Minutes of the Academic Council Meeting
Thursday, November 30, 2023

Trina Jones (Chair, Academic Council / Law School): Good afternoon, it's good to see everyone again. It's been a long time…All of two weeks, right? *(Laughter)* ECAC and I hope that you all had a very safe and lovely Thanksgiving. Because this is the last Academic Council meeting for this fall we thought we would mark the occasion with cookies. So, I hope you all got a cookie as you came into the room today. Before we get to our formal agenda, I hope you all noticed the article in Duke Today about the $100 million gift from the Duke Endowment to Duke University. President Price, would you like to say a few words about that?

Vincent Price (President): As you know, we are heading toward our centennial. And it was 99 years ago that James B. Duke created the Duke Endowment and created out of Trinity College this university, Duke University. We were thrilled to work with the Duke Endowment team toward the end of supporting some of our most critical initiatives through this very generous $100 million award. It's the largest award the endowment has ever given, and it is the largest single gift that the university has received since our founding. So, it is a wonderful moment. We are using these funds for a variety of purposes. Principally for financial aid, a support for the initiative that we announced over the summer to support students from North and South Carolina. This will add diversity to our class. We will also direct some of these funds to our graduate and professional schools to support students who are graduating from HBCUs in the region or from minority serving institutions. There are funds to support experiential learning across multiple schools, including the fabulous program of clinics in our Law School. And there is a piece to help us renovate the Wilhelmina Reuben-Cooke building. *(Applause)*

Speaker: Our building really needs it. We're really excited!

Price: Yes, we know this very well. And I'm excited about this. It was part of a conversation with the Endowment. This is part of our plan to thoughtfully renovate a series of buildings on the West Campus. These are academic buildings and laboratory educational facilities sorely in need of renovation, and this is the first step in that process. So, I'm just thrilled that we were able to announce this wonderful award today. A number of things gives me great confidence in the future, but it certainly helps to lift our Centennial even before we have formally launched our Centennial. So thank you very much.

(Applause)

Jones: Thank you for your leadership in making this happen. Now, to our formal agenda. The most important item on the agenda we're going to delay until January 18th, and that is the approval of the

November 16th meeting minutes. This is because of the short turnaround and the Thanksgiving holiday, which did not permit time for transcription. So, we will approve those minutes in January.

VOTE ON THE PROPOSAL FOR AN EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEGREE FROM THE SANFORD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

Jones: The next item on the agenda is a vote pertaining to the proposal from the Sanford School of Public Policy for an Executive Master of Public Affairs degree. The supporting materials that were posted for the November 16th presentation were posted again for today's meeting. Are there any additional questions for Dean Judith Kelly, Mark Hart or Asher Hildebrand before we proceed to the vote?

[Proposal for an Executive Master of Public Affairs Degree from the Sanford School of Public Policy approved with no abstentions or dissent]

Just a comment about masters degrees - during last month's Academic Council meeting, one of you asked about the number of masters degrees at Duke, and ECAC subsequently received a question from another faculty member about the timely review of masters programs throughout Duke. The faculty member expressed concern about an apparent backlog in reviewing these programs. As background, please note that in 2018, a review committee for masters degrees was set up but was placed on hiatus because of the pandemic. ECAC forwarded these concerns to the Provost's Office and asked if the Provost's Office has plans to reconstitute the Masters Review Committee or to employ other

mechanisms to review both the number of masters degrees that we have at Duke and the substantive contents of these programs. The Provost's Office promptly responded that they're scheduling a meeting for January of 2024 to determine what may be the purview of a reconstituted Masters Review Committee. We'll keep you updated as we learn more.

Next, we will hear from Dr. Jenny Lodge, who is Duke's Vice President for Research and Innovation. You will recall in our September meeting, we asked all of you, what would you like to see the Council address this year. In other words, what were your priorities. And we received a number of questions about research support for faculty, which we promptly took to Jenny and her office. She kindly agreed to come and respond to your questions today, as well as to overview a survey that her office conducted concerning research support for faculty. So, Jenny is going to speak for 10 to 12 minutes, and then we'll open the floor for Q & A.

