Paula McClain (Political Science, Chair of the Council): I’d like to welcome you to the last Academic Council meeting of this semester. We will not meet again till Jan. 24th so you can smile or cheer or something. The first item of business is the approval of the minutes. [The minutes were approved by voice vote without dissent.]

Thank you John. I want to remind everybody (and it’s my fault that I keep forgetting to do this) to identify yourselves when you speak, because we’re recording the minutes and we need to know who’s saying what—as opposed to getting together at the end and saying, “who was that person?” So, remember to identify yourself when you get up to speak.

New Policy for Post-doctoral Fellows

McClain: The next item on the agenda is an information item, on the new postdoc policy.

Provost Lange: Thank you all for your patience. Thank you so much to the Council’s ever-ready technology staff for being able to mount this [presentation] at the last minute. What I want to do today is just let you know about the new post-doctoral policy which we have worked on for a considerable period of time and which is now being rolled out.

There are many postdocs in our university, perhaps more than you realize. There are 559 in the School of Medicine, about 252 on the campus side, totaling about 811. They have been for many years, I think it is safe to say, a category of people who are very much used and very essential to what we do in many parts of the university—but largely unidentified in many of our procedures, safeguards, or policies.

So, in the Spring of 2004, I announced a plan to set up an office of post-doctoral services and a task force to establish a set of post-doctoral policies. The reasons that we did that were in part induced by a meeting, which the postdocs themselves held, at which they began to talk about not only their contributions to the university substantively, but also some of the dilemmas that they face because of the fact they seem to be an unrecognized category in our policy world. And to be honest, in a sense also, that they really faced some issues which it would be good for us to address in a systematic way that would ensure fairness to all of them, and their better integration into what we do at the university.

So, in the Fall of 2004, we established a task force on post-doctoral policy which was chaired by a dean of the basic sciences, Jo Rae Wright. Here is the composition of the task force [slide]. As you can see, it contained a good number of faculty members and also administrators. We especially needed administrators who would be well attuned to the...policy issues that needed to be addressed.

After a lot of work, you see, until from Fall 2004 to January 2006, that’s about 15 or 16 months, the Office of Post-doctoral Services opened with its founding director, Molly Starback, who is still working.
About a month later, the task force delivered a report to me with a goal of starting up almost immediately. Only three months and we would have this going. [rueful laugh...]. So why the laugh? Because, it turns out that categories of people who are never recognized in the university present problems to the university’s administrative structure which that administrative structure had never imagined existed.

And not only that, even though there were members on the task force who might have recognized these problems at the time, it wasn’t until we got into the very, very, deep weeds of individual policies that we discovered that there were more complexities to moving to the kinds of policies that had been recommended than we realized.

So, here we are, February 2006 and now it’s, I believe, December 2007, and we are now implementing the provisions as I will explain to you in a minute. Once I have explained, you will understand what some of the detail issues were.

There are two categories of postdocs and this is where you really need to start. There are post-doctoral associates—they are people who perform specific services at the university in exchange for compensation, which comes either from the university or through the university from outside granting authorities. The post-doctoral associates are effectively employees of the university and for them, the devising of policies directed toward them as employees is not that difficult once you recognize them as a category.

There are however, in addition, about 10% of the 811 postdocs that I mentioned earlier, who are post-doctoral scholars. They participate in the research training program for the individuals scholars generally, but their funding comes from outside the university and is provided directly to them and not to the university or to the university through grants to the faculty members of the university. In other words, they bring their money with them through various programs. They are not, or have not, and are still not, recognized as employees of the university; and while it may seem surprising to you that someone who works here for three or four years in a role, in a laboratory, working closely with other people, is given not enough weight at the university, cannot even get the university benefits.

It is in fact the case, that by law, custom, and every other thing I can think of, you cannot in fact deliver benefits of the university, out of university programs, to someone who is not an employee. And since one of the goals of the postdoc policy was, in fact, to be able to bring all postdocs under a regime in which they would be supported by benefits appropriate to their role in the university, we had a problem. And that was the problem which emerged particularly with health insurance, but with many other things as well. We had benefits, which we wanted them to have, but which a subcategory of them would have been unable to receive.

We went through lots of machinations to figure out how to do it; I’ll come to the solution in a moment, but I want to explain the kernel, if you wish, of the problem that we encountered once we got to February 2006 and started on the actual implementation. The new policy does say that for both post-doctoral associates and post-doctoral scholars, the maximum term in post-doctoral status is five years. At that point, someone needs to move onto another career status.

Postdocs are supposed to be in training and even though some of our graduate students may not always believe it, you cannot always be in training. Someday, you have to be something else. Yes, Ann Brown. You’re going to interrupt me?

Ann Brown (Medicine): Well, yes. My understanding is that people are frequently doing more than one postdoc and I am not certain if that could happen at the same institution, but is that an issue at this institution, where people do more than one postdoc?

Lange: We are going to discourage, although not totally prohibit, the accumulation of post-doctoral status across institutions.

Brown: Would this be five years total?

Sally Kornbluth (Pharmacology & Cancer Biology/Vice Dean Basic Sciences): I think there’s a 6th year possible if you transfer from another institution.

Lange: Right. Right. But, that’s what I’m saying. We’re not going to encourage it. Alright, other policies, and then I’ll come to the benefits issue.

On July, 1, 2009, the minimal annual compensation for postdocs at this university will be set at the level of the NIH for the first-year postdoc, something called the zero year NRSA postdoc. That number is currently $36,996. It will go up somewhat in that period. Although, if it goes up as fast as the NIH budget, it should actually be $35,000 by the time we reach... But, we are very much hoping that that won’t be the case! (That was a joke!)

The compensation plan getting to that level is being done over three years. In fact, as of this year, the minimum for all postdocs will be $32,000. It’s $32,000, it then goes to $35,000 and then to the new NIH minimum. That is to ease people in with their grants.

I have to tell you that one of our concerns, when we started up this policy issue, was in fact whether there were people being paid very differentially for the same kinds of work and experiences and that there were some salaries that were being paid at a level that we would not have been proud of. We did a very, very thorough examination of all the post-doctoral salaries and there were a relatively small number, but a real number, of people who were very, very low, had been receiving very low compensation. That’s why we decided we needed a minimum, a minimum is a protection of the postdocs in this situation.

