



To: Duke University's Academic Council
From: Tom Ferraro, Professor of English, Chair of APC 2020-21
Re: Academic Programs Committee (APC) 2020-21 update
Date: April 8, 2021

I am pleased to provide the Academic Council with this summary of APC's activities during the 2020-21 academic year. It has been a privilege to serve as chair and to work with the Provost, the Executive Vice Provost, and faculty from across the university, as well as with the competent, effective, and kind support staff. If the Provost ever taps you on the shoulder and invites you to become a member of APC, I encourage you to give it your full consideration as it is an interesting experience.

Following a brief introduction to the committee's function, a description of the topics covered this year is provided. The report concludes with a more thorough explanation of the committee's purposes, organizational structure, and mode of operation, which is a standard inclusion.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you this overview of the committee's work. I can assure you that the committee members take their charge seriously, devote considerable attention to the topics that come before them, engage in thoughtful conversation, and reach decisions and make recommendations that they believe are in the best interests of the university.

APC is fundamentally an advisory body to the Provost with a broad remit (see more just below). This year APC has had twenty-four voting members drawn from across the university, including two representatives from the Graduate and Professional Student Council. Seventeen *ex officio* non-voting members are invited to attend its deliberations. The Executive Committee of the Academic Council also appoints two non-voting members. (A membership roster for 2020-21 appears at the end of this document.) APC meets as a full committee monthly. The voting members are also divided into two subcommittees, each of which meets monthly. Generally, the full committee meetings are used for discussion and advice to the Provost on major policy questions, while the subcommittees conduct reviews of external reviews of academic units, of newly created degree programs, and of joint doctoral programs between units, as well as consider proposals for new degree programs, and the creation, contraction, termination, or merger of major units.

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 (a probationary review is required for new degree programs, typically after the first three years of operation), and joint doctoral programs between units. (APC does not review certificate programs, or the accreditation processes for professional schools).
- 2) Consideration of proposals for new degree programs or the creation, contraction, termination, or merger of major units (such as departments or university-wide institutes).
- 3) Consideration of major academic policy questions with salience for the entire campus.

ORGANIZATION

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 and Professional Student Council also has representation on APC. There are several *ex officio*, non-voting members from Duke's senior academic leadership who receive the meeting materials and are invited to all meetings.

Since 2014-15 APC has been composed of two subcommittees within the full committee. Each subcommittee is structured to achieve the widest possible representation of schools and divisions, and each has one appointed graduate student representative. Each subcommittee meets once per month and has the authority to act on behalf of APC as a whole. The full committee also meets once a month. By this mechanism, APC convenes three times a month during most months of the academic year, although faculty members, aside from the Chair and Vice Chair, attend only two meetings per month. The APC Chair has the responsibility of ensuring comparable standards of evaluation across the two subcommittees.

The Provost typically appoints faculty members of APC to serve three-year terms, with the Chair coming from the third-year cohort. When selecting the Chair, the Provost again works with ECAC, and typically rotates the choice between the broad divisions of intellectual inquiry within the university.

During the summer of 2020, under continuing chair Neil Siegel of the Law School, APC met six times in special session with the Strategy Team Leaders, who kept APC apprised of the decision-making governing the upcoming year under the Covid-19 pandemic.

MODE OF OPERATION

Typically, the two APC subcommittees 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 Committee 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 ensuring the questions from the subcommittee are addressed. The lead discussant then drafts the committee resolution – a document that summarizes the discussion that APC had on the topic and provides concrete recommendations to the unit/program heads and the Provost on how to proceed regarding the proposal or review at hand. The resolution is reviewed by the APC Chair and the Executive Vice Provost before being shared with the subcommittee for a vote or additional comments. This process usually takes place electronically, although 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, the Executive Vice Provost or the Provost provides APC's resolution to the unit/program concerned. The resolution also 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 ECAC 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, Executive Vice Provost 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 during 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 and the suggestions furnished by APC members and offering additional commentary, where appropriate.