A CONVERSATION WITH JENNY LODGE, VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Jenny Lodge (Vice President for Research & Innovation): Thank you so much, Trina. I'm really delighted to be here and have this conversation, because I think one of the things that my office has really focused on is how can we support research here at Duke better. Some of the issues that were raised in the September Academic Council meeting were...one of them was around the processes and the campus IRB being still on paper or PDFs or whatever, but it's definitely not in the 21st century. So, there's already a project underway to move the campus IRB onto

an electronic system. We're going to leverage the electronic system that is used by the Duke Health IRB, which is called Iris. And that project is ongoing. It got stalled a little bit because there were some concerns about the company, then the vendor that supports Iris was purchased by another company. We were very unclear whether or not we were going to continue to see support. They've committed to supporting us over the next several years and we're continuing to monitor that. But this is a project that's underway and I'm just thrilled that Nick Carnes, who is our new campus IRB Chair, as well as Holly Williams, who are actively involved in this project and making sure that it'll work for our faculty. I don't have a date for when you can expect that rollout, but it shouldn't be too terribly long from now.

Another issue that was raised was contracting speed and efficiency. I think this was mostly directed to the ORS contracting office. And what we've been doing is, John Dolbow, who's an Assistant Vice President in the office and also a faculty member in Engineering, is actually engaged in a deep dive review of that office. He's looking at their processes, their staffing, workflow, all of those kinds of things. Where is it possible to add some automation? Those kinds of things. So, I'm expecting his recommendations fairly soon. We're hoping to see some improvements in that. And in fact, we didn't even have a way of tracking turnaround times, which is, you know...in order to improve your process and know that you're getting better is you actually need to be able to track how quickly you're doing things to begin with.

Then, the other major concern that was raised was the increasing administrative burden on our faculty. That's what I'm going to spend most of the time today talking about. And this is really...you know, it's all the things that you have to do. You want to write a grant application, you want to do research, and there's all these regulations, there's all these steps and requirements that you have to go through. And these are not directly related to your scholarship and your research, but they are required. I've been in science for a long time. I know a lot of the people sitting in this room have been doing research for a long time. I know we've all seen increases in what we're being asked to do over the last decade. And I just want to make it clear that one of the big drivers of that, is that federal regulations have become more onerous and coming at a much more rapid pace. If you look at this graph, *(Refers to slide)* basically it is the number of regulations that have been enacted by the federal government that we then have to respond to and make sure that our research projects are abiding by those regulations. This is really to protect the researchers. It's to protect the faculty, as well as protect Duke. To me this looks like...I'm a biomedical scientist. I've worked with bacteria for a long time. This to me, looks like a bacterial growth curve that's in logarithmic phase with no sign of flattening out, which is discouraging. *(Laughter)* But I think what we can do here at Duke is try to understand what those regulations are and try to make it as easy for the faculty to comply with those regulations.

One of the things that we did early this year is we sent out a very open-ended survey to the faculty. It had just really basically two questions. What is working for you in research administration here at Duke and what is not working for you?

We didn't provide any suggestions or answers. It was just all free text. And I have to give a shout out to Mary Frances Luce, who took all of those answers, she sort of collated them into about 25 different themes or topics that were coming through as pain points for our faculty. Then we started to…that's too many to work on at any one time, so we thought about how to prioritize that. We got faculty input through the Executive Research Oversight Committee Faculty Subcommittee, which is comprised of about 16 faculty from across the university. We also pooled our academic leadership, Deans, Vice Deans, Chairs, that sort of thing. Then we also asked some of our administrative leadership to identify areas that they thought would be high priority to work in.

And there's a couple of areas that really, sort of, shone through in a lot of these different things - that there's this perception that we're shifting the burden of compliance from administrators to the faculty. I think part of this is that it just feels like there's this been this tsunami over the last four or five years of requirements that faculty are asked to do. But a lot of this is due to that tsunami that we're getting from the federal government in terms of regulations that we have to abide by. And it's not stopping. I was at a RACI meeting, this is the research administrator and continuous improvement meeting. And they were reporting out from some of the national meetings. There were just new requirement, new requirement, new requirement… So, we just have to keep up with those. The other is that there's just more and more offices that are involved in research, and they're not very well coordinated and it gets frustrating to try to navigate through all of those different offices. Then there's this perception that

the university doesn't trust the researchers. So, that's an area that we really need to work on. Because I actually believe that 99.9% of our faculty want to do the right thing and sometimes people just need guidance. Even I can't keep track of everything that I'm supposed to do when I submit a grant. So, it's really good for me to be reminded, "Oh, by the way, you forgot to do X, Y, or Z." Another big area that came across in this survey was international research and how hard it is to do international research here at Duke.