Now we are going back to the post-doctoral scholar. If a fellowship for a post-doctoral scholar is below the minimum, then there will be an expectation that his/her fellowship will be supplemented up to the
minimum, or up to the level that’s set by the PI, by the responsible unit, which would be the dept. or institute or center, depending on where the postdoc resides, or the dean, in that order.

So, when you hire a postdoc, if the fellowship comes with less, the post-doctoral supervisor will need to identify this source to top up in the cases where those fellowships are less. Most of the fellowships aren’t, but there are a few possibilities. The annual increase will be based on the written evaluation of the performance from the PI.

Now, we come back to the associates. This contrasts to the scholars issue. How have we finally determined to move around the obstacle that we encountered? All incoming postdocs will need to enter Duke as post-doctoral associates, which means they will need to be funded for at least one month as post-doctoral associates, by the PI, his/her responsible unit, or the dean of that school, so that they can attain employee status at Duke. Having attained employee status at Duke, they will then be able to enroll in the Duke Health Plan, dental, vision, disability, and retirement plans. If they then, after that month, choose to go onto their fellowship, they remain as Duke employees and they remain eligible for those benefits.

Post-doctoral scholars may also enroll in Duke health, dental, and vision plans. They may not enroll in retirement or any other pre-tax plan; that’s again, by law. Funding for the institutional component of the post-doctoral scholar’s health insurance comes from any institutional allowances that scholar has—that is, any health-insurance allowance or other such allowance that they have on their post-doctoral scholarship. Remember they’re bringing that from the outside.

And then again, followed by funding from the PI, the responsible unit, the dean, in that order. Other benefits: post-doctoral associates will have: three weeks of vacation and twelve sick days per year. Vacation and sick leave will carry over if you move from one lab to the other, but not if you’re a postdoctoral scholar. If you’re moving from an associate position to a scholar position—let’s say you’ve been a post-doctoral associate for two years, you and your advisor succeed in getting you an external fellowship for your third year, your sick days and sick leave and vacation days do not carry over.

There is no reimbursement for unutilized vacation and sick leave upon termination. The parental leave policy for post-doctoral associates is equivalent to that of staff, and post-doctoral associates can take up to 40 days of absence for personal reasons, subject to any funding and institutional guidelines. Now, what you need to know is that in general, we have been told by both the postdocs and their supervisors, that a number of these provisions are unlikely to be invoked but they are guarantees which the postdocs have, should they need them.

Kerry Haynie (Political Science): Excuse me, do you prefer if I wait?
Lange: I don’t care.

Haynie: This seems to be something for the science side of campus. A postdoctoral scholar can have up to 40 days of absence. There’s a postdoc in our center right now, who’s teaching a course. So, if the person needs 40 days, that person can…
Lange: I’m not going to pursue that.
Kerry Haynie: Don’t.
Lange: Yes, so what’s the question?
Haynie: So, it seems that the one size wouldn’t necessarily fit all.
Lange: Well, it’s not likely to fit any, is what I was suggesting…it is a guarantee, it is a minimum guarantee, but it is unlikely, either on the science or non-science sides, that this particular provision will be invoked in that way. But, your post-doctoral scholar for instance, might invoke those 40 days subsequent to the finishing of classes, for instance. In other words, it’s a provision that can be met in multiple institutional forms. But it needs to be there as a protection for the postdocs.

Okay, so, let’s see: Post-doctoral appointees may have their appointment ended with ninety days of written notice if funding ends, or if performance is judged to be unsatisfactory—you must do that in a systematic way. You can’t just one day get up and say, “You know really, I haven’t been happy with what you’ve been doing for me for the last 3 ½ years, good bye.” That can’t happen.

Post-doctoral associates are eligible for the Duke University dispute-resolution process but post-doctoral scholars are not because the scholars are not employees of the university, so you can’t invoke the dispute-resolution process. That doesn’t mean you can’t get some kind of resolution—you know, we have various ombudsmen in other categories, so there are other ways, but they don’t have access to this particular resolution. And, as it says here—and this is what I was referring to earlier—you can’t just one day say goodbye. There are a set of procedures that are appropriate for the termination of anybody who is contracted and postdocs have those same guarantees.

This is the implementation timeline: The policy goes into effect in January 2008, with respect to all features, except the compensation provisions, which go on into effect in the new academic year. And there’s a three-year grace period. That is because we have a lot of postdocs in the pipeline, so we have this grace period that you see here.

And that is the end of the presentation. I should also tell you that I owe this unique opportunity to speak to you about this to Professor Sadow, who happened to be out of town, something for which he will pay!

Questions

Tso-Pang Yao (Pharmacology and Cancer Biology): So, you mentioned several times that by law, the postdoc scholars are not entitled to certain benefits. So, what do you mean “by law”? And the following question is, is there any way that this institution can
find a way to make those scholars now become part of the employees?

Lange: Well, perhaps I haven’t been clear yet. All the postdoc scholars, as they enter the system, will spend one month as post-doctoral associates. Thereafter, they will be employees and they will be therefore be eligible for benefits.

Tso-Pang Yao: So, all benefits like retirement?

Lange: No, not retirement.

Tso-Pang Yao: So, that’s the thing which I’m trying to understand, is why that would be the case?

Lange: That would be the case because the retirement plan is for long-term employees and they have fellowships outside of that... I’m not sure, but Jim Siedow can tell you. But, we’ve been advised by the University Counsel that that’s the way to do it.

Tso-Pang Yao: The reason why I’m following this subject is that... particularly in the biological sciences, those scholars who are able to get their own funding, often times, not always but often, have better credentials. So, those are the people who would be really helping, for example, research projects. At least on paper, they’re doing much better so they can get the outside funding. But the way we treat them, then, is almost like a reverse selection process. So, you’re telling me that you’re trying to get me to write a grant so you can hire another person who may not be as qualified as I am to get funding, but then you come back and tell me, I’m sorry, you’re not entitled to this retirement or any of these benefits...