Over the course of its deliberations and discussions, APC often identifies broader issues and concerns that transcend individual proposals and routinely brings these to the attention of the Provost.

APC'S ACTIVITIES DURING 2020-2021

APC's school-year deliberation was relatively heavy on external reviews and policy discussions, and relatively light on new proposals. APC learned that most departments and units struggle with achieving financial sustainability and resolving space issues, all the more so in the wake of Covid retrenchments and redirections; most struggle, too, with increasing diversity and inclusion among faculty and students, despite efforts that may have predated BLM-inspired commitments, although future efforts should benefit from the University's rallying call and the TDE grant.

Throughout the summer of 2020, APC met in extraordinary session once or twice a month, under Chair Neil Siegel. APC was kept abreast of shifting conditions and thus shifting decisions on tactics from the Provost Sally Kornbluth and Executive Vice Provost Jennifer Francis, with recurrent updates from Vice President Kyle Cavanaugh, from Financial Officers Talman Trask and Tim Walsh, as well as from ex-officio members such as Vice Provost Gary Bennett, Deans Paula McClain and John Klingensmith of the Graduate School, and Dean Valerie Ashby with the three Divisional Deans in A&S. All but one of these sessions was dedicated to updates on the immediate problems presented by the coronavirus: whether and how students were to be in residence in the Fall, what frequency and method of testing could and should be instituted, the likelihood of moving first-years students to West and using the dorms on East to quarantine, how to protect those in housekeeping and food service etc., on campus; how to regulate behavior off campus and thus protect the people of Durham also; the de-facto exile of international students, including the impact on revenue-generating Master's Programs and stipend issues for continuing Ph.D. students; the financial impacts of reduced tuition, reduced housing and support-services income, reduced sports revenue, the temporary closure of the private diagnostic clinics of DUHS, in a complex budgetary system that impressively devotes most annual spending to financial aid and compensation/benefits, that is, to our *people*; the early key decisions to suspend retirement contributions and defer raises; initial plans for teaching hybrid and on-line courses for the upcoming year; the decision to reorganize the Fall semester, starting early and finishing at Thanksgiving (except, for instance, the Law School); and so forth. In

the one meeting looking further ahead, Provost Kornbluth shared initial ideas emanating from Faculty Group 2030, with significant affirmation (revisiting the UICs, streamlining Bass Connections/ DukeImmerse/ DukeEngage, addressing the pronounced growth in staff since 2011) but also widespread hesitation at significantly strengthening post-Tenure reviews (the faculty at large would rather sacrifice a small amount of increased efficiency in order not to be routinely “policing” each other).

At the request of the Provost and the APC chair, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies Ed Balleisen updated APC twice on University reconsiderations of its signature system of university-wide initiatives, institutes and centers—known collectively as UICs--which system had already been pinpointed by multiple governing bodies as a potential site for modest post-Covid cost-cutting. Early in September, the first presentation outlined the issues that the May 2018 UPC report (chaired by Lori Benneer of NSOE), the Provost’s Office under Ed’s guidance, and the Faculty Group 2030 had identified concerning the UICs: a funding model making financial oversight both difficult and critical; an increasingly unsustainable drain on the Provostial discretionary funds for innovation; governance problems in some UICs (redress underway in SSRI led by Don Taylor of Sanford); marked heterogeneity regarding degrees of research contribution, curricular engagement, public outreach—and faculty involvement; mission drift over time, for better or for worse, warranting review; and attenuated mechanisms for downsizing and, indeed, sunseting. In late March, Balleisen led a discussion of the impressive Report on the UICs from the Ad Hoc Interdisciplinary Priorities Committee (IPC), which had been submitted only ten days earlier. The result of the year’s labor of 16 faculty (plus Balleisen, *ex officio*) chaired by Lisa Gennetian of Sanford, the IPC Report addresses each of these issues in light of forecasted finances post-Covid. The Report makes strong recommendations in terms of proposals for general procedures (entailing new initiatives, consequential periodic reviews, substantial reconfigurations or sunseting) *and* in proffering discrete recommendations for each of the 11 UICs. APC inquired about what is required for transitioning from an Institute to a division within a School or even a School itself; how scale in terms of budget is figured into the equation, given markedly different levels of endowment; how the Provost addresses major donors when the original vision and/or its justifying circumstances have run their course; if and when the Deans are invited to weigh-in on resource allocations effecting the UICs; and whether or not future oversight and implementation are to fall on a standing committee or central administration; as well as matters pertaining to specific UICs.