The four topics that we chose to work on in this academic year is: really trying to help investigators sort of understand the different offices and navigate the research and administrative support. Trying to think about introducing some flexibility in the submission times. I know that there's a policy that you have to submit your grant applications five days before the deadline. And I think that frustrates a lot of people. Also, really thinking about international research and the unique challenges that are associated with that. Then this idea of, we have all these different offices and sometimes there are delays and gaps because of all these different offices touching things. And this is one where we don't have an organized initiative yet, but we are starting to have conversations. For example, we're bringing Human Resources to our Executive Research Oversight Committee Faculty subcommittee so that they can hear directly what the faculty see as the problem. We're trying to engage and develop conversations so people can really understand each other well. In terms of trying to communicate and help faculty navigate, there's My Research Path, which I think has been under a continuous improvement over the past

several years so that you can hopefully find what you need in that website better. We have a biweekly communication that goes out and it's targeted to specific types of roles. Faculty are not going to get the same message that administrators get because administrators want to know different things and be communicated with in a different way than faculty do. Then we've also revamped our [ORI website.](#) One of the things that I've done is I've insisted that we put the names of the people who are in offices on that website so that when you have a problem you can actually see who to call. You don't have to send an email to an anonymous email address.

Another initiative that's actually been ongoing for a while, but seems to be quite successful is this idea of connecting people and providing information to people about various aspects of doing research. We've got Research Week coming up. We've got our Researcher Fundamentals Sessions. You can see the different topics. *(Refers to slide)* The Medical School has, for several years now, sponsored the Foundations for Research Success. You can see all the different topics that they also provide. And these sessions are available to everybody across the university, it's not restricted to Medical School faculty.

Then we have pilots going on to look at being able to reduce the five-day, submission requirements for grant applications. We're identifying grant applications that are nonfederal. They aren't huge dollars, so less than $100K, not a lot of compliance requirements, and the work actually happens here at Duke. So, the submission window is reduced from five days to three days, which is actually a good chunk of the applications that go in. And the other thing we're doing is travel grants, which used to go through central office approvals, can now just be approved at a more local level. These would be nonfederal travel grants, you know, small dollars, no cost share, all of these kinds of things. I think that's really going to help people as well, especially graduate students and postdocs who are applying for travel grants.

Then international research. We've formed a committee that reports up to this Research Administration Continuous Improvement Committee that I mentioned. This committee is really trying to understand where the problems are, looking at specific cases and trying to figure out what would be the solution. How can we proactively prevent those kinds of problems happening in advance? The next step here is going to be thinking about faculty and staff focus groups that could really help with figuring out how to make all of this work.

On the horizon we have…there's been these pilot projects around reducing the five-day submission, and those will get rolled out hopefully in the next couple of months to everybody. And then also we're just continuing to try to identify ways to implement, streamline, and develop more automated process that faculty could access. Things like helping you write your facilities and resources pages, that sort of thing. Also, there's a lot of differences among the schools and the various departments even, in terms of who's responsible for doing what. We have a group that's going to be launching a survey and doing some interviews to try to understand the differences and who's responsible for doing what because I think there's a lot of confusion there.

This is just the team *(Refers to slide)* and I'm actually happy to take any questions or have a discussion.

