



**Minutes of the Academic Council and Annual Faculty Meeting
Thursday, March 20, 2025**

Trina Jones (Chair, Academic Council / Law School): Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome and thank you for being here today. Today’s meeting is also considered the Annual Faculty Meeting. We look forward to hearing from President Price shortly and to gathering for the reception afterwards in the corridor. My ECAC colleagues and I look forward to talking with you during the reception.

A quick update: The Academic Council annual election has concluded and on behalf of ECAC, I extend our congratulations to our newly-elected members, some of whom were re-elected for another term. Though terms do not officially begin until the fall for new members, perhaps some of you are here today, and if so, ECAC and I look forward to engaging with you during the reception. Everyone can find the 2025-26 roster on the Council website at the Committees and Members tab.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 20 MEETING MINUTES

Next, we move to the approval of the minutes from our February 20 meeting, which were posted with today’s agenda. Are there any corrections to the minutes? May I have a motion to approve? A second? All in favor, please say yes. Any opposed or any abstentions?

(Minutes approved by voice vote with no dissent)

PROPOSAL FROM ECAC FOR AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO REVIEW APPENDIX I

The next item on our agenda relates to the ad hoc committee to review Appendix I of the Faculty Handbook. Before I begin, please note that due to our crowded agenda, we may not have sufficient time to discuss this item, but ECAC wanted to give you an update on the Pickets, Protests, and Demonstrations (PPD) matter about which some of you have contacted ECAC. Please note that Duke’s PPD Policy has been a part of the Faculty Handbook since the 1960s and is currently located in Appendix I. In recent months, some members of the Duke University community have requested greater clarity and notice about expected standards of conduct under the policy as well as greater clarity concerning procedures to be followed in the event of an alleged infraction. At last month’s Council meeting, ECAC committed to working, as part of our shared governance tradition, to ensure that University standards and procedures are clear and comport with fair process.

To follow through on that commitment, ECAC proposes the creation of an ad hoc committee to review, and if warranted, to propose revisions to Appendix I. The

Charge of the Committee will be as follows (refers to slides). The Committee will examine all aspects of the PPD Policy, including both substantive standards of conduct as well as procedures to be followed when alleged violations occur. Among other things, the Committee will:

1. examine whether the Policy considers, and appropriately balances, important values (e.g., academic freedom, free speech, safety, the academic mission of the University);
2. examine who has jurisdictional authority over faculty in these matters, including investigatory authority;
3. examine and, if necessary, establish procedures to be followed in cases involving faculty, from initial investigation through final resolution;
4. ensure that key terms are defined and that illustrative examples are provided;
5. make recommendations, if warranted, to ensure that the Policy is readily accessible to all members of the Duke community; and
6. explore whether the Policy is consistent with other Duke Policies and procedures and make recommendations, where appropriate, in instances of vagueness or inconsistency.

We expect that the Committee, once constituted, will commence its work over the summer or in the fall and will report back to ECAC and the Academic Council in December 2025.

Are there any questions or comments?

Unknown Speaker: Who will appoint the committee?

Jones: ECAC normally appoints an Academic Council committee, and then we bring the membership of the committee back to the Council for approval.

Unknown Speaker: What is the time frame

for the appointment of the committee?

Jones: I've been consulting with the next Chair of the Academic Council because my term ends in June. In consultation with him and ECAC, we plan to constitute the committee this spring. But the committee will not begin its work until the summer or the fall.

Unknown Speaker: Why is there a delay in starting the work that is needed?

Jones: We have a lot on the Council's agenda this spring that we have to get through. Don't run out of the room please, Council members, but we may even need to set another meeting for the spring. So, that's part of the delay. The other part of the delay, to be frank with you, is that there is an ongoing proceeding involving this policy and in consultation with University leaders, we have agreed not to try to interfere with that ongoing process. Instead, we want to have a process in place to look at some of the issues that have arisen as soon as possible.

Unknown Speaker: Where are the members selected from? Do they come out of this body?

