizing, and Professor Saunders pointed out that error, and the minutes have been corrected to indicate the correct characterization. So at this point, the minutes, as corrected, are open for approval. Any further corrections? If not, can we accept the corrected minutes without opposition?"

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "So moved."

Speaker Beer: "All those in favor, signify by saying aye."

(Ayes.)

Speaker Beer: "Opposed, nay?"

Abstentions?

“The minutes are approved unanimously. I would like to now call on the agenda, which involves a report from the University Faculty Committee. I am not certain who will be making that report.”

## **6. REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY COMMITTEE**

Professor Dave Lipsky, ILR: “I want to acknowledge Dean Fry's assistance in preparing the report. The UFC met with the leadership of the Board of Trustees on March 10 in the Statler Hotel. Chairman Peter Meinig was present, as well as Diana Daniel, Robert Katz, David Selznick and Jan Rock Zubrow, and chair of the executive committee and several other chairs of committees of the trustees were also present. Faculty trustee Rosemary Avery was also present.

“We discussed several critical issues, including the role of the trustees in the Reimagining Cornell process. The trustees indicated academic planning was firmly in the hands of both the university administration and the faculty. We discussed strategic planning for quite some time at that meeting. Another question was concerning Cornell interactions with Albany and with the State University of New York, particularly in view of the pending budget cuts for the contract colleges. The trustees were convinced that Cornell is doing as much as possible, they gave us every assurance that Cornell was doing as much as possible in terms of communicating with Albany and that appropriate channels of communication were through the office of the provost.

“On March 23, the UFC met with Provost Fuchs. That meeting also focused on strategic planning. We learned from the provost that the university is on track to make additional budget corrections. The provost explained the need for the reserve draw, essentially the tax on college and university reserves; and since that meeting, the additional budget corrections have been made public.

“On April 6, the UFC met with President Skorton. We meet twice a semester with the president and twice a semester with Provost Fuchs. A major topic of conversation with President Skorton was his role in the strategic planning process. The president assured the UFC that he was very much involved in that process and supported the process fully.

“Many changes have already been made, particularly in regard to the management of spending. The senior leadership of the university now receives monthly updates from Mary Opperman, the vice president for human resources, and from Joanne Destefano, the chief financial officer, concerning the status and future of Cornell employees, including reports about possible layoffs and reductions in force and our current budget

situation. The information is also shared with the trustees on a monthly basis; thus, the senior leadership has a much better understanding of revenues, expenses and obligations currently than it has had in recent history. Trustees appreciate the activities and actions of the senior leadership; they also made that clear in the meeting that the trustees had with the UFC in March.

“The UFC is concerned about animal care and the infrastructure that supports animal care in research laboratories. We have urged Vice Provost Buhrman to appoint an advisory committee to make recommendations about the infrastructure for caring for animals and for evaluating protocols necessary in conducting animal research. And my colleagues and I would be pleased to try to answer any questions you might have.”  
 Speaker Beer: “Thank you very much. Any questions for Professor Lipsky and the University Faculty Committee?”

“Gentleman in the --.”

Professor Ted Clark, Microbiology and Immunology. “I am wondering if you could elaborate on the last point about animal care, where that's coming from and what, if any, concerns there are, and why there's an initiative.”

Professor Lipsky: “Probably not the best member to respond to that question, but I have colleagues here. Howie Howland, I think, can give you a good response.”

Professor Howland: “You may know that Michelle Bailey, who was director of care, has left, and there had been a large number of complaints about the way that proposals had to be submitted to the IACUC. A major complaint compliant was the sudden rise in per diems for vertebrate animals, which occurred in the summer. At that point, Senior Vice Provost Buhrman said he would appoint a committee in the fall of faculty and administrators to look at this and report back to the faculty. That committee was not formed in the fall, and the UFC met with him, I think at the end of the semester, and asked him please to do this. We were hoping that would occur before the appointment of a new director of care. Again, he said he'd do it in February, and that didn't happen. So we very recently addressed a letter to him, pointing out that we thought this was really a very serious situation, and we really did want action on it. So that's pretty much what that issue is about.”