Steffen Bass (Physics): Thank you very much for this overview and thank you for coming. I totally understand that a lot of the rules and the burden that comes upon us is the result of trying to be compliant with the ever-changing landscape of federal regulations. Yet, I would like to highlight two examples where I think it is really a Duke interpretation that has gone overboard. The first example has to do with an equity issue for our graduate students. We often send our graduate students to international sites, right? And when I say we, it's all the researchers who engage in international research. These could be a field trip to Kenya, a trip to some accelerator in Geneva, or some mountain in Japan for a neutrino detector. And we are not allowed to pay our graduate students a per diem when they go overseas. They are instructed to bring back receipts. And that is very difficult if you're in a foreign country where the concept of a receipt is perhaps not that prevalent, or if the receipt is being issued in Japanese, Swahili, or in some form that ETR doesn't recognize. *(Laughter)* And when we complain to ETR, they say, "Oh, yes, ask for an English translation." Or, even worse, they give us a little block of English receipts that we are supposed to take to a convenience store in Japan and ask the clerk to fill out because that's the only thing that gets our graduate students reimbursed. So, our graduate students end up paying out of pocket for their meals, which they can barely afford because of that. That was example one.

Lodge: I'll tell you I just saw Daniel [Ennis] writing that down.

Bass: Number two has to do with, again, an international example. We have to hire researchers that conduct their research at these international sites. It so happens that because research is so international these people whom we hire are foreign nationals. And we've done this for decades with Geneva and, apparently, we got a special dispensation by university counsel. But when we just recently tried to hire somebody to work on some telescope in Chile, all hell broke loose. We were being suggested to use an outside employment agency that would employ that person because Duke was legally not able to do that. And then I asked my colleagues at Brookhaven Lab or Penn. State or University of Pennsylvania how they handle it. And they say, "Oh, it's no problem for us." So, that is a huge competitive disadvantage for our faculty who care first and foremost about the ability to do their research. And if they encounter these kinds of problems, they start shopping elsewhere for faculty positions.

Harvey Cohen (Clinical Science): I just want to follow up on that, lest you think it's just one person complaining. *(Laughter)* It's pretty widely felt, at least in the medical center, and maybe it's only there, I don't know maybe we're more paranoid. But in the medical center, among people who deal with multiple institutions on grants of various sorts, that Duke administratively is way more rigid and conservative in their interpretation of the NIH rules than many, many of our peers. We're often told, "You can't do this." And then on the same grant, somebody in another institution will say, "Oh, no, we're fine. We can do that." And I would urge us, on the administrative side, to look at those and say, "Do we always

have to be this rigid and conservative in our interpretation of the NIH?" We've been told on occasion from the NIH that that would be okay. And then we come back here and are told, "No, you can't do that." So, I would just urge that we look at that side of things, as well as educating the faculty on helping to be able to conform to the rules. But how rigidly do the rules have to be interpreted?

Lodge: Okay, I hear you.

Nicolette Cagle (Nicholas School of the Environment): I just want to second what my colleagues here or third what we're saying. For ecological field work, we're going all over the place and graduate students are unduly impacted. They literally can't afford to put charges on their credit cards. They have been left in situations without money, which actually created a dangerous situation for some of them. It's something that needs to be fixed to keep our students safe.

Veronica Martinez (Law School): My question is about the timing of exempt IRB approvals. I'm relatively new to Duke. I had done an IRB approval at my last institution. It is exempt. And they did it in a week. And then my coauthor is at NYU, and he did his approval at NYU. And I think it took NYU three weeks, but it took Duke two months to review it here. But like, it had already been approved at my last institution, had already been approved at NYU, and then Duke wanted changes to our consent agreement. We're in the process of a study. So, then we have to go back to NYU. And the change wasn't really material. So, I don't know…for exempt work, there is no danger to human subjects for what I'm studying. I was confused as to why it took two

months for an exempt project to get approved.

Lodge: That was campus IRB?

Martinez: Yes, that was campus IRB.

Mariam Kayle (School of Nursing): Thank you so much for being here and for being very responsive to some of the issues we've raised earlier. My question is about - I really appreciate the website saying who is the team member. What would be very helpful, from my perspective, is also to know what type of contracts they handle. For example, the educational grants contract, the research grants contract because that was the issue I ran into trying to get an educational contract approved and figuring out who's the right signing authority on it. So, that would be extremely helpful.

Karen Shapiro (African and African American Studies): I have an item that I'd like to be seen added to the wish list. Which is, I'm trying to remember the exact name, it's these academic integrity and compliance units that we all have to do every so often.