Lange: I understand what you’re saying. Those scholars will encounter the exact same situation in other institutions at which they were to find a lab where they wanted to work. Which is only to say that competitively, we will not be at a disadvantage. That said, of course it would be preferable if they were eligible for retirement benefits, but we can’t make them eligible for retirement benefits.

Tso-Pang Yao: So that’s my question. Why is it by law?

Lange: Maybe Tallman or Sally can answer this. Executive Vice-President Tallman Trask: What we’ve done here is we made everyone come in through the employee door. If you stay an employee, you’re eligible for all of the benefits. If you come in through the non-employee door, under the Federal Healthcare laws, we can grandfather you because you were an employee, you can keep our healthcare plan. But, you cannot receive a federally mandated or controlled retirement plan if you are not an employee.

Lange: And you have to be an employee for a certain period of time, which is longer than one month.

Sally Kornbluth: I just have two comments also. One is, it’s better now than it was before because at least, you know, the health insurance provision is put down. But another thing is, there’s nothing to stop you as an individual PI from doing, what I’ve done with the postdocs, is a non-comp. Give them some extra money to pay into a private retirement account of their own.

There’s nothing to stop you from helping them establish such a thing. But, you’d have to put money into it.

John York (Pharmacology & Cancer Biology): But where do we get that money? You can’t use federal funds and so you have to use discretionary funds, which 90% of us faculty do not have. This is a sticky issue and so, one thing to do is follow this up. I assume, since you want this to go into effect January 1st 2008, that we’re going to vote on this?

Lange: There’s no vote. This is not an Academic Council issue, this is an information item. But, I did not say that in order to stop the discussion, so please go ahead.

York: Well, I think that there are a lot of basic science faculty who were not consulted and we’ve brought up a number of things—and Arno Greenleaf just brought it up at the Biochemistry faculty meeting today. While there was a list of people that you presented, and in that list were faculty in the basic sciences, this is really the first we’ve seen of this.

We think there are a lot of good things in this policy and we support the postdocs because of what they are here to do and that is to train. But, the fact is that we haven’t been able to have a lot of input into this. I don’t know if that’s because by law we’re not supposed to, or because the post-doctoral committees wanted to do this. But, it’s a little bit unnerving. So, that’s another reason to postpone full implementation.

Arno Greenleaf (Biochemistry): Can I add to that briefly? John and I were just recently put on the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee (BSFSC) in the Medical Center and this is the first this committee has ever seen of this policy, right now. We understand that changes such as this, at least in the School of Medicine, are supposed to come through the Basic Science Faculty Steering Committee to be approved. Obviously, this hasn’t happened so we’re wondering if it wouldn’t be prudent…

Also, the degree of involvement and knowledge that this was even going on varies tremendously across departments. Our department was completely unaware that this was going on and so the faculty have actually not had a chance to consider it. And there are some significant intellectual questions that are raised by this, in addition to procedural ones. So, we wonder if we
should go ahead with this, on the time schedule that is planned, or if we should, in fact, by some kind of school policy go through the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee first?

Lange: I discovered yesterday and actually, largely by chance (well, not by chance, but when I was getting my directions) that this had not gone through the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee. And I’m actually not entirely clear why it did not.

So, I think the concerns you’re raising about process have merit and I am willing to find some period of postponement. I would prefer not to postpone it to next semester, but some period of postponement may be necessary. Having said that, it would be good if we, today, rather than in some meeting that then has to get reported out to another meeting—if there are issues other than this retirement issue, which you wish to raise, I would prefer to have them raised today, rather than have them raised later. Now, other things may come out of the conversation. If there are issues that you, or John, or other basic scientists here, or other faculty have, we should raise them now and not postpone that discussion to a later day.

York: Well, this will be an abridged version because many of the faculty have not even seen this.

Lange: I understand.

York: I’d be happy to bring up some of the comments that were brought up at the faculty meeting.

Lange: Ok. Sally is here too.

York: So, for one. Actually, I should point out that on the 18th of December we are meeting with you (Sally) and Herman—the chair of basic science faculty, Herman Staats.

Sally Kornbluth: I would also like to say that a month ago this was sent to chairs and the chairs were a little variable in talking to the faculty. But…I think this was sort of a compound error in the hand-off, because what happened was the planning phase was done under Jo Rae. And then the implementation phase started when I came in and I think, probably, neither of us realized that the other one wasn’t consulting with BSFSC.

Lange: Let me say just one other thing. Just because I don’t want it to appear that we have not consulted the faculty. I understand the issue that’s being debated, but this has been presented at least twice to the Academic Programs Committee. It’s been presented to the University Priorities Committee at least twice. There’s been extensive discussion with the chairs, or at least they’ve had access to it.

This is partly a problem with this hand-off as Sally said. It is also a problem that we are not getting effective communication, from those with whom we share the policy, down to those that they are supposedly representing, as they serve on these various faculty bodies whose representatives are selected by the Academic Council.

I’m not saying that that’s not a problem unique to this. It has come up before. It’s why often policies get very far down the road and then, suddenly, someone says, “well I never heard about it”. Okay, and that is an issue, ok? But I have already said that. I understand the issue. So, go ahead John.

York: Well, I would say, generally speaking, the faculty that I’ve spoken with have endorsed the idea that post-doctoral rights should be formulated into a policy and I think maybe part of the reason why people aren’t saying much here is because we get the sense that there’s not much we can do about the legality. First of all, we don’t know the legal side of it. And second, what we had before, calling everybody a Research Associate and then having fellows from outside, it doesn’t sound like anything has really changed except for the written policy.

Lange: Well, this, the salary minimum, the access to certain benefits....

York: Well, for the salary minimum, the NIH implemented this years ago and many of us, similar to me—I’m a Hughes faculty member—will have a minimum that even exceeds what is on here for two to three years. I realize that some people are abusing that. But there’s been sort of a general view in the basic sciences in the Medical Center in the way that there is a minimum and that minimum was certain. At least that’s what I thought.

Kornbluth: Right, there were certainly violators of that. And I think a lot of this was driven by the desire to stop the exploitation at the margins. In other words, I think the bulk of people are not going really to be influenced in their daily practices by the policy but you would be surprised at the edges, what some people were doing.

Lange: And more generally, policies like this are designed to shift a system from one in which those who have the power in the system grant things, to a system in which those who are operating the system have rights. This essentially entitles postdocs to certain rights and that’s really what the policy does.