Speaker Beer: “Thank you. Any other questions for Professor Lipsky or other members of UFC who may be present? Thank you very much. We'll move to the next item, remarks from the dean of the faculty, Bill Fry.”

## 7. UPDATE FROM THE DEAN OF FACULTY

Dean Bill Fry, Dean of Faculty: "Thanks, Steve. I wanted to report on a few things that have been on my plate for some time, and a couple of these issues also have been on the plate for many of us, especially recently. I think many of us are concerned about academic integrity. We have heard some real horror stories about mass cheating and that sort of thing. It happens at Cornell; it is happening all over. There's a tremendous amount of concern about what to do about it and sort of the culture of the lack of appropriate academic integrity. Seems like most of us want to correct the situation, but nobody really knows quite what to do about it, I should say.

"The Educational Policy Committee has been dealing with this for the entire year. That committee within the University Faculty sort of owns academic integrity. They have ideas of tweaking it; but so far, a real major overhaul has not yet occurred, but that's what we are attempting to do and thinking about.

"One of the really nice features that will become available very soon is a website that will be on the University Faculty website, dealing with how to negotiate academic integrity within the university. That should be up very soon. It was developed by a group of persons from the Academic Integrity Hearing Boards, and it's a really useful tool for both students and faculty to use. That will be available soon.

"I wanted to report also that there will be an electronic election in the next week or two that we will have elections for a trustee, for the UFC, for nominations elections and for at-large senators. There will be the OPUF amendment that we approved here on the ballot and also a referendum from University Assemblies.

"And the issue that has grabbed all of us is the student deaths, ten student deaths in this academic year, six by suicide and three just by the spring break. That's a cluster of suicides which really is a contagion. The university responded very quickly, put fences on the bridges, as we have all heard about. And then in his April 5th editorial in "The Sun," David Skorton said that "I have asked the Vice President Susan Murphy, Provost Ken Fuchs and Bill Fry to coordinate in comprehensive examination of the student experience and to share with the community ideas and plans to support our students." "So I would like suggestions as to what that means. I have had -- personally, I have had letters from faculty, from students, undergraduate and graduate students, from alumni and from parents, all concerned about it. It's an issue that we do need to deal with. Cornell is known as a rigorous place. There is some stress. I am not willing to say that we are too rigorous and there's too much stress, but we have that reputation. There are -- I think there are some issues we should look at; the classes, the grading system, our

exams, approaches in scheduling exams. One faculty member said we should eliminate evening exams.

“And then I have also had several questions concerning the calendar. So Steve -- and the calendar is an issue that I had promised that we would investigate next year, and indeed we will. Next year is the first day in which Labor Day will be taken as a holiday, but also I would like us to take a very comprehensive look at the entire academic calendar, both fall and spring. In order to do this, it seems to me it needs to be largely faculty-driven. I am suggesting there should be four to six faculty members on a committee that would investigate the calendar; somebody from Student and Academic Services, at least one academic associate dean who deals with such things, representatives from the student assembly, the graduate student and professional student assembly, the university assembly, then we need to have liaison between Ithaca College and the local public schools.

“The provost and vice president for planning have promised we could have support in this endeavor. I think that's really important, because this is not a trivial issue. It is going to be data-informed, it will be very important that we know what's happening. “And so we have been promised support from Institutional Research and Planning to conduct this evaluation. So I think we can do a very credible job. That committee will be active in 2010 and 2011.

“The challenge to this committee is to create a calendar that's cohesive, academically appropriate, that it has appropriate breaks, and hopefully -- and this is a significant challenge, Abby -- in synchrony with the area schools and avoids conflicts with IC. That's a process that's happening, and particularly on how we deal with the student experience, I would appreciate any suggestions that you might have. And Steve, I think that is my report. I would be happy to address any questions or to listen to comments.”  
Speaker Beer: “Professor Cohn.”

