

Global Priorities Committee
Report on activities, 2015-2016
Susan Alberts (Committee chair)

The Global Priorities Committee (GPC) is an advisory committee to the Vice President and Vice Provost for Global Affairs, Michael Merson, and to the Provost. It also reports to the Academic Council. The committee comprises senior faculty members: six from schools with undergraduate bodies and six from the professional schools. The GPC is charged with reviewing and refining Duke's global strategy and assessing university and academic programs and activities operating globally, both when they are being created and in monitoring ongoing performance.

The committee meets monthly and reviews a wide range of issues relevant to Duke's global mission. Below is a summary of some of the key topics covered by the GPC in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Global Centers

The GPC created a subcommittee in September to explore the idea of creating global centers across the globe, as many of Duke's peer institutions have done. The subcommittee determined that the global centers should be small, agile offices located in countries where there is a high level of Duke activity among students, faculty and alumni. They should serve as sites of concentrated engagement, enhancing Duke's mission to be a global university by facilitating research and learning opportunities for the Duke community. These centers should address local and regional issues and increase awareness about the interconnectedness of global challenges, serve as a "footprint" for Duke around the world to attract and recruit the best students and faculty, and serve as a convening place for Duke alumni. Based on a number of criteria (focused on where Duke has research strength, student programs, strong alumni networks, and undergraduate and graduate students who attend Duke), the subcommittee suggested initial centers be established in Berlin or London, Sao Paulo, Cape Town, somewhere in India, and Istanbul. The proposal was presented to the Board of Trustees and the Deans Council in February and received overwhelming support.

Duke Kunshan University Phase II

The committee heard a number of presentations and had multiple discussions about Phase II of Duke Kunshan University, which would initiate an undergraduate degree program.

1. In September, Associate Vice Provost for the Duke Kunshan University Program Office Jim Dobbins explained the five-step approval process for Duke Kunshan's four-year undergraduate curriculum and degree to be offered in Phase II. The committee encouraged beginning with a "stage zero" in which faculty are informed about the justification for moving forward with Phase II.
2. In December, Provost Sally Kornbluth and Executive Vice Chancellor of Duke Kunshan University Denis Simon presented the potential benefits and costs of a four-year undergraduate liberal arts degree, which the committee suggested the formal proposal include. The presenters also shared the news that due to faculty concerns, the timeline for Duke's approval would be pushed back six months.
3. In January, the committee discussed the December presentation and requested that the DKU committee provide an account of DKU Phase I and the lessons learned, in order to consider whether Duke should proceed with Phase II.
4. In February, the GPC held a special session during which Sally Kornbluth, Denis Simon, Jim Dobbins and Noah Pickus presented the DKU Phase II curriculum

proposal to provide a deeper understanding of the planned undergraduate curriculum. The committee then shared their concerns and suggestions with APC.

5. In March, President Brodhead, Provost Sally Kornbluth and Executive Vice Chancellor of DKU Denis Simon joined the GPC meeting to discuss DKU Phase II and the “Memo to the Faculty from Provost Sally Kornbluth on Duke and the Development of Duke Kunshan University.” GPC then sent feedback on the document to APC and the Provost.

Global Alumni Task Force

GPC advised the Office of Global Affairs on the creation of a Global Alumni Task Force, to consist of 25-50 members who will provide advice on future opportunities and areas of growth and how alumni can help Duke be more global. The task force will meet twice, and will consider the formation of a presidential alumni advisory council. The first meeting will be held on June 22 in London, in conjunction with the final Duke Forward event to be held on the same date.

Online Global Education

In August, Associate Vice Provost for Digital and Online Education Initiatives Lynne O’Brien asked the GPC to evaluate new ideas for using online technology to further global education, and to identify new faculty members to take part in creating global collaborative online learning projects. With GPC’s feedback, a global online education RFP was circulated, and a number of proposals were submitted. Lynne’s committee is working with candidates to build out these proposals.

Refugee Crisis

In October, co-director of the Kenan Institute Suzanne Shanahan presented to the committee about Kenan’s refugee project, which seeks to understand the impact of forced migration on refugee well-being, understand the local implications of the global crisis, provide policy recommendations and develop interventions in support of refugee well-being. The community-based project works in Durham, Egypt, Ireland, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta and Nepal.

Strategic Plan

Noah Pickus attended the November GPC meeting to discuss the global goal of the university’s new strategic plan. The committee provided feedback, noting that more clarity was needed, in addition to a definition of global that includes the local but still prioritizes the global. As a result of this feedback, the Office of Global Affairs drafted an updated version of the global goal.

Global Administrative Support Steering Committee

In February Jim Roberts, Brendan Murphy and Tim Walsh reported to GPC about the roles and responsibilities of the Global Administrative Support Steering Committee (GASSC) and how it provides administrative support for faculty working abroad. GPC was impressed with the level of support GASSC provides, and suggested additional ways for GASSC to raise awareness about this resource among faculty to ensure that GASSC is looped in more often.

Global Asia Initiative

Also in February, GPC heard from Prasenjit Duara, who will be forming a Global Asia Initiative to explore connections both within Asia and beyond the region. The committee provided recommendations regarding this new initiative, suggesting that long-term sustainability of the initiative should be ensured, that more connections across campus should be sought and that the initiative’s core purpose should be clarified.