

To: Academic Council
From: John Willis, Academic Programs Committee Chair, 2015-16
Re: APC Activities, 2015-16
Date: April 28, 2016
Cc: Provost Sally Kornbluth; Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs Keith Whitfield; Emily Bernhardt, Incoming APC Chair

This overview begins with a brief overview of APC's **purposes, organizational structure, and mode of operation**. Since every academic unit in the university eventually interacts with APC with regard to some issue or process, it seems useful to give interested Academic Council members an overview of the committee's charge and basic approach to its work. The document closes with brief reflections on APC's activities in 2015-16.

PURPOSES

The Academic Programs Committee (APC) has three basic functions, each of which involves the provision of advice to the Provost on pivotal matters relating to Duke's core academic mission:

- 1) Consideration of **external reviews of: units** (departments and university institutes), **newly adopted degree programs** (all such new degree programs now face a required probationary review, typically after the first three years of operation), and **joint doctoral programs** between units. (APC does not review certificate programs, nor the accreditation processes for professional schools as a whole).
- 2) Consideration of **proposals for new degree programs or the creation/contraction/termination/merger of major units** (such as departments or university-wide institutes).
- 3) Consideration of **major academic policy questions with salience for the entire campus** (these might involve such issues as the shifting landscape of online education at Duke and elsewhere; proposals for/reviews of major pedagogical experiments/innovations; assessments of signature Duke programs for undergraduates, masters' students, and/or doctoral students; the creation or reconsideration of major curricular frameworks; the academic dimensions of university-wide strategic planning; etc.).

ORGANIZATION

In order to ensure that APC's deliberations incorporate faculty perspectives from across the university, the Provost and the Executive Committee of Academic Council (ECAC) collaborate in the selection of members from each of the professional schools, as well as a range of departments in each division of Arts & Sciences. The Graduate-Professional Student Council also has non-voting representation on APC. There are several *ex officio*, non-voting members from Duke's senior academic leadership.

Beginning in 2014-15, Provost Kornbluth expanded the membership of the APC. In 2015-16 there were 26 voting faculty members and 2 non-voting graduate student members. The Provost also instituted a new structure for APC, creating **two subcommittees of the whole**, each now comprised of thirteen faculty members, incorporating the same balance of schools and divisions, and one grad student representative. Each of the two subcommittees now meets once per month, and has the authority to act on behalf of APC as a whole. The full committee also now meets once a month. Thus APC now meets three times a month during most months of the academic year (though faculty members, aside from the Chair and Vice-Chair, still only have two meetings per month). The APC Chair now has an additional responsibility of ensuring comparable standards of evaluation across the two subcommittees.

The Provost typically appoints faculty members of APC to serve for three-year terms, with the Chair coming from the third-year cohort. When selecting an APC chair, the Provost again works with ECAC, and typically rotates the choice from among the broad divisions of intellectual inquiry in the university. Professor Emily Bernhardt of the Biology Department has recently been selected to serve as the APC Chair for 2016-2017.

MODE OF OPERATION

Typically, the two APC subcommittees now handle external reviews or new degree/unit proposals, while the full committee discusses broader policy questions. On occasion, however, scheduling difficulties have resulted in a subcommittee discussing a policy issue. The Provost also retains the discretion to ask the full committee to consider an external review or proposal for a new degree program or unit.

When undertaking the first two of its functions, APC receives the full documentary record concerning either the external review or the new proposal. These materials include the prior evaluation by the Executive Council of the Graduate Faculty (in the case of departments or joint doctoral programs), or by the Masters' Advisory Council (in the case of professional degree programs.) The APC chair then appoints a "lead discussant." This faculty member reviews the materials especially closely and, in consultation with the APC chair, frames discussion questions for the head of the unit/program under review, or for the lead faculty members on a new program proposal.

These queries furnish a starting point for the brief presentation by unit/program heads at APC, and subsequent interaction between the presenters and the committee.

During an APC meeting considering an external review or new proposal, the lead discussant is responsible for taking especially close notes. She/he then writes a draft resolution to the Provost, in consultation with the APC Chair, which encapsulates the views the committee. The committee has the opportunity to comment on the draft. After any further revisions, the committee votes on the final version of the resolution. These votes frequently take place electronically, though if several subcommittee members ask for an additional face-to-face discussion, the Chair will delay the vote until the next meeting of the subcommittee.

In the case of an external review, APC's resolution is provided to the unit/program concerned, and helps to inform any Memorandum of Understanding drafted by the Provost. In the case of a proposal for a new degree program or unit, the APC resolution, with the assent of the Provost, goes forward to the ECAC, for consideration by that body and then the full Academic Council, before final consideration by the Board of Trustees.

Before moving to generate a resolution, APC may ask for additional information from unit heads/lead proposers. In the case of new proposals, APC may also ask for minor revisions to the formal proposal, or send the proposal back for more substantive reconsideration and reframing.

APC also receives visitors to frame its policy meetings of the full committee. The Provost, Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, and the APC Chair work together to set the broad agenda for these discussions. The Chair then works with the invited members of the university community to identify appropriate background reading materials and structure brief presentations to set up discussion. Typically, the chair takes notes on these meetings, and where appropriate, solicits additional feedback from committee members. After the meeting, the chair often submits a memorandum to the Provost and the heads of relevant university units/programs, summarizing the views expressed/suggestions furnished by APC members and offering additional commentary, where appropriate.

APC'S ACTIVITIES DURING 2015-16

In the current academic year, APC has considered the following external reviews:

- The **University Program in Ecology (UPE)**
- The **Department of Immunology** in the Medical Center
- The **Department of Pharmacology and Cancer Biology** in the Medical Center
- The **Department of Psychology & Neuroscience** in the College of Arts & Science
- The **Department of History** in the College of Arts & Science

APC also considered the following new proposals:

- A new **Masters of Fine Arts in Dance** in the College of Arts & Science
- A new **PhD in Integrated Biology and Medicine**, jointly sponsored by Duke University and National University of Singapore at Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School
- A new **Masters in Quantitative Management (MQM)**, from the Fuqua School of Business
- A new **PhD in Computational Media, Arts, and Culture (CMAC)**, joint from Art, Art History & Visual Studies, the Program in Literature, the Information Science + Studies Graduate Certificate Program, and the Franklin Humanities Institute

Policy discussions included:

- The proposal for **Franklin Humanities Institute (FHI) faculty appointment hiring authority**
- Discussions of the **approval process for an undergraduate college at DKU**
- Discussions of **Calibration of APC, Policies and Expectations**
- Discussions of the **new draft Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Technology Transfer from the Office of Licensing and Ventures (OLV)**
- The proposal for the **Pratt Professional Masters Programs to have non-tenure track, regular rank faculty hiring authority**
- Update and discussion of the **Strategic Plan**
- Discussion of the new **Institution Creation Guidelines**
- The proposal for the **Conversion of the Duke University Energy Initiative to Institute Status**
- Discussion and update of **DKU**
- The proposal for a **name change of the MA in Historical and Cultural Visualization to the MA in Digital Art History/Computational Media**
- The proposal for a **name change of the Program in Women's Studies to the Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies**
- Discussion of the proposed **curriculum for the new four-year undergraduate program and degree at DKU**
- Discussion of potential **Duke Support for Interdisciplinary Graduate Networks Grants**
- Discussion of the **Proposal Planning Document for a New Spring Break Program**
- Discussion of the **Request for Approval of a Four-Year Undergraduate Degree Program at DKU**