Professor Cohn: “David mentions in the UFC report the budget corrections have now been made public. I have heard mention in passing of figures, but I haven't seen anything definitive, and I was wondering if you might be in a position to inform us or update us about that process.”

Dean Fry: “I am in the position to ask Elmira Mangum, the Vice President for Budget and Planning. I think she can address that question very well. So Elmira --”

Elmira Mangum, Vice President for Budget and Planning: “Yes, the budget for fiscal year 2011, we are in the process of making the decisions and finalizing decisions. What

we did at the beginning of this process was to try and restate what the Ithaca campus structural deficit is, and that is different from an operating, one-time expenditure reduction.

“Many of the actions that were taken this year, the 5% across the board was a permanent reduction, but there was also a drawdown from reserves. Those reserves clearly are one-time funds, and they were used to address long-term budget that the central university had for facilities and for buildings, et cetera; so what we are using those funds to do is pay down long-term debt to relieve the ongoing operating budget of 30 years worth of debt related to facility and other capital types of projects; but going forward in restating the deficit to begin fiscal year 2011, the campus budget for this fiscal year was budgeted to be almost \$69 million in the red.

“And in order to address that, next fiscal year we have agreed with the Board of Trustees to take several actions. One was to reduce the endowment payout as an operating activity going forward, to try and reduce -- what we are going to try to do next year is reduce the ongoing expenditure budget, so that we can have a permanent corrective action and won't continue to have annual or create annual deficits over a period of time.

“Part of that -- so we'll address the entire \$68.9 million, to try to take it down, but an action taken last year and this year as part of the budget reduction process included a staff retirement incentive. That staff retirement incentive was supposed to be implemented in a way that it would have a permanent impact on the budget. It didn't get implemented that way; so when I came, I found that it would reduce the expenditures for this year, so we had to load that back in next year as a permanent expenditure reduction.

“So the budget reduction for next year includes the \$17 million that was supposed to come from the staff retirement incentive, it includes the \$69 million that was coming from the budgeted annual deficit; but there are also a couple other things that are contributing to an ongoing operational deficit, which we are also going to address. And that includes -- we have a staff retirement -- a staff salary improvement program or salary improvement program that's been announced of 2%. When the budget estimates were made for next year, they were understated, so that's going to add an additional amount of permanent budget deficit that we need to cover.

“In addition to the fact that there are fees, tuition increases that were projected -- because we live on a projected budget -- and program fees, and they are not bringing in the resources that they had budgeted for and had expected for next year. So basically

summarized, we are about \$102 million structural deficit that we have to solve for, and the plan right now is to solve for about \$72 million of it next year; and then the year following, we are hoping that some of the efficiency initiatives that we have gained -- that we should gain from the efficient work that's been done out of the Initiatives Coordination office, the Bains Consulting Group, to identify ways for us to save money by delivering services more efficiently -- you hear about some of the actions the IT organization is going to try to take. There are procurement actions and contracts the campus is going to be involved in to create savings for everyone and structurally allow us to be able to reduce or spend over time.

"The one that's most important that's a part of next year's action that's been -- that you may have heard a lot about or -- I don't know if they have had a presentation on spans and layers, but the organizational one has to do with redefining the span of the organization of each one of the administrative layers and making them more -- deliver service more concisely and efficiently, and that's by contracting the number of employees designed to deliver different types of services. So this year's budget will contribute about \$20 million of these savings.

"The way we designed the budget reduction so far this year and where we are having hearings, we met with each of the deans to explain to them what the budget reduction would look like within their college. What we are doing is, rather than looking at the budget reduction as contract college, endowed college, in keeping with the theme that's going through Reimagining Cornell and trying to treat the university as one, what we are doing is looking at it in three different stratifications. We are looking at colleges and trying to treat academic instruction and research in the same manner and, in fact, for this particular strategy, we remove all of the sponsored program expenditures and activities, because they are variable and they vary across different faculty and schools.