Lodge: RCR [Responsible Conduct of Research]

Shapiro: Those. But, they're all very much aimed at people in the Medical School or in the sciences. So those of us in the Humanities or in the Interpretive Social Sciences look at this…

Speaker: What's the point [of them]? Sorry to interrupt.

Shapiro: I find it kind of intriguing. I do it, but I have colleagues who don't do it because it's like…they keep getting little

love notes, "You haven't done it." Ignoring it because it makes no sense to them. So is there a way for Duke to adopt, to look for what would make total sense for people in Humanities and the Interpretive Social Sciences?

Lodge: I'm looking at Mary Frances over there because that's one of the things that I've asked her to really look at is our training modules and then working with faculty to ensure that we do have training modules that are appropriate. And I would actually like to see them be effective as well, that you've actually learned something when you take a training module.

Shai Ginsburg (Asian and Middle Eastern Studies): To add to the complaints of Humanities. *(Laughter)* The MHR web page, which is unreadable to the Humanities if you have to. None of my faculty can read this, and none of my faculty understand how much money they have and how much money they spent out of there. I mean, I know that in comparison to the budget of the sciences, this is minuscule, but we are unable to understand the little resources that we have.

Bass: Shai, we can't read it either!

(Laughter)

Ginsburg: Oh, okay. I thought it was just me…I go through these month by month and I cannot understand them.

Blanche Capel (Cell Biology): I'm wondering when a new rule comes down, is it reviewed somehow before it's installed? For example, does somebody evaluate what is the problem we're trying to solve with this rule? How much trouble

is it going to be causing everybody? And how many people would be affected or might really be the target of the rule? Is there some evaluation committee or somebody who looks at this?

Lodge: I think that's the RACI committee, because they're the ones who discuss the new rules coming down and try to understand what we have to do to be compliant with those rules and who needs to be asked to comply.

Capel: Because I think that it's not fair to paint with just a broad brush. There are a lot of different types of people in this enterprise that have different liabilities or are at risk for breaking different kinds of rules. It just feels like there's a blanket approach that doesn't work for a lot of us.

Roxanne Springer (Physics): I'm motivated by a couple of the earlier questions to follow up on this. So is Concur, and that sort of thing, within your purview?

Lodge: No, I wish it were.

Springer: But it is related in the following sense that all of us with our grants are ultimately responsible for everything. Right? Spending the money, how it's spent. Because so many of the information portals are opaque to us, we don't actually have the information that we need in order to be stewards of these grants.

Lodge: I'm curious, what school are you in?

Springer: Physics.

Lodge: I think this is another area when we talk about, sort of, differences and the

amount of research administrative support that people get. Our faculty being provided with a really good and understandable way to understand how they're spending their grants. So, I think that's part of that. Some administrative systems at all universities are really designed for administrators to use who are using them every day. In some of these there aren't great vended products.

Raphael Valdivia (Basic Sciences): I mean I understand the predicament you're in because it was not that long ago we were under the microscope from the NIH. And I think collectively, we tend to forget that. I think the pendulum has swung a little bit too far though. But I wonder, how is that being assessed, whether we are overcompensating and are we still under federal scrutiny in terms of our practices?

Lodge: I would say yes, we are still under scrutiny. We probably get more attention from the NIH than many other institutions do. I think this is an area that we need to be looking at as a university - where is our risk tolerance?

Jones: Any other questions?

Bass: This is a not really a question, but a follow up on the RCR comment. It seems to me that there are a lot of issues but exacerbated when Duke for the sake of efficiency merged, so to speak, the management and the research outfits of the campus side and the School of Medicine side, right? We're getting all these RCRs that were clearly designed for the huge number of researchers in the School of Medicine. And it just doesn't work for the campus side. So, this reorganization, for the sake of administrative efficiency and consistency,

has had a number of unwanted side effects where I wish we would reconsider and perhaps go back to a model that is a little bit more individualized for the campus side versus the School of Medicine, which is big enough to warrant its own.

Lodge: I think one issue, one counterpoint to that, Steffen, is that the NIH doesn't care if it's Engineering or if it's Medicine. Our funding sources, actually, are across the university. We have $85 million of NIH funding in eight schools and I can't remember how many hundreds of millions in one school. We have to pay attention. We have to be similar and consistent in how we treat that when we're talking about federal funders.