Jones: They come generally from the faculty. If you have any recommendations or individuals that you would like ECAC to consider in nominating or appointing individuals to this committee, please do not hesitate to send them to acouncil@duke.edu.

ECAC would like a motion to approve the creation and charge of this committee. May I have a motion? A second? All those in favor? Any opposed? Any abstentions?

(Charge and creation of committee approved by voice vote)

***PRESIDENT VINCE PRICE AND
ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE FACULTY***

Jones: I'm pleased to welcome President Price to the podium with his annual address to the faculty which is entitled "Duke's Place of Leadership in a Rapidly Changing World."

Vince Price (President): Thank you, Trina. Let me begin by recognizing your leadership and service as Chair of this Council over the past two years, as well as that of your colleagues on ECAC who will be finishing their terms this year. I am deeply grateful for your service. Congratulations are also due to Professor Mark Anthony Neal on his election as incoming Council Chair. And I'd also like to offer my thanks and appreciation to the full Council for your ongoing engagement and work in support of our academic mission.

In his indenture of trust that created our University, James B. Duke requested that the institution secure for its officers, trustees and faculty, people "of such outstanding character, ability and vision as will insure its attaining and maintaining a place of real leadership in the educational world."

One hundred years later, we have most certainly attained that place of leadership. You, our faculty, and your predecessors, are largely responsible for that achievement. You have devoted your careers to expanding knowledge; to educating the next generation of young minds; and to providing world-class health care.

And it's fair to say that the world has taken notice. Today the Duke University faculty is home to: Two Nobel Prize recipients, joining six who served at Duke previously, and another six who studied or trained here;

Two National Medal of Science recipients; Ninety-six members of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine; Sixty-three members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; A culture of interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship that is unparalleled, and was duly recognized in this year's inaugural Times Higher Education rankings for interdisciplinary sciences, which placed Duke among the top five institutions in the world; And hundreds of colleagues who have worked together to launch Trinity College's first new undergraduate curriculum in 25 years. That list of accolades only begins to touch the surface of your many accomplishments. And it neglects the reality we all know, which is that the work of education and scholarship can't be well summarized in honors and awards alone.

We on the faculty recognize the heart and soul of the academic life we chose, as it's reflected in our everyday lives includes the countless hours in the classroom, lab and library; the late nights on hospital rounds; the methodical fieldwork, conducted thousands of miles from home; the twists, turns and failures that mark the unpredictable path to a discovery; and the innumerable, lively discussions and debates with colleagues and students that lead to new perspectives and greater understanding. Those are the moments, and the pursuits, repeated thousands of times over the past century, that have vaulted Duke to its place of leadership in higher education.

And you, together, as a faculty, will play a critical role in determining how Duke will not only maintain but advance our place of leadership in this rapidly changing world. A world where artificial intelligence and other technologies expand as never before our capacity for generating knowledge even as

they stand to exacerbate inequities and introduce profound ethical concerns. A world in which our students are digital natives, whose formative learning experiences were profoundly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and who despite their comfort in the digital world, a comfort that not all of us share, still crave genuinely human connections and community. A world in which ironically at the very moment when academic breakthroughs in so many fields stand to improve our lives in dramatic ways, public support of higher education and academic research has been trending downward, and our primary sources of external funding appear to be diminishing rapidly before our very eyes. A world where social media platforms have largely replaced evidence-based forms of communication. And a world increasingly beset by confrontation, confusion and conflict, entangling institutions of higher learning in political, social, and cultural clashes. Indeed, it seems the American research university is in a moment of existential challenge. Unquestionably we are in a moment of deep uncertainty.

One thing that does seem increasingly clear, however, is that we no longer enjoy at this moment many of the resources upon which we have relied in the past to help propel our momentum. These include, most foundationally, the broad trust of the American public and the support of our government.

And yet, this moment of challenge could conceivably present, for those of us prepared to lead, some opportunities to refine and perhaps even improve research institutions like ours. This could be a moment in which, provided we focus on our unique institutional strengths and are open to new ways of working, we may be able to deepen and even extend our impact.

How, then, are we as an academic community to lead our way forward? How do we navigate through the challenges before us, and see and seize the opportunities on the horizon?