"We said what's the base we have to deal with that's left and started to see how that would impact - how reducing that budget expenditure level would impact the colleges across the institution and try to make sure that they were treated and the impact would be similar across all the colleges. We provided for a little more of a budget reduction to academic support functions, because the idea here is to protect instruction. So the support functions such as career advising, the university libraries, career placement, campus life and some of the other activities that support the students and student experience on campus, we cut them just a little bit more; and then we took a look at administrative areas like the vice president's areas across the institution, facilities, the infrastructure, the plant and things like that. That is where the bulk of this reduction is going to come from.

“So the largest part of the reduction next year is going to come from the administration, administrative services, through trying to be more efficient in terms of delivery of services, and I think that's essentially the thing we are working with. Right now we are meeting with the vice presidents to talk to them about how this would impact their areas.

“The provost has provided an opportunity for each of the deans to come back to him, if they cannot absorb this reduction, or come back to him and explain the impacts of reduction on their particular part of the university. He is going to provide the same opportunity for the vice presidents and other administrative and support areas to come back and, during the next couple of weeks, we are hoping that we will be able to have a final budget that we can submit to the Board of Trustees in May, and we can have a budget going forward. So that's kind of where we are right now in the process.”

Speaker Beer: “Any further questions for Dean Fry? Gentleman on the aisle, on the left.”

Professor David Delchamps, Electrical and Computer Engineering. Trivial question. You mentioned the e-mail election we are going to have. The last year was the first year I remember doing that. It didn't say how many people we were voting for for each thing. It gave a list of names and said rank them. It didn't say there's two seats. So if you could fix it so it would do that, that would help.”

Dean Fry: “Thank you. We'll fix it.”

Speaker Beer: “I think we have time for one more question before we go to Good and Welfare. One more question?”

Professor Levitsky, Nutritional Sciences. “Going back to the suicide problem, two things: One is how does Cornell rate among other institutions? I have heard various rumors one way or the other on that. What are the data? And secondly, these suicide fences that have gone up, are they empirically derived, or are they promoted as a public display of Cornell doing something?”

Dean Fry: “My responses are from an ignorant person. I am clearly not an expert in this area, but from what I have heard is that physical barriers do make a difference, and there are -- I haven't seen the data, but there are apparently credible data to support that. So yes, those physical barriers do prevent suicides, from what I have been told. “And the first part of your question was, are we different from others. And suicides are really -- there's a tremendous variance, but I heard Susan Murphy yesterday say that college is a tremendous mitigating factor in terms of suicides, so young people in

college are less prone than those who are not in college. Cornell is apparently at about the national average for suicides. During the first part of this century, we were right at that national average. Then we had a period of about three years in which we had no suicides at all. And this year, we were clearly very different from that.

“They are always disturbing. I think what was particularly disturbing is this cluster of suicides just before bring break, and that really did concern people, that something had to happen to prevent or to break that sort of clustering; but from what I understand, we are probably about the average. Cornell suicides, if it's off a bridge, are really spectacular, so that's invisible.”

Speaker Beer: “Thank you very much, Dean Fry. We will now move to the section of the agenda referred to as “Good and Welfare”. It's a section under which any member of the faculty can address the senate on any area of concern. Our first speaker is Professor Harry Lawless, who will enlighten us on the matter of concern.”

## **8. GOOD AND WELFARE**

Professor Harry Lawless: “Thank you. I am here to present or to inform you about a resolution from the CALS Faculty Senate which was passed unanimously last week. And do we have that on a PowerPoint slide?”

“Okay, shall I read it? Thank you, Dean.

“This was penned by William Lesser from Applied Economics & Management, so I take no credit for this prose, but it was approved by all of us who are on the CALS Faculty Senate. And it is in the spirit of transparency and engagement, and the basic idea is to have a mechanism by which the administration or the university will respond to recommendations from standing committees or other duly constituted bodies such as a faculty senate; there being no apparent mechanism for such response at the present time or at least no formal mechanism such as a web site or something like that.