Jones: Do you want to respond to any of the other questions that were raised?

Lodge: I actually just want to thank people because I think these kinds of conversations are really good for me, for the Provost, the President, and Daniel [Ennis] to hear. I think it's really important for us to hear what your concerns are and where you're seeing your roadblocks.

Jones: And Daniel may have had a bit of indigestion when Steffen was talking about the campus side versus the Health System side. *(Laughter)* But it seems that there are some themes in what we're hearing. Concern about graduate students while they're doing research, inefficiencies due to slow processing, and that sort of thing. Then the opaqueness of some of the websites which can interrupt or disrupt the ability to do research efficiently. I'm wondering, is there a portal where you can hear these

comments or are we limited to a survey instrument that you might disseminate every year?

Lodge: That's a really good question and let me talk to the team about that. Because we don't have a portal for those kinds of concerns. And yet, I think understanding the volume and the scope of those concerns would be really good.

AN OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO THE EXTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR DEPARTMENTS & PROGRAMS

Jones: Thanks, Jenny. Earlier this fall, the Academic Programs Committee [APC] discussed changes to the External Review Process for Programs and Departments. As it was explained to me by the APC Chair, Steffen [Bass], who is sitting here today, this process has been extensively considered by APC, spanning multiple years and indeed former chair of APC Gabe Rosenberg spent some time on this particular issue. Supporting materials were included with our agenda and Ed Balleisen, who is the Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies, has agreed to walk us briefly through some of the changes and to answer your questions. And Steffen is here as well to respond to questions. We've allocated 15 minutes for this overview with 5 minutes of presentation from Ed and then 10 minutes for you to ask questions. If we need additional time we will schedule it in our January meeting.

Ed Balleisen (Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies): Thanks so much Trina. Good afternoon. This is one of the most important regular functions that we have at Duke. We review units and it's on a fairly long timeframe. So, we want to do it well. Over a number of

years, there has been a consistent discussion within APC about the unevenness of the process. And it's not that it's not a valuable process, but over and over again people on the committee would point out this issue or that shortcoming. Let me walk you through the patterns that we encountered in those conversations, which were accelerated during the pandemic, partly because the pandemic stopped the flow of reviews. So, there was an opportunity to use some time in the committee, extensive time actually, to talk about those concerns and to think about what we might do about them.

It's a lengthy process doing a review of a unit. And the self-study was just a bear. How many people in this room have helped to put together a self-study? It's not a trivial matter at all. And the instructions, as we looked at them, they were often ambiguous. Who should be doing what? What exactly was being asked for? Another concern was that you'd have a review, you'd have a great discussion often, and then you'd have some recommendations. Often the review process led units to make some changes even before they got to APC. But then there was a question, we've called for X, we called for Y, we've called for Z. What's going to happen two or three years later? Is anybody coming back to check and see whether these things are actually happening or not? Another concern was that the responsibility for the review process rested, the oversight of it and implementation of it, with the Graduate School. And that was great, especially with respect to analysis of how graduate education was going in a given unit. But the Graduate School was not responsible for faculty development, not responsible for Undergraduate Education. And so, was

this having an impact on the holistic assessment process for units? And then in addition to that, our external review teams often really weren't that familiar with Duke. They knew the national context. That was great. So there were moments where it felt like there was a lack of understanding of some of the context that mattered and that sometimes there was a strong identification with a unit being reviewed and a sense of advocating for it. Which came through often in final reports that some people on the committee started saying, "We can just have Chat GPT do the report." More faculty lines, more graduate student FTEs, more space, and that great department can be even greater. There was a concern about reach because we were really focusing on programs with Ph.D. programs. There were some units that weren't actually in the queue. Partly because of the lack of a real understanding of the Duke ecosystem, not so much attention in the review report around where the department fit in the larger university and with respect to larger university priorities. With all of these concerns, APC had many discussions over the last couple of years, and we also took advantage of our hiring of Suzanne Barbour, as Graduate School Dean, since she had been at two other universities and was familiar with review processes there. We had an additional dialogue with Suzanne and with John Klingensmith after Suzanne came to Duke. Suzanne had some PhD students do a landscape analysis of review processes at other peer institutions. All of this fed into a process of revising the framework over the course of spring 2023. And refinement of that proposal in the summer with final revisions at APC this fall. And that's what's come to you now.