York: So, a couple of just general points that have come up. Do NSRA rules for someone who gets like a fellowship from the outside prevent someone from getting supplemented for things like the health plan or some of these things, using federal dollars? You’ve outlined a system where the PI is the first in line and then the department, and then the dean’s office. So, I mean, does anybody have an idea how much that’s going to cost extra?
Kornbluth: That won’t cost you anything because it’s still not an NSRA. If it’s all with federal funding, that’s a line item on those grants; it comes with insurance money. In other words, the ‘fringe’ has paid for that. So, the issue is really only people who are not federally funded. And if it’s nonfederal, you can supplement it with federal funding.

York: What about travel to meetings and things like that? It was also brought up at the Faculty Committee of the Biochemistry Department that someone who had an NSRA fellowship wanted to go to a national meeting and they couldn’t have their PI supplement that with money for travel. Was that something that was discussed at the level of the postdocs, do you know?

I think generally speaking in terms of the Scholar vs. Associate, to say that we bring in people on an NIH grant to do a task (I know formally, we have been assigned something at the end of the year that says, “did you do what was there” right?). That implies that these folks are not trainees and I think that one objection just philosophically to that language is that a lot of the people on NIH grants are in fact trainees. They are not doing tasks for us.

Kornbluth: So, I don’t mean to jump in for you Peter, but I’ll make a comment about that. That was a legally-driven phrase and the reason is, and this was by Jim Luther and other people in the know, apparently, when you pay someone as a postdoc on a grant, like an NIH grant, you’re paying them for ‘work performed.’ So, even though yes, they’re trainees, according to NIH terminology, you may only pay them for work performed. So, that language comes legally-driven out of what we’re allowed to say those funds are going for. So, if you look at even language around being able to supplement their salaries, etc. in the policy, you have to say you’re supplementing them not for any more work performed, in other words you’re paying them extra money because they’re doing a great job. So, this is all legally driven more than what you and I would talk about as commonsense definitions of these things.

York: And then, record keeping? For vacation accrual and sick leave. It’s my understanding that the PI is now involved with that and the department? So that puts another burden on us as faculty and the department.

Lange: Primarily the departments, and there have been discussions with all the business managers and it’s my understanding that the business managers do not see this as particularly burdensome responsibility.

York: Well, the faculty meeting at least today, we sort of laughed about that, but maybe it’s not burdensome to some. It sounds like this is just another thing we’re going to have to do. We’re probably not going to have any pots of money to try to hire someone new to do that.

Lange: No, no, because it’s not a full FTE or anything close.

Kornbluth: I just have a comment about this too, maybe this is not the official party line but I’ve said it at other meetings that Peter’s been at. You know, for the average PI that’s running their lab, I’m not going to be keeping track of the days. Because, one minute people are gone I don’t know, and one minute they’re back and it’s like, “Hey, how are you?” So, the average postdoc is going to be performing like a professional colleague, like they normally do.

Again, there are a couple of people on campus who might as well shackle their people to their benches, the way they treat them. And so, it’s really to protect such people. So, if someone realizes they better darn well be keeping track of their hours because their PI is going to try to shaft them, those are the people that are really being covered here. But, for the general PI in the general department, it’s going to be just the way it is today.

York: Yeah, I mean, that’s why we can’t argue with any of this stuff. It’s a formal plan and it’s just sort of until now been unspoken that it’s going to stay as it was, but the message that’s here now, when you think about it, when you’re unsatisfied with the postdoc’s performance, what are the reasons we become unsatisfied with the postdoc’s performance? Their progress. So, if they say “you’re letting me go because I’m not working hard enough, and you know, I work from 9-5” and that, then maybe this is also something that could come back as a legal issue.

Lange: It’s no different from working with any other employee in the university. I cannot, I could not dismiss the secretary in my office, I could not dismiss someone else who worked for me, without giving them advance notice that their performance was deficient, and then giving them some period to adjust to that. And if they don’t adjust, giving a second warning.

I don’t really understand why this provision should be seen as burdensome. If a person is not performing well, they should be told they’re not performing well.

York: Yeah, I guess in the case of a trainee… I mean, I still think of a post-doctoral fellow, whether they’re called a scholar or an associate, as a trainee in my lab because they’re working towards something for their career, not mine. And that’s the language that’s difficult to accept here even though it’s the law and it’s the way it’s been all these years, I still view that person as a trainee.

Lange: John, I’m completely sympathetic to that. Okay, the difficulty is that all of these years that you’ve been treating that person as a trainee, you’ve still been bound by the exact same language which you’re being bound by here. Okay, you’ve been treating them that way. I presume they’ve appreciated the fact that you’ve treated them that way.

York: They love me!

Lange: And in fact they wish they could work for you 370 days a year, but they just can’t do it. If I could just, if I could just accumulate these comments.

York: I love postdocs!
Lange: If I could just accumulate the two most significant things that I’ve heard that we would want to consider. One is the travel issue and one is the simplification to the maximum degree possible of the record-keeping provision and/or a recognition of what Dean Kornbluth said.

Will Wilson (Biology): I was just wondering about the, you know what other funding sources have vastly lower rates of compensation or even if there’s a fellowship that comes in at $25,000/yr. Does that mean that in order to have that person in your lab or in your space, that you have to give up every dime of the discretionary funds?

Lange: No, you go to your chair and try to get assistance from your chair and/or from your dean. And the deans have all signed off on this policy and they understand their obligations under the policy. None of the deans think that the amounts of money here are peculiarly burdensome. They’re not going to be that many people in this situation. For just the reasons we said earlier when John was speaking, most of the fellowships are being pushed up to the level of the NIH minimum because there’s been so much public discussion of the NIH minimum. And so, I don’t think we’re talking about a lot of people, or a lot of labs, or a lot of money.

Dona Chikaraishi (ECAC/Neurobiology): Just, a small thing. I think that the maternity leave, the family leave, for the scholars should be looked at again. I reread the thing and it’s six weeks but it turns out, I just learned yesterday, that the whole six weeks is from their 40 days of accrued days, which is inconsistent with the associates category. And so, someone should make them consistent.