“So it reads, “whereas all of Cornell University is undergoing a profound Reimagining process which requires the full informed commitment of all the university community” -- that's the first whereas – “and whereas the organizational stewardship task force report emphasizes the importance of shared governance and collaborative decision-making with a commitment to open communication and transparency; recognizing that the feedback loop from faculty to the several levels of administration remain unclear to the extent that there is no evident mandate for an administration response to faculty standing committee resolutions and recommendations, nor is there a readily accessible

source for follow up information on recommendations made and actions taken or not; and further recognizing that final decision-making authority at Cornell University reside with the Board of Trustees, the president and the deans and designees as delineated in the charter and other applicable documents; and moreover, recognizing that standing faculty committees decisions and recommendations are to be interpreted as recommendations to the university or college level administrators as indicated by the nature of the recommendations, then let it be -- here we go. Here's the resolution -- resolved that when a standing committee, parentheses, such the CALS Faculty Senate, closed parentheses, makes a recommendation, the recipient individual or his, slash, her designee shall be required to send a formal response, in a timely manner, indicating whether the recommendation was accepted or rejected in whole or in part with a justification for the decision reached.

"The resolution continues in a second sentence, those explanations shall be added in a timely manner to a newly created web page for the university community to contain all committee recommendations submitted with the explanations of decisions made and justifications for those decisions.

"That is the original version from William Lesser that was approved unanimously by the CALS Faculty Senate on April 7. Since that time, Dean Fry pointed out to us the choice of verbs in the resolution were somewhat unfortunate, particularly the "shall be required to," insofar as the faculty cannot truly compel the administration to do anything, so Professor Howland suggested that the verb be changed to "should," so that "the recipient individual or his, slash, her, designee should send a formal response in a timely manner."

"And Dean Fry also pointed out the CALS Faculty Senate was not really a standing committee of the university, and so Professor Howland suggested a second change to when a representative faculty committee, parentheses, such as the faculty senate of the university or a college. And so that broadens that scope a bit, but I think captures the spirit of what was intended by the CALS senate."

Speaker Beer: "Could you please describe what you intend with this resolution for the future."

Professor Lawless: "We intend to present it then to the university faculty in its amended form for its first and second readings and hopefully its adoption."

Speaker Beer: "At the May meeting?"

Professor Lawless: "At the May meeting. Thank you, Steve."

Speaker Beer: "Any questions? Senator Cohn."

Professor Cohn: "As the Linguistic representative to this body, I feel it my responsibility to ask a semantic question, which is how do you define "in a timely manner"?"

Professor Lawless: "Some of the CALS Faculty Senators also felt that that was vague, and I'm open to suggestions and amendments to that."

Professor Walcott: "The University Assembly has the same provision in its charter and it requires that our recommendations go to the president and that he respond within 30 days. That's just a suggestion."

Professor Lawless: "Thank you, Professor Walcott."

Speaker Beer: "Any further comments or questions on Professor Lawless's concern? If not, thank you very much."

"We will now move to the second Good and Welfare issue, which will be presented by Professor Klaus Beyenbach. If you will hold that, please."

Professor Klaus Beyenbach, Veterinary College: "Thank you, Dean Fry for the opportunity to speak in front of this group. I am Klaus Beyenbach, from the Department of Medical Sciences in the Veterinary College, and I want to talk to you about the suicides at Cornell."

"I am housed in the Veterinary College, and I'm a professor in the Veterinary College, but my teaching is exclusively to undergraduate students, and I have been teaching undergraduate students for 30 years. And with the students I have in my laboratory, I have about 20 undergraduate advisees; so with that experience, I believe to have a fairly good handle on what motivates and ails our undergraduate students."