So, what are the new changes? We've really tried to sharpen the self-study, with clear instructions, and centralized data collection so that we're taking a lot of the burden off the departments and we're asking units really to focus on key strategic questions. We have instituted already a mid-cycle check in with the Provost so that we can look at the recommendations from a review and see how the unit is doing a few years on. We wish to move the oversight of this process to Academic Affairs. The Graduate School will still be involved, with respect to the piece of it that involves looking at graduate education. We want to add a Duke faculty member to the review team, from close enough to the unit to be able to understand it and to understand the Duke ecosystem, but far enough away that we don't have a conflict. And we want to actually get an additional set of eyes on the self-study by getting some letters, like tenure letters, from some additional external people. We want to include a wider set of departments. And all of this, we hope, will give us a more holistic assessment of where a department is, how they're fitting in at Duke, and how we can improve matters with current budgetary constraints. Always understanding that there will be conversations about departmental needs as part of the larger equation. I should stop there. Questions?

Josh Sosin (Classical Studies and History/ECAC Member): I think we were talking about this when I was on APC, eight years ago, so I'm really pleased to see a lot of this moving forward. I have a narrow set of questions that have to do with the department role under the proposed new procedure. Under current procedure, departments as a matter of default will send recommendations about

who should constitute the onsite team. Under the current proposed, the external letters, which are never to be read by the department, if I understand correctly, the Vice Provost may solicit nominations from the department, *not will, but may*, and these letters are to be fed to the onsite visit team before they arrive. This will naturally color their view of things, but these are to be outside the scrutiny by the department. So, there is a removal of department participation in the process at that level. And then also in the selection under the proposed changes of the onsite visitors: under current proposal or the current standard, they *will* recommend folks that should be considered for the onsite visit. Under the current proposal, departments aren't to be consulted at all, and this is just an administrative affair. I like *very* much all of the streamlining. I have real worries about these couple of key features that take department insight out of the default procedure. I'm not asking for departments to shape their own review entirely, that's not compatible with the concept of the review. But to share their insight over who in the field, in which they are expert, would be appropriate to come in and do this important thing.

Balleisen: You articulated that incredibly well, Josh. One challenge we have here is whether we want to sort of consider any adjustments to the proposal in light of the discussion. This is one that I certainly would want to discuss with Alec and with Mohammed and others in the Provost's Cabinet. To think about whether we want a move made to will. I think that the piece about the confidentiality of the letters, though, is an important one. Because if you want to get a view from experts in the field about where the department is, how it's doing, as is the case with tenure

letters, if they know those letters are going to be read, you're going to get very different kinds of letters.

Sosin: Not sure this is precisely cognate with tenure and promotion. There may be a discussion around the wisdom of sharing such a big dossier of protected information with members of adjacent departments. I'm not sure. That itches a little bit.

Springer: Thank you so much for doing this. I think it's really important and long overdue. I sat on the committee of the Graduate School that would see these departmental reviews and then have discussions with leadership within those departments and was frankly appalled at both the inconsistencies in how different departments were treated and also in the sorts of ethical lapses, frankly, that make me want to advocate for something in between what Josh and you are advocating. For example, at the moment, because of the influence that departments have on who is chosen, you get into a situation where the external reviewers are known by and influenced by leaders at Duke. Furthermore, when the department runs the meetings and is a gatekeeper to the communities that the external review team can even meet with, that means that sometimes constituents, undergraduates, staff are prevented from meeting with the external review team if they have something potentially critical to say about the department. In the past, I've seen where a strong personality on the review team essentially hijacks the whole affair. In one case, everybody on that review team resigned, except for the one person who felt really strongly and he just wrote the report all by himself. Let me leave it at that. But I do want to bring up the issue of having a rubric ahead of time,

having a list of things to look for ahead of time. And that just because there is a member of an external review team who is excellent at their field of research does not mean that they are excellent in understanding whether or not the department they're reviewing is fulfilling its mission.