Lange: Okay.

John Staddon (ECAC/Psychology & Neuroscience): I think I know the answer to this question, but I’ll ask anyway. Several years ago, I had a postdoc who worked in my lab for six months. I had no money for him. He came from a foreign country. He supported himself. Eventually, I found money for him and he was supported at the legal rate. But would that initial period now be illegal, illegal to have a volunteer in your lab?

Lange: He supported himself. He did not have a fellowship?

Staddon: Correct.

Lange: Well, then you probably should have called him something other than a postdoc.

Staddon: Well, he wasn’t called anything, he was just in my lab.

Lange: That’s fine. We’re regulating a category. We’re not regulating every form of assistance in the laboratory, or anywhere else. Yes?

Steve Baldwin (Chemistry): I’m just curious. This 40 days for personal reasons, it seems like a minor issue but I had a relevant recent experience. If there’s a problem, like I don’t agree that it’s valid personal time, is there an arbiter that will help us out here?

Lange: The Office of Post-doctoral Services would be the first person. One of the reasons for creating that office is to create opportunities for let’s call it, mediation, between postdocs and their supervisors around issues such as that, or other issues. That office is in a way an effective place for that to happen. We didn’t have any such place before so things very rapidly could escalate. In this case though, they’re less likely to do so. Molly is an extremely capable person and I think plays that role very effectively. She’s been playing that role now for a while.

Baldwin: Thank you.

Lange: If you have any other comments, I can give you Jim Siedow’s number!

Josh Socolar (Physics): Just a quick question. Since a fair amount seems to hinge on whether you’re classified as an associate or a scholar, I just want to be really clear about what the distinction is. In the policy here, it says under the definition of scholar, that he receives a stipend from a training grant or fellowship awarded either directly to the university or to the individual. Now, exactly what is the difference between a training grant awarded to the university and say, money that you know, like the Center for Systems Biology centers, NIH grant, hiring postdocs that are not even necessarily tied to a particular project?

Lange: I’m going leave that to Sally.

Kornbluth: Well, a lot of times, with foreign nationals, and also there are also a lot of fellowships, that pay out to the individual a lump sum: your person will get a check for $35,000 from the granting agency and that money never gets processed really through the university. So, I believe that that’s what that distinction is speaking to.

Socolar: And the Training grant?

Kornbluth: They would still be a post-doctoral scholar, I believe, if it was on a training grant.

Socolar: What’s the difference between a training grant and say, the Center for Systems Biology NIH grant?

Kornbluth: I believe, and you know, I don’t know for sure, but I would guess that that would be the same as somebody who is being paid off of somebody’s individual NIH grant, if it was not something that was specifically for a trainee position. So, in other words, someone coming off of Program Project grants for instance, would still be a post-doctoral associate I believe.

Socolar: So, is there some place I can look on my grant application that will tell me whether it counts as a trainee or something else?

Kornbluth: Dona can answer that?

Chikaraishi: Yeah, I think that things that would be, training would have to be T32 characterized, in terms of the NIH guidelines. So, if someone is T32, they would be a scholar, by the definition. But to come on some other thing, they’d probably be an associate.

Socolar: But not all grants are NIH so…
Chikaraishi: Yeah, I mean probably NSF has a , you know, some categorization that is equivalent to the NIH T32.

Socolar: So this word, trainee, is there particular programs that are identified?

Tallman Trask: The distinction is really very simple. From where does this person get money? If this person gets money from Duke University, regardless of where Duke got it from, they’re in a category that we can call them employee-like and we can give them benefits. If they get the money directly from their government, directly from a granting agency, and Duke does not give them money, then we can’t put them into that category.

Member: But, I don’t think that’s fair, because an NRSA person is a scholar, yet the money’s being processed through…

Lange: I know what you’re trying to do, but it’s going to get worse, so, I believe that we have been alerted to this issue and therefore, it will be taken up again.

Now, let me say in response going back, that I will propose—not propose, I will determine—that there will be a new implementation date and that that new implementation date will be March 1st. That gives us 2 1/2 months to resolve these issues. I do not wish, after the enormous amount of time that’s gone into this already, that we delay it longer. Obviously, were some mammoth obstacle to arise…But this gives everybody an incentive to have the discussions, to get them resolved, and I think it’s a reasonable period of time. It basically gives us all of January and all of February. Thank you all very much.

McClain: Thank you. We have a name plate in Academic Council that says, “Have you remembered to consult your faculty today?” And so, I’d like to commend you for recognizing that we had not taken place on this particular policy and now we can kind of back into that, so, thank you.

Proposal from the Elections Committee

The next order of business is a proposal from the Elections Committee, which is the result of inquiries that have been made over the last several years from faculty who are concerned about the forced-voting constraint on the final ballot in the current election procedure. ECAC referred this question to the Elections Committee, which is chaired by Bill Reppy in Law, and the members are Ingeborg Walther in German Languages, and Literature, and Don Frush in Radiology.

ECAC has reviewed and approved the proposed changes. Professor Reppy is out today but has asked his colleague, ECAC member Tom Metzloff, to present the proposal. You should have received in your materials, a copy of the proposal.

Tom Metzloff (ECAC/Law): Thank you. Bill is in California for, I think it’s his mother’s 98th birthday so, that was kind of cool. The election procedures for ECAC are not necessarily simple, but this proposal, we think is a simple one. It does not affect the nomination process. You all recall that at some point early in the Spring we get nomination information. You have to list a certain number of people in larger divisions so that may include professors by rank. That’s not changing. There’s nothing about that requirement—about who gets to be members from different areas. The same formula, roughly 8 faculty to 1, will be maintained for election into Academic Council.

What we’re looking at, we think, is a simple change to the election process. When you get your final ballots to vote, it used to be you had to vote for the number of people from your particular group to be elected. So, for instance, the Law School, we were getting 6 and then 3 up, you had to vote for 3. If you only voted for 2, your ballot did not count and if you voted for 4, obviously, it did not count, either. The proposal is simply to get rid of the requirement that you have to vote for that maximum number. That means you can vote for fewer if you want to. The reason being, you might not have wanted to vote for someone you don’t know very well, if that’s what’s there, or there are people you firmly don’t think should be on the Academic Council. As you can imagine, there all sorts of reasons like that.

