

1. REPORT FROM DEPUTY DEAN ON THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS FROM CHRIS BARRETT

Deputy Dean and Dean of Academic Affairs, Chris Barrett, College of Business and the Stephen B. & Janice G. Ashley Professor of Applied Economics and Management, International Professor of Agriculture, Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management:

“Thank you, Bruce. The College of Business has a variety of task forces that were commissioned by the provost just after the board of trustees voted in the end of January to create the college. I list those here in the lower left of this slide.

“Those committees began their deliberations sometime in late January or early February, depending upon the committee. They all completed their reports, sent to the Steering Committee chair, co-chaired by the provost and Dean Dutta, consisting of the deans of Hotel and CALS, as well as a number of vice presidents, deputy provost, myself, et cetera.

“So those reports were all filed earlier this month. You have copies available of the summary two-page reports that came from each of those committees. The full reports, subject to a bit of revision, minor revision by the Steering Committee, should all be released later this month.

“A crucial thing to keep in mind here, there was a great deal of concern, in some case I think appropriate concern, that the initial decision was very much a top-down process. Notice that this has been a fairly radical shift, as promised by the late president and the provost, immediately moved to a much more consultative model.

“We have a count here. Ninety-eight different individuals, formally a part of one or more of the committees, and a significant number of people beyond that; for example, the Faculty Governance Committee that John Siliciano and I co-chaired, consulting on almost entirely a weekly basis with each of the schools' faculties around the faculty governance matters under deliberation.

“So we've switched to a much more consultative model. Thankfully, I think the final products of each of the committees are enormously enhanced by that, not just because of process, but because of content. That participation substantially enhanced the quality of the resulting products.

“The report that I'm to brief you on is around faculty governance. The three schools' delegations, as I reported to you last month, met, talked extensively about their own aspirations and concerns, both, about the College of Business. And from that discussion

emerged four central governance principles, of which I highlight continuity of the schools' missions is really central.

“The schools each have distinct missions that will remain at the core of the academic programs there, and continuity of faculty expectations is a second central piece. When we evaluate faculty for tenure, for example, the university's universal criterion is excellence in fulfilling the responsibilities of the position.

“Everybody's committed to excellence. The crucial issue is: what are the responsibilities of the position? And those are adapted to suit the specific missions of specific schools, and one of the greatest concerns the faculties of each of the three schools had was that we not have an inadvertent homogenization of positions; essentially to use the review process for tenure as a way of reconsidering what the positions ought to have been when initially hired.

“And so the guidelines that we have proposed from the Faculty Governance Committee, which the Steering Committee has accepted, go to great length to make sure we enumerate much more meticulously than has been the case to date the means by which we have guided junior faculty, what were expressly the expectations of the position upon hiring, upon annual reviews, upon first reappointment, et cetera.

“So continuity of faculty expectations was maybe the single most worrisome feature for faculty from each of the three schools, and we've really put that at the centerpiece of the guidelines developed.

“Cohesion of the colleges. Obviously, the central reason for creating the College of Business is that we have fractured groups of faculty across the three schools who share a common scholarly interest, teaching foci, but we don't yet coordinate across them effectively. So achieving that coordination to enhance both the quality of scholarship, so we can create more cohesive scholarly communities, but also to be able to coordinate around teaching much better.

“In the process of going through these various committees, we have uncovered all sorts of examples of unnecessary scheduling conflicts between courses that students in different programs really ought to be taking simultaneously, and yet they can't do it because of the way we've set up the timing and scheduling of courses; things that, in principle we don't need a college to do, but in practice, we don't coordinate until we have some formal coordination mechanism.

“And we're using this as an opportunity to frankly draw on best practices from each of the three schools, to try and up our game across the board, particularly around transparency and fairness of processes in hiring, in annual and biannual reviews and reappointment, promotion, et cetera.