Victoria Szabo (Art, Art History, and Visual Studies): Just wanted to add to the conversation about the external review letters. I was trying to imagine Duke soliciting such letters from other institutions and thinking about how difficult it is just to get tenure letters out of people. But also, the question of who are we going to get to do this? Would it be Chairs or Deans? Who would be in a position to actually make this kind of evaluation? Then go back to the worry about whether we can get people to do the letters. And then also thinking about my own experiences as an external reviewer at other institutions, where I felt like I learned by being the reviewer, by being on site, by talking to the people, and I'm not sure I would have been able to have the insight necessary to write such a letter. Maybe I'm too low in the food chain to be doing that kind of appraisal anyway. Can you just talk about that a little bit more?

Balleisen: I think the charge will be really important to, both actually, people on the review team but then also to the people who will be writing letters. This is going to put a big premium on the Office of Academic Affairs to be thoughtful about this process. We have had a lot of conversations in APC about the importance of making sure that the external letters include people with some administrative experience so that they're able to ask and think through those

questions about ecosystem and community. I would also say, and this is, I think, maybe relevant to Josh's point as well, that we all know this is going to be an experiment. We're going to have to see how it goes. If we move forward with it and that we would really need APC to be reflecting, say, at the end of every year on how they feel like the process has gone. And we're going to need to, maybe even think like, after three or four years, do we need to tweak this in a significant way in light of what we've seen? The premise underpinning this is that we will not have a challenge to get really good people to write letters, in part because it's the same point that Josh just made a little bit earlier. It's a peek under the hood of another institution which would be of interest to somebody with administrative experience. But of course, we're going to have to have promises of confidentiality from their side too, in order to engage in this.

Paul Jaskot (Art, Art History, and Visual Studies): In terms of the scope of the review, it'd be great if we had clear guidelines in terms of the interdisciplinarity nature of the programs. Two examples, one, majority of our faculty are involved in the MFA program. We were told that's not part of our review because it's not our program. But our curriculum and our faculty are doing all of that work in that area. So, it's a weird absence from our review. Secondly, of course, is CMAC, an interdisciplinary program we contribute to, a graduate program, but it's not part of our graduate review. So again, we have faculty doing graduate work there that is absent from our program review because it's the silo of the department. Some way of kind of capturing those overlaps and

those faculty and student interactions would be really helpful.

Balleisen: I think if you look at the granularity of what we're now asking for in the self study template is very different from what art, art history, and visual studies just went through. And there's a lot of scope for self-definition in that way. I would encourage you to have a look at the details and see whether you think we've done a good enough job.

Valdivia: I just read the new proposal. So, the Basic Science Departments are going to fall under this new review from the Medical School side, and the Dean will be part of the review team?

Balleisen: Will be consulted around the whole thing, but not part of the review team.

Valdivia: And would the Chairs…

Balleisen: Input from the Dean, in terms of, all of these different issues around who's going to be on the review team? Who's going to be solicited for letters? It's consulting the Vice Dean from the School of Medicine with respect to that process.

Valdivia: And the chairs are being reviewed independently of this process or as part of it?

Balleisen: These are reviews of the unit. Now, of course, reviews of the unit are reviews of the leaders of the unit are hard to disentangle, but the charge is to review the unit.

Steffen, did you want to make a quick comment?

Steffen Bass (Physics/APC Chair): Yes, just a very quick comment. APC was enthusiastic about this proposal because of, you know, bringing the reviews into sort of speak, the modern era, of making sure that the burden on the departments is less than it used to be for the self-studies. But I want to be on the record that in order for this proposal to be successful and to have the throughput, in terms of reviews that we need because there's a huge backlog of departments that haven't been reviewed for seven or ten years. In order for it to be effective, that requires a heavy lift from the Office of Academic Affairs and the Provost Office. And that may require some additional staffing resources that aren't there at the moment.

Balleisen: Thank you so much, Trina. If you'd like us back in January just let us know.

Jones: Thank you. If you have additional questions about the review process, just send them to acouncil@duke.edu and we'll try to make sure that we get answers to those questions.

Our last agenda item for today pertains to Appendix L, formerly Z, of the Duke Faculty Handbook, which we were not able to get to at our November 16th meeting. This discussion will be held in executive session.

[Remainder of the meeting conducted in executive session]