The question has come up, and I’ve had some e-mails about this already, about exactly what the ballot will look like, I think that can be handled by the Election Committee and there are some good points that have been raised. The question comes up mainly about what happens with one of the larger divisions where we do have rank requirements. Someone casts all 8 of their votes for full professors and doesn’t cast any votes for an assistant or associate professor and one of those has to be elected. We will still, when we get down to the counting, pick the person, the assistant professor who gets the most votes, so as long as one person votes for one of the assistant professors in the group, which we think is almost a certainty. We will have an election. Even though a full professor might have more votes than an assistant professor, there still is the requirement about the ranks.

So, the language you see is in the proposal. It basically gets rid of language that says you’ll vote for as
many assistant professors, total number specified, and adds a simpler sentence as follows: *Each faculty member entitled to vote may vote for as many candidates that he/she wishes, not exceeding the number of members to be chosen to represent the division by the ballot.*

Any questions?

**Questions**

Josh Socolar (Physics): I’m just a little confused about what’s being changed. So, if I read the language that’s being deleted, it would seem to imply that a vote for at least one assistant professor was required, my ballot would not be valid if I did not mark at least one assistant professor. Are we changing that? That’s the old one, right? That’s the way we’ve been operating, correct? So, we are changing that rule; that means that for example, in an election where we’re only electing three full professors, whereas it used to be, you could only vote for three full professors, now you can vote for five if you want. I just want to be clear that that’s what’s happening.

McClain: Well, I guess the answer is yes, but 7 of the 11 divisions have rank requirements. Which means that if there are ten representatives in your division, which has a rank requirement, 2 of those will need to be associates and 1 an assistant. But if you don’t want to vote for any of the associates or assistants, and you only want to vote for 6 of the ten, you’re free to do that. But when the balloting, the counting, is taking place, that when you have the rank requirements, the assistant professor with the largest number of votes would satisfy the rank requirements for that division.

Socolar: I have no problem with allowing people not to vote for the assistant professor, or the associate professor, or whatever. The thing that seems strange to me is that if I forgo my vote for the assistant professor, that I should then be allowed to list an additional full professor. It’s like voting for four people when only three can be elected. It just seems strange to me.

McClain: There are electoral systems that allow the totals that way. So, it may be strange, but it is legal. Yes?

Owen Astrachan (Computer Science): Can I ask for a clarification of Josh’s question. Is it the intent (I mean it’s one thing for it to be strange and accepted in other practices) is it the intent of this proposal to allow somebody to vote for 10 full professors and no assistant professors? That didn’t seem to me that that was the intent. It seemed to me that the intent was to allow partial ballots to count.

McClain: Right.

Member: And that Josh is pointing out a flaw in the wording of that intent, that you can now vote for 10 non-assistant professors and then have a vote count that previously would not have counted. And as the committee already said no record oh, “Oops, you’re right. That’s a flaw in this system,” or is the commit-
basic principle and I think we need to figure out exactly how that will work on those divisions where they elect by rank. Is there any objection to the basic principle? That’s important. Okay, good. We’ll get it figured out.

Central Campus Update

McClain: Thank you, thank you Tom. The last item today is an update on central campus. This portion of the meeting will be held in Executive Session. All members of the faculty may remain but all others may be excused for the remainder of the meeting.

Metzloff: I would like to make a motion that even though we’re in Executive Session and the secretary takes minutes published after the fact, that the reason for the Executive Session, as I understand it, is to ensure the confidentiality of the client to the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting to which have not had a chance to see it. So, I move that they be taken and published in due course. [The motion passed by voice vote, without dissent.]

Tallman Trask: We appreciate your indulgence. It’s a little bit private. We were going to tell you some things the trustees have not yet seen. They’ll see it on Friday and Saturday and we didn’t want to get ahead and have it in the Chronicle that they would see before we unveiled it.

When we were here last Spring, talking about the revision on the planning on Central Campus, we had interviewed four final firms to be the new master planner of Central Campus and ended up hiring Cesar Pelli.

We’ve spent the last six months basically starting over, going through a period of analysis in terms of data and the pause has helped us ask some questions that were different from those originally asked: What is a campus? What is a memorable space? What are the adjacencies of certain activities? How can we encourage pedestrian and non-vehicular traffic on the campus? How can we encourage interaction among the wide range of members of the university community? And to what extent can design take advantage of terrain?

You may recall one of the big problems that we had in the last plan was that it would have taken 6 months to move the dirt to get the land flat, so we could start the project and I think people were increas-ingly concerned about the volume of damage that would do, even though the damage you were doing was to surface parking lots which have already been ruined. We were not going into green spaces, but we certainly had an issue there. And also, is there some way in which this project could or should be a gateway to the campus?

This is something that Cesar Pelli pointed out that I’ve never noticed before, which is, the arches on East and the arches on West, are in fact the same arch.

Some of you may know, some of Cesar’s work, these are just examples of some recent things he has done, especially in the art, kinds of areas [slides]. We would also like to have this staircase in Durham but we’re not confident that it will be part of the plan.

So, here is what we’ve done. We have spent, as you can see on the graph, periods of time now in information gathering, which was the first three months, then sort of laying out what are our conceptual alternatives, and then essentially trying to figure out what kinds of development schemes might be preferred and then once that’s agreed to… then to go into final development in the early parts of 2008.

To give you a sense of the process, and some of you have been here, this is a room in downtown Durham that we’ve put together which has all of the information we’ve collected about Central Campus. It’s very complicated and so we try to have the meetings there where everything is available to talk about how things work.

The first discussion was of the site itself and these are work boards that show issues about topography, buildable areas, disturbed areas, green areas—trying to get a more comprehensive set of the entire site before we focus in on a particular part.

So, for example, these are aerial photographs. And our land use plans are on the right, existing plans of what the campus actually looks like, trying to get a handle on what the dimensions are. Kibitz, go ahead!

Lange: So, I would point out, this is the Central Campus zone that we’re talking about and this is also the zone that was zoned with the city for which we had zoning regulations in place that would obviously we adhered to as the project goes forth.

So, the issue is where in this broad space do we think about placing the campus?