“So the central organizing units of the College of Business as proposed by the faculty governance committee are three, two of which have formal authorities and responsibilities. The schools remain the central apparatus. The schools have deans, the schools are the tenure homes, and the schools remain the repository of each of the degree programs presently offered.

“These aren't being blended into one composite degree offered by the College of Business. They remain distinct in Hotel, Dyson and Johnson. The unifying features of the college are seven cross-cutting, largely discipline-based areas.

“We have accounting faculty in each of the three schools. Those faculty unify under an accounting area that coordinates curriculum across all three schools' programs that creates a unified scholarly group across all three, with a shared workshop, seminar, whatever is appropriate to the groups. You see the list of the seven there.

“Faculty are right now self-declaring their preferred affiliations with areas. As of mid-morning today, we had about 175 out of the 220 faculty had already declared their preferred area of affiliation. We've asked for those by May 20. By the end of the month, we expect to have area affiliations pinned down and go back to faculty to ask them to self-identify who among the area faculty they would support as the area coordinators, the leader of their area. So that process should be completed next month.

“Finally, less formally, there are themes, multidisciplinary themes that are designed as the features that pull us together to really accentuate the parts of Cornell that the College of Business is meant to help bring out and to help reinforce. So themes like entrepreneurship and innovation, sustainability, hospitality, agri-food industries, et cetera.

“These are the features that are to be self-organizing, declaring what a curriculum would look like for a student who's interested in piecing together entrepreneurial finance, management of teams and start-ups, marketing of new products, pulling across the disciplines, but with a common core program that they're intending to pursue.

“So that's the purpose of these themes. They don't have the same formal governance authorities that schools and areas have, because they're intended to be features that are

perhaps more transient, that are designed to respond to student and external demand, but they are nonetheless crucial elements of how we organize.

“I’ve already mentioned we put together very detailed protocols on hiring, reappointment, promotion, tenure. I think crucial things there are enhancing the engagement of faculty with similar research interests from across campus and making that those assessments of junior faculty performance, for example, available at the beginning to the tenured faculty of the school.

“And as I mentioned, formalizing much more the articulation of the expectations of the positions, so that we can hold tenured faculty to respecting the position responsibilities that we asked faculty to fulfill.

“And finally, we will be constituting, when we reconvene in fall, an elected body, a faculty policy committee intended to provide input and oversight of college policy. So a body of elected faculty who can speak directly to the dean about matters that concern the faculty.

“So with that brief overview, I’m happy to field whatever questions the chair will allow us –”

Speaker Lewenstein: “We have about nine or ten minutes for questions.”

Professor Richard Miller, Department of Philosophy: “This is a comment about an anxiety many of us had when the College of Business decision was handed down. Many of us are worried that the Dyson School’s major emphases, which have been in development economics, agricultural economics, environmental economics, which have not been in management, are bound to be diluted by the emphasis of an entrepreneurship, of a College of Business. If the faculty of the Dyson School did not share this concern, that would be good enough for me. I use and admire them.

“Faculty of the Dyson School were not consulted, according to an utterly reliable source of mine, on the decisions being handed down. And the process you have described, I understand, has featured such measures as postponing a survey of faculty opinion till after the Steering Committee met.

“Incoming Dean Dutta, in describing what the College of Business is about, says that it is to advertise to the world Cornell’s position in business education. When he was asked about diversity in “The Chronicle” interview, his response is: We’ll be very careful to be diverse in the industries that we object.

“Your presentation last time, when you got to college cohesion, was essentially to say we hope for cohesion, and then you moved on to the fourth point. Nothing you've said about cohesion today stills those anxieties about the dilution of investigations of economic activity that are not matters of business education and research, are not matters of promoting entrepreneurship, but play a vital role in Cornell, in humane and insightful perspectives on what you are promoting in the decision that has been handed down.”