In Fall 2020, *ex-officio* member Gary Bennett (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education) and invitée Mary Pat McMahon (Vice Provost for Student Affairs) hosted a presentation and discussion on the work being done under their collective vision to reimagine “Next Generation of Living and Learning” in Trinity and Pratt given the issues of maturation, ethnic inclusivity, sexual vulnerability, mental health issues, and the defacto anti-intellectualism in both the persisting work/play dichotomy and the hyper pre-professionalism (often misinformed) dogging this generation’s undergraduates, especially at Duke. Plans in the making, mostly under the charge of NGLLE 2.0 (chaired by Dean of Students John Blackshear), include assignment at matriculation to dorms on East allied with “Quads” on West, a Covid-triggered but desirably permanent rescheduling of Greek and SLG rush activities from the Spring of the first year to the Fall of the second year, early instruction in resilience, a renewed system of faculty engagement with the Quads (with new emphases on involvement across not only A&S divisions but across Schools). In conversation, the faculty acknowledged the strength of the planning, expressed their experience with the limitations of top-down intellectual programming and reservations regarding the inherent homogeneity of SLGs, and underscored the need to address the domination by the fraternities of the social scene (and at times the real estate) on Main West.

Earlier this spring, Executive Vice Provost Jennifer Francis led a presentation and discussion of the Course Evaluation System: the current system is universally disdained. The software that the University is piloting this month (Watermark's Evaluation Kit) offers much better facility regarding its several intended functions: to help students choose courses and faculty, to enable teachers to refine those courses and their pedagogy, to allow units to evaluate their members and overall curriculum, to give more thorough and accurate records for purposes of tenure and promotion, and to leverage self-assessment data for the SACS accreditation process. Of the last, APC learned that SACS has revised its assessment criteria to be more responsive to the missions of research universities and liberal arts colleges. Discussion pivoted on certain practical issues of implementation, including how to yield a higher participation rate from the undergrads.

Of great moment was a discussion at the Provost's behest on Tenure Standards led by the Co-Chairs of the 2018 Tenure Standards Committee, Profs. Anne Allison and Bruce Jentleson, as well as the Provost herself. Before meeting, members of APC were able to examine both the full Report and its supplemental Summary of Recommendations, focusing on public scholarship, digital venues, and the arts, with special sensitivity to how unconscious bias and differential status have played out in collective deliberations. Discussion focused mostly on implementation, guided still from the 2018 Report: retaining fundamental disciplinary criteria in most units and in the process as a whole while making room for public outreach, alternative media, and scholarly creativity; proceeding very carefully (to learn how) to assess digital venues with regards to peer review, circulation value, and academic reputation; empowering local units to determine for whom public scholarship is primarily a service contribution and for whom it is a telos or even "a laboratory method of inquiry," as it can be in PPS; identifying strategic opportunities to appoint master artists at the senior level with tenure whose charge would include helping Duke articulate and maintain rigorous standards for awarding tenure to artists.

Other questions were raised and partially addressed: the overreliance on metrics; the "subjective" or friendship network that determines where scholarly work gets published, which some feel is more invidious in public outlets including the major magazines and newspapers; the gender bias that may appear in relying upon grants and fellowships as a measure of scholarly productivity, especially when residency is requisite, given that women still have a disproportionate responsibility for the day-to-day operations of their families; the need for utter clarity with regards to standards for tenure in each unit, which could be attached as an addendum to the initial contract letter and underscored with guidance at the third year review (really now 2nd year); periodic required updating of such standards unit by unit, to reflect changing conditions within forms of disciplinary and interdisciplinary work while pre-empting the temptation to individualize criteria on a strictly ad hoc basis (which especially concerns APT).