Trask: Alright, we have spent a lot of time and effort understanding how people come to this space, where they come from, where they’re going to, how they might traverse it, what kind of vehicles or no vehicles might be appropriate to that movement and whether we can encourage, as we’ve seem to have actually done this year, increased use of bicycles—and pedestrians. (I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but since Peter’s been giving away bicycles, everyone’s riding them around campus in a way that has not been true in the 12 years that I’ve been here.)

These are the interesting maps that sort of explain where people are coming from. Over here, in terms of access: a third of the people are coming to us at the
Durham Freeway, which is a fact I think none of us understood. We would have assumed it was more off in this sort of in this direction. But, this has become very significant.

Another thing that has become more significant to us, that we want to pay more attention to, is downtown Durham. As you may know, we now have almost a thousand employees in downtown Durham. It’s almost become a campus of Duke University in many ways. And the amount of revitalization of that has jumpedstarted, has been quite considerable, and so, I think conceptualizing us as here is no longer correct, but we really are all of this transition and we'll continue to be more of that. We’re about to move three hundred more people downtown.

Lange: Some of you may not know what the red represents here because you won’t be able to read it up here, is the number of visitors to scale, so, it tells you how many visitors are coming to different places on campus.

Trask: You saw the Central Campus room in Durham. This is the identical room in New Haven with Cesar and Richard and a couple of our trustees up working there. We’ve also gone back and looked through the planning history of Central Campus in all of its incarnations, which are actually very many. As you may know, what we now call Central Campus, this land roughly in here, did not belong to Duke University until after WWII. Duke was originally on what is now East Campus. The plan was to expand around East Campus. The neighbors got wind of it, jacked the prices up. Mr. Duke got mad, went down the road a mile, and bought a farm, which became West, Duke Campus. The only part of that East purchase that was still remaining was the land we converted into the Trinity Heights Homesites, about five years ago. And in between, was essentially mill-worker housing for the people who worked in the Erwin cotton mill, which is now across the freeway. But in those days, you simply walked up to go to work in the cotton mill. As the cotton industry declined, Burlington and Erwin made serious arrangements with Duke and Duke acquired the property over time. So, the fact that we didn’t use it as you might have expected was not accidental because we had no control over it. By the sixties we had control over it, and some of you may remember the idea that engineering would go to Central Campus, which was floated in the mid-sixties. Earl, you were here?

Earl Dowell (Mechanical Engineering): I heard about it.

Trask: Well, we had Women’s college, Trinity College, and an Engineering College which was the model in the 60’s. By the late 90s we were talking about a development that looked sort of like this. This was really a campus master plan for West and East Campuses trying to give some indication of what Central might look like. It then went through several other incarnations all of which sort of look like this one and that is where we ended up last spring when the trustees said we’d like to take a look and see whether there is another choice.

We’re paying a lot of attention through all of this to issues of sustainability. These are for example, watershed maps, disturbed land maps, greenway maps, the hollows on Central are quite important and we’ve committed to maintaining then. And this, for those of you who don’t know, is the swamp, stormwater, something protection.

One of the issues in sustainability is water and how do you retain water and where do you retain water? And there’s a lot of pressure now to retain water on every project as if every project is complete unto itself. We decided about two years ago that we would do some of that but that would not be our primary focus. Our primary focus would be to restore Sandy Creek and its tributaries that run through Campus and to capture the water in a multi-million dollar project that we have now built over by golf course. So while we’re attentive to run off on this project, we are not one of those places that’s trying to eliminate any run off from any part of the campus project.

We’ve paid much attention to landscape and trying think through what are the kinds of spaces, what kind of vegetation is natural, what kind is appropriate, how formal should it be, what do we think we know about the drought not only this year but in coming years, and how does that impact the kinds of planting one might do. We’ve looked at a lot of topography. This is somewhat hard to read because the scale is not as much as you might like to see, and so we’ve done different schemes to look at it. But this land moves up and down a lot. It’s generally running to the south on a drainage pattern as well. So, there’s lots of contours and there’s a lot of space in here that really is not buildable. One of the things the Pelli people did was to actually exaggerate. This is the East Hollow. It’s three to one, so you can get a sense. There’s really a lot of up and down across this site and in this part of North Carolina, when have that kind of terrain, you can pretty well assume there’s water running through the bottom of that piece, and there is in each of the three places on Central Campus. Peter, you are not kibitzing enough—would you like to comment on my vest like you always do?

Lange: Keep going.

Trask: This is a group with Dick, and Peter, and me and Paula Burger, the chair of Buildings and Grounds, and Fred Clarke? and Mitch Hirsch from Cesar’s office working through some of these issues in the downtown Durham room. These are the water features you’ve seen.

What they’ve come back and said basically, this is as we understand it, the perimeter of Central Campus. And this is sort of the entire mass of Central Campus and all of the spaces that are potentially available in Central Campus. And then you begin to look and see how much of those spaces in fact is not buildable. This is all before you even decide where to put it, trying to figure out what’s available. Obviously
the gardens are not going to be the site of Central Campus. These are the trees, there are some zoning issues here and across the top in terms of the city. There are some small parcels of land that we don’t own; so when you map all this out, you end up with the residual footprint of Central Campus. So, you basically have to go mentally from there to there, when you think through what the alternatives are.

Lange: That’s a voting district in Texas!

Trask: It is. This is the line where we agreed anything south of this would not exceed 75 feet in height as part of the city zoning. So, this is basically the space that is reserved for the larger buildings on Central Campus over time. As you may recall, when you last saw Central Campus, it was right here.

We will continue to work on the program. It is not substantially different than it was in our discussion last spring time. You will find that in terms of amounts, these here are various colors to demonstrate— in the orange shades housing, in the green shades, academic, in the gray shades, support services, and in yellow, alumni and development. And here we are back again, in the Durham room…Cesar’s been here a lot. He’s told us in the beginning if he got the job, he would spend a lot of time on the job and he has done that entirely.

Then they began looking at various and assorted ways one might arrange this campus. And they started with some really strange ideas, and some very good ideas. These colors give an idea of the kinds of programs. There are quadrants that are around T’s they’re around squares, they’re around nothing. They’re linear, they’re horizontal. They are offset in one way or another.