I suggest three principal ways Duke can best capitalize on our place of leadership in this rapidly changing world.

First, even if these immense pressures feel to us unwelcome and unwarranted, we should try our best to see them as potentially clarifying of our purpose. A scarcity of resources, while likely to be unpleasant at best, and painful at worst, can serve to sharpen our focus on identifying and reinforcing true excellence and true distinctiveness in Duke's education, research, and clinical care. If we can increase clarity with regards to what has distinguished Duke and remain true to our core values of respect, trust, inclusion, discovery and excellence, we have reason to be optimistic about our long-term success. We are fortunately headed into these rough financial and political waters in an enviable position of institutional and financial strength, both in absolute terms and relative to peers. As communicated to the Duke community last week, we should be prepared not only to seek cost-reductions across the university, but also to re-imagine our work and consider how we might strategically realign around our highest priorities. We will find ways, even as we cut costs, to invest in funding student access and opportunity; in catalyzing Duke science and technology; in living up to our climate commitment; and in advancing healthcare, all as we maintain our core commitment to a superior liberal arts education and our distinctive residential undergraduate experience.

Second, even as we feel under attack and

mischaracterized by our antagonists, we should approach this moment in a spirit of openness to fair criticism and with a desire to do some things differently than in the past and, in so doing, become better at what matters most. The loss of public trust in American higher education comes from a sense, shared by far too many outside the walls of this campus, that institutions like ours are privileged in our disposition, unaccountable for our actions, and profligate in our spending. These I believe are caricatures; but they may reflect some underlying deficiencies that we can and should address. Now is the time for us to commit to being maximally efficient and transparent in our operations, and maximally effective in realizing our most critical goals and objectives. We will need to make some difficult tradeoffs. If we are smart and serious about pruning and perhaps thinning now as needed, we can position ourselves well for a vigorous response when conditions more conducive to growth return.

Third, even as we turn inward and undertake this vital work of implementing cost-savings and identifying opportunities for realignment, we should retain, even expand our outward focus on making real difference in the world through purposeful partnerships. The insularity of the academy is one of the challenges we need to face, and the only way to gain public trust is to demonstrate our commitment to listening and engaging in common cause with those who may be skeptical of our intentions or our work. Our consideration of strategic realignment should not come at the expense of being engaged globally and in our local region and community. Instead, it should be a lens through which we sharpen our focus on engagement that foregrounds our mission of education, research, and patient care.

This university community has faced many

challenges before, and we will face others in the future. And even as we look for efficiencies and cost reductions, we will move forward to make the case for new resources and new funding partners, as is the goal of our comprehensive campaign. I think that both the timing and the theme of our campaign are prescient, because we are indeed made for this, made for this moment.

We may find our path challenging, and rocky, and possibly steep at times; but we will maintain our course and stay true to our Duke character. We will remain outrageously ambitious in our aims. We will remind ourselves every day that we succeed as a team. In a world that leans toward the negative, we will remain positive and always look for “yes.” And we will remain pragmatic. We want to do the work.

I am confident that by working together and by being grounded in our mission and our values, we will successfully navigate the uncertainty of this moment and will ensure that Duke’s second century is one of even greater impact than our first.

Thank you. (applause)

And I understand that we'll be moving into **Executive Session**. We'll talk about a variety of topics, including the strategic realignment and cost-cutting exercises. I look forward to taking questions and any comments you may have and engaging further in conversation at that time. Thanks.

[Remainder of the meeting conducted in executive session to vote on a proposed Honorary Degree nominee for Commencement 2025 and a discussion with EVP Daniel Ennis and Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Rachel Satterfield]

Following conclusion of Executive

Session, Chair Jones ended the meeting with these remarks:

Jones: Our thanks to Vince, and to Daniel and Rachel, and to all the faculty for attending today. Our next meeting is on April 17. Please note that we may need to begin that meeting a little earlier, given the number of items planned for the agenda this spring, so please keep an eye on your in-boxes. Please join me and my ECAC colleagues in the corridor for our reception. Thank you all and take care.