Another major policy issue, that of a prospective revision of how the University conducts its External Reviews of departments and programs, is scheduled for the full APC on April 21, 2021. Paula McClain, Dean of the Graduate School, and John Klingensmith, Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School, are the invited discussants.

A comprehensive summary of activities is provided immediately below, as well as the membership roll.

External Reviews

- Fuqua Ph. D. in Business Administration
- Cultural Anthropology Department
- Bioethics and Science Policy Master's Program
- Pathology Department
- Philosophy Department
- Earth and Climate Sciences (formerly Earth and Ocean Sciences)
- Marine and Conservation Sciences

Program Changes/ New Proposals

- Material Sciences 4+1 degree
- Name Change for Psychology and Neuroscience Ph.D. Degree
- Name Change for Ph.D. Program in Earth and Climate Sciences (formerly EOS)
- Sanford Executive Masters in National Security Policy: E-MNSP

Policy Discussions

- UICs (twice)
- Next Generation Living and Learning Implementation
- Course Evaluations
- Tenure Standards
- External Review Process

cc: Jennifer Francis, Executive Vice Provost
Sally Kornbluth, Provost

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

The APC is an advisory body to the Provost. The charge to the APC is a broad one in terms of advising the Provost on university-wide academic issues as well as providing advice on the creation, termination, or contraction of academic units. The full Committee meets once a month. Members serve on one of two subcommittees which meet every three weeks. The membership of the APC is comprised of senior faculty members from schools with undergraduate bodies and the professional schools, including two from the Executive Committee of the Academic Council. Ex officio members include the Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Chair of the Academic Council, and the Executive Vice Provost, among others. Term: three years.

Term Ending August 31, 2021

Tom Ferraro, Chair, English
Deb Brandon, School of Nursing
Jasmine Cobb, African and African American Studies (on leave, Spring '21)
Stephen Craig, Chemistry
Keisha Cutright, Fuqua School of Business
John De Figueiredo, School of Law
Sara Galletti, Art, Art History & Visual Studies
Christina Gibson-Davis, Sanford School of Public Policy
Fan Li, Statistical Science
Cary Moskovitz, Thompson Writing Program
Negar Mottahedeh, Program in Literature
Susan Murphy, School of Medicine
Kate Scholberg, Physics
Beth Sullivan, School of Medicine
Charlotte Sussman, English
Gabriela Nagle Alverio, Graduate and Professional Student Council representative
Sudeep Sarkar, Graduate and Professional Student Council representative

Term Ending December 31, 2020

William Darity, Sanford School of Public Policy
Susan Schneider, School of Nursing

Term Ending August 31, 2022

Edgardo Colon-Emeric, Divinity School (incoming Dean of the Divinity School)
Gabriel Rosenberg, Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies
Avner Vengosh, Nicholas School of the Environment

Term Ending August 31, 2023

Amy Schmid, Biology (will not serve 2021-2022)

Term Ending December 31, 2023

Tracey Yap, School of Nursing

Ex Officio

Valerie Sheares Ashby, Dean, Arts & Sciences
Gary Bennett, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Lawrence Carin, Vice Provost for Research (resigned from university)
Eve Duffy, Associate Vice Provost for Global Affairs
Jennifer Francis, Executive Vice Provost

Kerry Haynie, Chair, Academic Council
Deborah Jakubs, University Librarian & Vice Provost for Library Affairs
William Johnson, Dean of the Humanities
John Klingensmith, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate School
Sally Kornbluth, Provost
Rachel Kranton, Dean of Social Sciences
Laura Lieber, Religious Studies - ECAC representative
Paula McClain, Dean and Vice Provost of the Graduate School
Neil McWilliam, Dean of Graduate Studies
Manoj Mohanan, Sanford School – ECAC representative
Mohamed Noor, Dean, Natural Sciences
Martin Smith, Dean of Academic Affairs and Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Shrey Majmudar, Duke Student Government representative