Deputy Dean Barrett: “Thank you, Dick. So for those who don't know my own background, I came here 18 years ago, precisely because of the features of Cornell that Dick so articulately laid out. I'm an agricultural environmental and development economist. My research program is in rural Africa and Asia, and the unpleasant reality of my fields is that they don't pay for themselves in universities these days.

“So we have succeeded in the Dyson School in thriving areas of agricultural, environmental and development economics, precisely because a decision was made back in the late 1990s to pursue accreditation as a business school, and we've managed to build a very strong undergraduate business program that, for want of a better term, cross-subsidizes the areas in which I work.

“And if you look at other leading programs against which we compete, they are in decline in size, stature and funding, precisely because agriculture is shrinking. We don't get the same number of farm management and environmental economic students that we used to. And the way that a few of our programs have managed to succeed in reinforcing and maintaining those areas is by making sure we tie ourselves to an economics or a business program.

“There are a couple of different models out there. So those are the models that are working right now. That's what we've pursued in the Dyson School, quite successfully, I think. And I find reassurance, as somebody whose own career is very deeply wedded to these topics, that we are not aiming to become a plain vanilla business school.

“You have heard the provost say any number of times if we become Wharton North, we've failed. That's not the objective. The objective is to create a different kind of business school, one that really draws from and reinforces the things that make Cornell distinctive. We have the world's foremost College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. We have a phenomenal group of scholars working in Environmental Sciences and Sustainability. We have the Ivy League's best engineering school. We have premier architecture and planning that reinforce real estate.

“These are all things that give us strength that other elite business schools don't have. If we try to just win in accounting and finance, we lose. There's no way we can out-Wharton Wharton or out-Harvard Harvard, but we can do the things that they don't do very well, and we can be known as the best there is.

“In a faculty task force we have on mission, vision and core values right now, one of my colleagues, interestingly, a Johnson School tenured faculty member, likes to keep saying that the College of Business will be the business school known as having an Ivy League brain and a land grant heart, that none of the other top ten programs can make such a claim. That will be the distinctive feature of the Cornell College of Business.

“So I very much share your concern, Dick, and I would have never agreed to take on this position if I feared that it would actually dilute the areas I've dedicated my career to. On the contrary, I think it is the most effective way for us to safeguard them.

Professor Bensel, Government Department: “So this is a good overview, but it's really the process of consultation. It's not the outcome. As you say, the final report isn't available, isn't ready yet. It still raises very important questions on education policy.

“As you say, the care and concern with continuity and disciplinary areas and multidisciplinary themes does recognize the potential impact of the formation of the College of Business on curriculum and on education. And then when you talk about including changes in multidisciplinary programs, that also stresses that impact.

“So what I would urge, and this has been, as you know, a sticking point from the very beginning, since this involves education policy and it's across colleges, it should come back to the faculty senate when there's a final report. Will that happen?”

Deputy Dean Barrett: “So the Steering Committee, co-chaired by the provost and Dean Dutta, received all these committee reports. They have been slightly revised in response to relatively modest suggestions from the Steering Committee and with response to feedback from the faculty and the three schools.

“So for example, the Faculty Governance Committee report was provided in its entirety to the faculties of those three schools. It's not been publicly released yet, but it was very important to get their feedback on that. And at this point, I believe that those are just to be publicly released this month in advance of the board of trustees meetings, where it will also be presented to the trustees.

"I'm sort of above my pay grade to understand the issues of disagreement between the faculty senate and the administration over what falls under the domain of educational policy broadly. When we use the term multidisciplinary, what we mean is that we cut across the disciplines within the College of Business.

"So for example, economists and finance people and marketing people who share common interests in small and medium enterprises in developing countries; it's not necessarily touching on people -- faculty from outside the college, although we very much want to reinforce the sorts of collaborations that already occur."

Speaker Lewenstein: "Thank you, Chris. I realized there are many more questions, but we have a very full agenda. I forgot to announce that because we started five minutes late, we will continue the meeting until five minutes after 5:00.