They’ve looked at all of these trying to think through was there a scheme that was particularly better than the rest. And then, they tried to lay those schemes, or at least some form of those schemes, on the residual land mass of Central Campus. If you start taking the building blocks and putting them out there, you discover that there are any number of combinations that we have not looked at before, as to where and how you might put Central Campus, and you’ve got to think about density, sustainability, you’ve got to think about adjacencies, you’ve got to think about how you get from here to here, both within the campus and from the other campuses. So we’ve played for weeks moving these things around. As I’ve said in the beginning, I did a project with the late Charles Moore before, and rather than use a little box like this, he used fruit loops, and at the end of the exercise everyone got to eat the fruit loops.

Lange: Let me make this comment. Before you take those down, I’m going to make two comments. I know, but still, just in general. Don’t worry about the colors, in the sense that for the most part, the functions are interchangeable. What you want to be looking at is the patterns of the buildings and not whether you know, the residential is going to be here, because none of the talk has gotten that detailed and note, in all of
West. It gives us much better access, and possibilities to increasing recreational fields which were always a problem with the last plan. It is a lot easier to build because you don’t need to knock down things and build on their sites. One of the phasing problems we always had with Central Campus was trying to figure out how you would actually do that. It has a significant possibility of increasing the interaction and the attentions to the Gardens and the hollows. It has the potential of creating a Duke University Road, a stronger gateway into Duke, and a stronger connection to downtown. This is now only about 6 blocks from downtown. It works better for density and pedestrian purposes. It saves a very large piece of land for further development. It has the other advantage of then saying: we need to renovate the West Campus dormitories and one of the problems we’ve had is where will the people who would normally live in the West Campus dormitories be while we try to do that. The answer is here: before we demolish this housing, people can live there while we did West Campus, which is the only straight sequencing plan we’ve ever come up with.

Lange: And then there’s one more advantage of this scheme which is what happens to this part of West. So, those of you who have spent a lot of time with undergraduates, or have seen ever any of the residential surveys of undergraduates, will know that the dorms at the eastern periphery of the current West Campus are the least desired dorms. Part of that is because they’re not the terribly attractive living spaces, some of them. But part of that also is that they’re viewed as so peripheral to the campus. On the one side there is nothing, from the student’s standpoint; and on the other hand there’s a hike back up to West. Obviously, any scheme which does this moves that from the Westernmost point to actually the Central point between the West campus and this sort of arts area around the museum and that could change the social dynamics of that part of West.

Trask: So having gotten that far, we have just now begun to push the pieces around. As I’ve said, these are blocks. They’re not buildings yet, but they show you some of the possibilities...I think the orange colors are residential, green colors are academic, and it gives you a sense of the incredible variations you can put together of how to actually arrange spaces. Do you want as it is on main West, for one half to be academic and the other half to be residential? Do you want to combine them? What academic adjacencies are important? Where do the grad students go, and so forth?

We are just beginning to push those questions. In a conversation we had last week, this was sort of a preferred variation on the theme which would say residential would come in here and reconnect to Peter’s favorite part of campus the Edens quad down here and try to deal with that problem. That Alumni would come in here and reconnect to Peter’s paradigm would come in here and reconnect to Peter’s. And the graduate students would be here another to it. That academic programs, and performances spaces, and art spaces would basically wrap the Nasher. And the graduate students would be here all together we had some conversations about actually moving some portion of them and having married-student housing next to the Child Care Center. It seems like a good adjacency for certain graduate students.

Lange: That would be in there.

Trask: Right. The schemes are emerging; there is no scheme yet. We are hoping to show this to the Trustees—a bit on Friday, and then on Saturday. Peter will be here to show them on Saturday. Assuming they are generally receptive, we are on target to actually have a plan that gets to building type and building shape although not architecture by the Trustees February meeting. And here is a picture of me and Lange kibitzing...

Questions

Mary Boatwright (Classical Studies): It looks like the road that goes between campus and university that goes now alongside Anderson, that’s kaput at least in E.

Trask: No, Anderson’s a public road, so Anderson stays.

Boatwright: But that one, just had a green swath. Not that one, but, there.

Lange: Well, that can’t happen.

Boatwright: This one can’t happen?

Trask: You may recall that last Spring, we also cut arrangement with the city, that gives us much more substantial control over Anderson Street, even though it remains a public street. But, Anderson street, in any of these plans, will be significantly improved aesthetically and we’ll make it look as much like a university road as we can even though it is a public road. One of the things we’ll probably do is, people, I think they’ll remember that the speed limit on that road is 25 mph. People are driving like it’s 45, but it’s 25 mph. Professor?

Metzloff: Thank you. I’ve had the pleasure of being at some of the meetings representing ECAC and also on CFE. I have been very impressed with the amount of conversation you’ve had with groups of people. The process has been quite remarkable about how carefully Cesar Pelli has done his assignment and thinking about it so, I think we’ve been very well served, and personally, I think this is a very attractive development. The right questions are being asked and I think they deserve it well. So, I would certainly like to give my congratulations to all of you on that regard.

Trask: Thank you. I think that the punch line for many of us was that one of the disadvantages Duke has is it has two campuses. So why would you want three? And maybe thinking that we would just have a bigger west and we really spent a lot of time making sure those attachments made, both programmatically and physically, will end up being much more successful in the short-run and has the advantage of leaving much more flexibility in the long-run.

Metzloff: I’m certain one of the key points, and maybe you’ve talked about it but maybe not as much
in this picture, is how important it is to embrace the Duke Gardens—which in some ways is not a very active part of the campus—from the campus itself; it’s hard to get to in many respects. You get to it separately and I think this plan has a lot of potential for doing that. I know that’s one of the central organizing principles now, and I think it should be.

Lange: And we have a new director of the gardens who has a much more active sense of the role of the Gardens in the community. I was just wondering, given what Tom said about the process, perhaps we could hire Pelli Clark Pelli to do the postdoc problem?

Member: Good idea.

Metzloff: The election ballot too!

McClain: That’s it. We’re adjourned. Have a wonderful holiday season and I will see you back in the second semester.

Respectfully submitted,

John Staddon
Faculty Secretary, January 4, 2008