"I am sure you must have given some thoughts why our students are compelled or driven to jump off bridges or to commit suicide in other fashions. And I wanted to share with you today my impressions of undergraduates, and my impressions are that many of them -- not all of them -- many of them are under too much pressure, and that this pressure is self-driven, self-imposed. I don't think it comes from us, but it appears to be peer pressure."

"I will give you some examples of the experiences I have collected during this semester. One student believes he should take and must take 22 credit hours, and I could not persuade him for taking less credits. I saw him two days ago, by accident, on campus, and he looked pale and gaunt and tired, and he had dropped down to 18 credits; but as an advisor, I had no power to prohibit the students from taking 22 credit hours.

"Another student in my class this semester is missing the 10:00 lecture. "Why," I ask her.

"I can't hear four alarm clocks."

"Why can't you hear four alarm clocks?"

"Well, I study until 5:00 every morning."

"Well, other students, next to their coursework, are taking undergraduate research, which is a major commitment; and for the first time -- that hasn't happened before -- they are also taking undergraduate teaching assistantships for four credits, five credits for research. And these are both major time commitments, on top of all the other responsibilities they are having. Why are some students now feeling compelled to do research and to be teaching assistants?"

"And so often I get the impression that our undergraduate students, they are trying to be everything to everybody. Other students have a deep sense of social responsibility. They volunteer in the community, in the hospitals, in nursing homes, they work for Big Brothers, they go on fund drives, food fund drives, and they have that responsibility in addition to the primary purpose of really being here. Others, again, want to exhibit their leadership qualities and abilities, and they organize new interest groups, new clubs and so on, which again, is a big distraction from their education.

"Now, many of our students can handle multiple responsibilities; but coursework, research, scholarship, volunteering, athletics, and then not to forget many of our students are on work study, by themselves these may not be insurmountable pressure, but collectively, they may create a synergism that when a minor or benign problem comes up, that pushes them over the balance and to arrive at a catastrophic decision. "The suicide at Cornell is everybody's business, and I think it's primarily the faculty's business. I have great understanding for the University for putting up these awful fences at the bridges, because yes, we did have to do something quick, and immediately and visibly; but putting up the fences is only managing the problem. We must aim to cure the problem of suicide. I am not about to say that suicides can be cured, but I think we can do better than the national average.

“So on that note, I want to find out -- well, what is the faculty thinking about this? Do you agree with the experience that I have had? And what are we doing collectively as a faculty? What can we do in advising and in teaching to connect better with our students?”

“I think we are all digitally connected, but personally isolated. And I think if we go back perhaps to some of these old-fashioned ways of taking your students in your office and sitting down for an hour or two and just talking and listening and hearing their concerns -- these students in this era, the students today, they are in an environment and atmosphere of political insecurity, of economic insecurity and physical insecurity. When we were students, we didn't have that. The United States was competent and generous –

[LAUGHTER]

“That is my experience -- competent, generous and confident. We are in a different era. These are the students we are getting, and the pressures they are now putting on themselves reflect some of these insecurities, and these insecurities turn into fears, and fears can turn into hopelessness. Thank you very much.”

Speaker Beer: “If you would like to hear some comment or --?”

Professor Beyenbach: “Definitely, yes.”

Speaker Beer: “We have several minutes for consideration of this very important issue that Professor van Beyenbach brings to us. Any comments or questions for him or on the issue? Gentleman on the aisle.”

Professor Clark: “So I guess I have had experiences similar to yours, where a student will decide, for whatever reason, that they have to do something, you know, that they have to take 22 credits or this is what's expected of them, and it's very difficult, as you said, to talk them out of that, to make them see that no, you don't have to do that. It isn't that way.

“So I think that's a real challenge. I am not sure how you get them to relax, how you get them to see that it's not all or nothing. There is something in between, and they will do just as well, if not better, by accepting that. That's the challenge that I have had.”

Professor Beyenbach: “I think it's a challenge that can be rather easily fixed, if the registrar doesn't allow students to take an excessive number of courses, but there may

be also financial pressures for students to graduate in three and a half years rather than four; but I think moreover, it is part of a -- superhuman. Look at the resumes your undergraduates are sending to you. They seem so overstated of all the things they do and have done, and I think it's unrealistic."

Speaker Beer: "The lady in the rear."

Professor Rose Batt, ILR: "I think we can do things by having the kinds of conversations that you have suggested with our students. Obviously, we can't solve the problems of 15 to 20 years of students being pushed and pushed and pushed, to be the super stars, then they continue this kind of behavior, but we can certainly do whatever we can do.

"I have been really impressed by the mechanisms and the systems we have at the ILR School, whereby -- I don't know if it's every school has this or because Cornell is so decentralized we do things differently, but our office of student services, first of all, is very, very proactive.

"So the kinds of orientation, the kind of connections the students make with the Office of Student Services already is creating one body of people that they feel trust with, as well as trust with the faculty, and the Office of Student Services also asked the faculty to proactively, like in the mid-term, send them any names of students that we are worried about, and I have had -- I routinely have interactions where I catch some student who seems to be falling behind. I talk individually, and then the Student Services follows up. I think that kind of teamwork of having several points at which students can be caught and -- in a safety net is really the way to go; but I really think ILR does a fabulous job on that score."

Professor Beyenbach: "Glad to hear it. Yes, we must be proactive about this. When we come to the point where we have to send students to counselors, I think it's already too late, and -- or counselors. I am not saying that that's what you are doing, but we get encouraged to send students to counselors; but when I talk to the undergraduates, they don't want to admit weaknesses, and that's how they look at it, if they seek counseling. "So what you are doing, proactive from the very beginning, taking a personal interest in your students, that's what I hear you saying; I think, yes, we have to connect personally."

Speaker Beer: "Former Dean of the Faculty Walcott."

Professor Walcott: "Brief comment. I have found that in general, many of them are very busy and they don't come seeking my advice; whereas when we had the pin numbers that were required, it was a motivation, it was something that they had to come and see me to collect, and that at least gave me a contact once a semester where you could talk to a student.

"And now I have those that want to talk, and that's fine; but there are a substantial number that are too busy, don't get around to it and interact by e-mail. I think, again, by instituting some kind of system to encourage students to have contact with advisers might help very much."

Professor Beyenbach: "Exactly. When we have gone over to this digital advising, I don't see the students anymore. I only see them when they graduate, and I have to sign off on having them fulfill the requirements. And then the students might feel that if I have to see my faculty advisor, well, they may not be comfortable with this. Perhaps it is a sign of weakness or so."

Speaker Beer: "Final comment or question by Senator Vicki Meyers-Wallen."

Professor Vicki Meyers-Wallen, Biomedical Sciences. "All the things you are saying are very good. We teach veterinary students, who are also under stress and financial difficulty. All the things you are saying are great; but if you are worried about suicide, then I think we have to look at suicide and ask the question, if we are going to treat this disease or prevent it, then we need to know what's causing it.

"Right now I don't know anybody in this room who really knows what's causing it, and I think the university is in a position, now that this is a problem, to use their professionals to talk to their families or whomever and find out really what is the background of the students, what are the things that might be causative. Certainly someone has an idea.

"With that kind of information, which is of course private, at least the university could give us some clues, some professional clues from professionals who know what they are doing, and say this is what we can do, as faculty, to treat that disease. So I would hope that the university is doing something like that."

Professor Beyenbach: "Very well said, Vicki, and I think we, as a faculty -- we can do better in alleviating anxieties in our teaching, we can do better in our advising and in our encouraging and nurturing and enabling the careers of our students. And I think --

and I have no experience in that -- I think we may also do some improvements in admissions."

Speaker Beer: "Thank you very much. We have reached the hour of our adjournment. Motion to adjourn is in order."

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: "So moved."

Speaker Beer: "All in favor, aye. (Ayes). Thank you very much."

Meeting adjourned: 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Gouldin, Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty