Faculty Engagement at Emory

Understanding “shared responsibility”

Deb Houry
Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine, Faculty Council Chair, and University Senate President

What is faculty governance? How does it exist at Emory, and is it important? In its 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) calls for “shared responsibility among the different components.

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of institutional government and its specification of areas of primary responsibility for governing boards, administrations, and faculties."

But which "areas of primary responsibility?" Some construe faculty governance to mean that faculty members have decision-making authority over some aspect of university management. For instance, usually faculty members have primary over curriculum, but not over other major areas such as the university budget. I think the term "faculty engagement" is perhaps the best way to start these conversations, however. With dramatic changes underway in research funding, tenure, clinical care reimbursement, and higher education more generally, faculty must be proactively engaged in solutions, or we will be left behind as key decisions are made.

Over the past few years, the Faculty Council has had ongoing discussions at its meetings regarding faculty engagement and governance. In 2011-12, Council chair Erica Brownfield presented an overview of different governance structures at each school. The following year, chair Gray Crouse initiated a lecture series to increase faculty engagement and conversations on cost and administrative growth in higher education.

This fall we conducted an online survey to gain insight into perceptions of faculty views of university-wide and school-specific shared faculty governance, as well as potential areas to improve engagement. Based on the AAUP Indicators of Sound Governance instrument, the survey was modified to shorten it, remove questions not relevant to Emory, and include school-level questions. Questions included

- University-wide questions: views on president and Board of Trustees with regards to shared governance, importance of faculty participation, and campus climate;
- School-specific questions: views on shared governance in the school, faculty areas of primacy, dean's use of communication channels, evaluation of administrators;
- Open-ended: view of faculty council and senate.

Of approximately 3,000 full-time faculty surveyed, 1,084 completed the survey, with school response rates ranging from about 27 percent (medicine) to 80 percent (nursing). Most units had more than 50 percent response rates. We reviewed the results in total and conducted school and tenure-track comparisons. Keeping these response rates and differences across schools in mind, overall demographics of survey respondents are shown in the chart below left.

Overall, the majority of respondents viewed faculty participation in university governance as worthwhile (54 percent true or more true than false). On the other hand, almost half (49 percent) voiced neutral feelings regarding satisfaction with current participation. Another interesting finding was that 40 to 85 percent (varying by schools) believed relationships between university administration and faculty were cooperative, with three schools having high rates of "don't knows."

With more than 3,000 full-time faculty at Emory, it is not surprising that many are not overly aware of central administration. It does suggest, however, a disconnect between some units and the larger university. Emory's vision of forging strong interdisciplinary programs and working for positive transformation cannot be done in silos. Faculty at schools must engage and feel that they are part of the university. This year, we...
have been sending out Council Concerns and Senate Summary to all faculty and posting the minutes on our website, and we circulated an open call for committees to increase participation and awareness.

We also asked some questions about school-level governance. Most faculty members believe participation in school-level governance is important, but only 10 percent of faculty members were satisfied with faculty participation in school-level governance. Schools differed widely on that last point, however (14 to 95 percent).

The Faculty Council has used these results to guide discussions in subsequent meetings this year and has disseminated the school-level results to deans and faculty representatives. We have learned that there are some “best practices” that should be shared. There are also several ongoing discussions and task forces around campus currently reviewing these issues.

For example, the Rollins School of Public Health (see page 8) reimagined a faculty council with elected departmental and at-large representatives. This forum has been soliciting issues from the faculty, posting “live” minutes online, and requesting input on different faculty-relevant topics such as grievance policies. A faculty committee in Emory College (see page 9) spent this year reviewing different faculty governance models, and the Emory College faculty met in March to discuss these findings.

Similarly, the School of Medicine is in the process of re-envisioning its faculty advisory committee to the dean to be more expansive and to align more closely with Emory Healthcare and Clinic to reduce redundancy. The law school also recently created an advisory committee of elected faculty members to represent faculty concerns and issues to the dean. Our hope is that these discussions increase faculty engagement and governance at the school level and that we can continue to share best practices and ideas across the university.

Faculty governance is merely the tip of the iceberg, though. If faculty are not engaged and participating, what is there to represent? We must be active at all levels, from participating in working groups to giving input and recommendations to initiating solutions. Simple steps can have a tremendous impact. For example, Woodruff Health Sciences Center requested input from staff and faculty on different cost savings ideas. They received more than seven hundred suggestions, many of which have been implemented. We modified the Council Concerns newsletter to become more bi-directional; faculty may click on specific topics and give feedback and suggestions. Our survey does suggest, however, that many faculty are neutral at best with regard to participation in shared governance activities.

Faculty members overall thought they were involved in curriculum and educational policy (66 percent) and promotion and tenure standards (64 percent). Nearly half, however, did not feel that their school supported shared governance activities with time, training, or reward for participation. Perhaps faculty evaluations and promotion and tenure processes should give greater weight to service. Without tangible benefits and with competing interests for time, faculty may elect not to engage or participate in governance and service activities. My hope is that faculty will participate in leading this change by engaging in initiatives that shape the intellectual life of the entire institution, encouraging colleagues to contribute, and demonstrating the positive impact they can have.

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**“PARTICIPATION IN SHARED GOVERNANCE IN MY SCHOOL IS A WORTHWHILE FACULTY RESPONSIBILITY.”**

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**“I AM SATISFIED WITH FACULTY GOVERNANCE AT MY SCHOOL.”**

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**“FACULTY IN MY SCHOOL SET AGENDA IN AREAS OF PRIMACY.”**

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**“MY SCHOOL FOSTERS SHARED GOVERNANCE WITH REASONABLE WORKLOAD AND SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION.”**

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A Common Meaning of Faculty Governance

Essential in a rapidly changing social and global context

Casually ask faculty members at Emory how they define faculty governance, and two themes emerge. First, most seem to focus on faculty governance at the departmental or the school/college level, in which their appointment is housed. Second, they view faculty governance as a mechanism to oversee the curriculum and guide decisions about the promotion, and if applicable, tenure of a colleague. From the perspective of the need for engaged faculty governance at the university level, we wonder how a different number of voting versus non-voting members, representation by academic unit, length of term, and other factors might impact the influence of the university Faculty Council.

From conversations with the faculty, we know that several view faculty governance at the university level as less relevant than that in their own academic homes. Although we disagree, it is understandable that this view may arise from Emory’s decentralized organizational structure. Owing to this decentralization, many decisions are made at the level of Emory’s schools and colleges, creating a system in which deans have the responsibility to make decisions, serve semi-autonomously, and wisely use discretion in decision-making. Sometimes as faculty members, we forget that with this responsibility comes accountability, in this case from the deans to the provost and others in central administration. Faculty governance operates in this same framework.

Emory has made much progress in the area of faculty governance. For example, the Faculty Council now includes tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty. Another strength is the use of standing and special committees, including those charged by administrators, such as the Faculty Life Course Committee or the University Research Committee. Membership on these committees allows for input beyond only those faculty members who serve on the council.

We have observed that the lack of a shared definition of university-level faculty governance frequently results in less effective and targeted faculty engagement.

Within our schools and colleges, faculty determine the content of the curriculum, student learning outcomes and assessments of this learning, and standards for reviewing faculty’s tenure and promotion. Similarly, faculty members oversee faculty recruitment, and they are first in line to make decisions on promotion and tenure. Currently most academic units at the university are examining ways to improve current faculty governance.

At the central or university level, opportunities for improvement also exist. For example, what governance structures do we need to put in place for teaching and offering courses across academic units? What processes do we need for effective engagement in online education and other academic innovations in which only some faculty are interested? What are priority areas in research and scholarship that, despite the variation and uncertainty of external funding sources, will always require institutional investment? What strategies for faculty governance are missing when it comes to setting priorities for recruitment beyond that within each academic unit? Is there a need for reviewing ranks and tracks for faculty appointments at the university level? What processes and structures do we have in place to ensure that “local” decisions are aligned with not only Emory’s mission but also available resources?

In exploring questions such as these, we will continue to make progress on faculty governance at Emory. To us, this exploration is not a choice but a necessity. Let’s see if we can maintain and further improve governance that views faculty and administrators as unified parties rather than adversaries, one that seeks to establish a vibrant academic community that is ready to respond to a rapidly changing social and global context.
Back to the Future on Faculty Governance

Some random, personal reflections on higher education in the twenty-first century

I grew up in Hong Kong (while it was still a British Crown colony) and Canada (while it was a dominion of the United Kingdom, before Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau reclaimed the Charter in 1982) and earned my B.A. degree in Canada. So my formative education was not “U.S.-American” until I began my doctoral education in the United States. I have been living in the U.S. since the 1980s and now am a naturalized citizen and a faculty member at a private university. The educational efforts of my adopted country have been on my mind lately, especially since I participated in Emory’s Academic Leadership Program in 2012 and in an Academic Learning Community on “The Changing Landscape of Higher Education” sponsored by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence in 2013-14.

Frank Y. Wong
Associate Professor of Behavioral Sciences and Health Education, Rollins School of Public Health, and Co-Chair, University Research Committee

Many things have changed in the last thirty years. These days we have a proliferation of professional and technical as well as for-profit schools. Technologies allow students to participate in distance learning. I marvel at the progress we have made to keep up with the demand of an ever-changing world.

In his collected essays on higher education (Pursuing the Endless Frontier: Essays on MIT and the Role of Research Universities, 2011), Charles Vest, the late president of MIT, posed an important question: What is the faculty’s collective responsibility to our students? He also addressed two concepts: boldness and openness. To illustrate them, he gave the example of how MIT lists all its core curricula online to share with the world. Indeed, it is a bold move to promote an open society.

When Dr. Vest posed the question and discussed the two concepts, he was primarily interested in examining how and in what way faculty should be stewards of an ethical education. Yet implicit in his framework are also questions of how and in what way academic governing structures and practices may need to be reconsidered as integral parts of an ethical education in the twenty-first century.

In traditional academia, governance structures and practices are more or less a local enterprise. For example, alumni are the core resources for university governance roles such as serving on the board of trustees. This is true for good reason, as alumni have vested interests in seeing their alma mater thrive and maintain its core values.

Meanwhile, each academic unit is responsible for its own daily operations. At Emory, as in other similar institutions, the units either nominate or select faculty to represent its interests to a central governing function, the Faculty Council and the University Senate. This process is no doubt democratic in practice, but it is also operating in a silo. There is little incentive for each constituency to know and learn from one another. More or less, each pursues its own interests.

The traditional academic governing structures and practices serve a time-honored purpose, but they could use some scrutiny in the twenty-first century. We live in an interdependent world and cannot afford to be unfamiliar with what our other colleagues outside of our disciplines are doing. Can we foster an environment promoting Dr. Vest’s values of boldness and openness? What would such an academic governing structure and its practices look like today?

I make no pretense that I have the answers to these questions, but I do have some thoughts regarding these issues.

First, education has become a global enterprise. With many American universities establishing international campuses, does the overall institutional governing body reflect this reality? It is one thing to aim for an immediate gain in the global market share (for example, international students), but it is quite different to have a long-term strategic perspective and/or vision to guide the development and cultivation of how market forces fit into the core values of the home institution’s culture.

Second, the conventional structure and practices of the faculty senate do not encourage meaningful exchanges across departments, schools, and units—and perhaps most importantly, with the central administration. Each is there to represent its own constituency instead of working towards a common goal, be it global education or otherwise. What could be done differently to reflect education in this century?

Human nature is slow or loath to change. Any change requires what Dr. Vest would call boldness. To be great, a global university (including Emory) must have the necessary expertise or global experience among its trustees to chaperon this process. This need calls attention not only to the structure of governance, but most of all to the required intellectual energy. The university’s governance (for example, having a global education committee) accordingly needs to reflect new priorities. It may be useful to establish a program that allows faculty to do a year-long internship or placement in the central administration or one of its sub-units to promote openness in governance. Alternatively, each faculty senator could adopt a department, school, or unit outside his or her own to learn about the work and aspirations of others.

These suggestions no doubt require institutional, intellectual, and financial commitments. Emory University is already headed in that direction with key programs such as the Academic Leadership Program and the Emory Public Voices Fellowship. I think it is a strategic necessity for the Board of Trustees to continue fostering such infrastructure building to promote Emory as a great, global educational leader. &
Bobby Ahdieh joined the law school faculty in 2000 from the U.S. Department of Justice. He has been a member of and chaired a variety of law school and university-wide faculty governance bodies. He was appointed associate dean of faculty at the law school in 2010 and vice dean in 2011. He was a participant in the 2013-14 Academic Learning Community titled “The Changing Landscape of Higher Education,” which was convened by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence to explore the shifting contexts of higher education.

The Academic Exchange: How do you view the role of faculty governance in higher education?

Bobby Ahdieh: I think the role appropriately varies, depending upon the phase of decision-making. The first phase is defining the strategic vision for the university, school, or department: Where does the relevant academic unit want to go? The next phase is developing ideas for how best to pursue those goals. The third phase is executing on those initiatives, and fourth is assessing them: Was this program a success? Should we abandon it, modify it, or continue as is? Our role as faculty should be at its acme in the first and last phase. Too often, though, we brush past the first phase. And we definitely don’t give enough attention to the role of faculty at the assessment phase. We need structures that ensure that when we do something, faculty join in measuring the results against the vision set forth at the outset.

AE: What about the faculty’s role in the two middle stages?

I think most of us are receptive to being more involved, but I’m not sure our structures of governance are effective in instilling a sense of responsibility for the future of the university.

Lynn Zimmerman coordinates Emory’s online education efforts, serving as an ex officio member of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Online Education and helping to facilitate the university’s Coursera courses. She was a participant in the 2013-14 Academic Learning Community titled “The Changing Landscape of Higher Education,” convened by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence to explore the shifting contexts of higher education.

The Academic Exchange: You serve as an ex officio member of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Online Education. What does this body do in terms of faculty governance?

Lynn Zimmerman: The connection between the Faculty Advisory Committee on Online Education (FACOE) and faculty governance takes two forms. First, one ex officio member of FACOE is an elected member of the Faculty Council. This year the former Faculty Council chair is serving on FACOE, and it is our intention to always have this presence on the committee. The purpose of this formal connection with the Faculty Council is to ensure there is information flow between FACOE and the Faculty Council members. Secondly, almost the entire FACOE committee is made up of faculty, with representation from each school and from all levels of faculty. This was deliberate in the creation of the committee in order to create an opportunity for a representational faculty voice to advise the Provost on this important issue.

AE: What does the term “faculty governance” mean to you?

LZ: In its strictest definition, faculty governance refers to the opportunity for faculty to share in key decision making processes, often through elected representatives. But I think that faculty governance has also come to mean any kind of significant faculty input to a process. In this context it’s important to note that all of the work of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Online Education is being driven and accomplished with faculty input, so by this definition, it is faculty governance in action.

AE: You were part of the Academic Learning Community convened in Fall 2013 on the Changing Landscape of Higher Education. What was that experience like? What sorts of topics were covered?

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Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate and Continuing Education and Professor of Biology

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at the third phase of execution, however, that the effects of that changing landscape show up most starkly. Simply put, I don’t believe we have the luxury of not granting administrators and staff the lead role in executing on the vision and initiatives the faculty has embraced. The alternative—that we retain this task as faculty, to be carried out alongside our scholarly and teaching obligations—creates the risk that important undertakings will fall by the wayside. But if the faculty’s role in defining the vision and assessing the outcomes is not shortchanged, I believe that delegation can be a powerful tool.

AE: What’s an example in the law school of effective faculty participation along the lines you describe?

BA: I can think of a number, though two that immediately come to mind are our Juris Master degree and our Transactional Law program, both of which have been successful—even as they’ve departed from what law schools have traditionally been doing. The faculty set a high bar for them and let their faculty and staff leaders run with them. With a year’s data from the J.M. program, though, the faculty returned to the fray with a set of proposed curricular enhancements. The consensus was that these additions were valuable, and the administration readily embraced them and their costs. They said, If this is the faculty’s sense, we want an excellent education to move beyond where it has been, and frankly a lot of those things are technology-driven.

BA: How do you see Emory’s online education efforts, faculty governance at Emory, and the changing landscape of higher education as interlinked?

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BA: As a group, we read the book College Unbound. One chapter discusses how many schools are trying to define a niche for themselves by doubling down on a particular program and staking their claim on that. Some in the group wondered whether that suggested lessons for Emory. Others responded that such “specialization” was distinctly applicable to non-elite institutions, rather than schools like Emory. Not surprisingly, there was pushback: Are schools really insulated simply because they’re elite? And, even if so, is Emory sufficiently elite to rely on that expectation? The discussion brought to mind the reliance of some universities, and individual academic units, on a model of mimicry: figure out what university, or department or unit within it, you want to be like, see what they’re doing well, and then copy them. Personally, I’m dubious that it will be a viable strategy for higher education institutions in the coming decades. I don’t think it will work. Even at the most elite schools, I believe that students and faculty are increasingly attentive to why they should study or teach at the given school. The key is to find the right balance of familiarity and distinction that will best position the institution.

AE: You’ve been participating in an Academic Learning Community on the future of higher education. Has there been anything in particular that’s piqued your interest?

BA: As a group, we read the book College Unbound. One chapter discusses how many schools are trying to define a niche for themselves by doubling down on a particular program and staking their claim on that. Some in the group wondered whether that suggested lessons for Emory. Others responded that such “specialization” was distinctly applicable to non-elite institutions, rather than schools like Emory. Not surprisingly, there was pushback: Are schools really insulated simply because they’re elite? And, even if so, is Emory sufficiently elite to rely on that expectation? The discussion brought to mind the reliance of some universities, and individual academic units, on a model of mimicry: figure out what university, or department or unit within it, you want to be like, see what they’re doing well, and then copy them. Personally, I’m dubious that it will be a viable strategy for higher education institutions in the coming decades. I don’t think it will work. Even at the most elite schools, I believe that students and faculty are increasingly attentive to why they should study or teach at the given school. The key is to find the right balance of familiarity and distinction that will best position the institution.
Governance with Impact
Faculty governance at the Rollins School of Public Health

Established in 1990, the Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH) quickly rose to be ranked among the top schools of public health nationally and internationally. The faculty governance structures in RSPH reflect our belief that faculty guidance and vision are essential for the continued growth and ascension of the school. The ability of the RSPH faculty leadership to influence pressing issues facing the school and the university, however, flows from its creative use of faculty governance bodies rather than from the authority granted to these bodies. While the faculty share authority over matters of instruction, promotion, tenure, and research, the governance structures in RSPH fall along a broad spectrum of faculty agency in shaping and setting school policy (see figure), ranging from Determination to Limited/None (borrowing the terminology from the AUP Bulletin, 57(3):68-124, 1971).

For instance, the RSPH Education Committee, which focuses on curriculum, teaching, and policies and procedures pertaining to students, acts deterministically in most matters. The Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, which concerns itself with the professional advancement of the faculty, acts jointly with members of the administration and others. The Research Advisory Committee, which deals with research support and administration, typically acts in a consultative role, addressing matters that affect the conduct of research, including research integrity. Finally, the RSPH Faculty Council engages in broad discussions on initiatives, policies, and procedures that pertain to the professional life of faculty, yet it operates with limited authority.

Aside from setting policy, a major challenge faced by these faculty governance bodies has been maintaining their relevance in light of the school’s strong departmental identities. RSPH has a revenue model that provides for considerable financial autonomy of departments, and thus curriculum, teaching, and policies and procedures pertaining to students, lining up the ways and means, and putting the energies of the faculty. Several RSPH governance committees have engaged in substantive research, including a look at the impact of network bandwidth limitations on the conduct of big data research, potential salary disparities among faculty subgroups, patterns in enrollment and extramural funding, the increasing reliance on unlisted “special topics” courses that bypass governance oversight, and faculty perceptions of workplace climate. The discovery role of RSPH governance bodies has guided policy discussions, steered committee agendas towards concerns of the faculty, and shed light on unseen dimensions of faculty life and student experiences.

2. Engaging in essential fact finding: Research and fact finding contribute to a well-informed faculty and provide school leadership with timely information on the status, views, and experience of the faculty. Several RSPH governance committees have engaged in substantive research, including a look at the impact of network bandwidth limitations on the conduct of big data research, potential salary disparities among faculty subgroups, patterns in enrollment and extramural funding, the increasing reliance on unlisted “special topics” courses that bypass governance oversight, and faculty perceptions of workplace climate. The discovery role of RSPH governance bodies has guided policy discussions, steered committee agendas towards concerns of the faculty, and shed light on unseen dimensions of faculty life and student experiences.

3. Tackling transformational themes: RSPH faculty governance bodies are moving beyond topics of short-term concern to focus on challenging, transformational themes. Committees have taken on issues that include creating and facilitating a culture of excellence in mentoring; developing and rewarding faculty leadership; helping faculty more fully understand the constraints and challenges facing the school; facilitating “disruptive” teaching innovations; reducing barriers to the pursuit of research that is high risk but potentially high reward; and supporting faculty work-life balance. The RSPH community seeks constructive solutions to the major challenges posed by shifts in the research funding landscape and by changes in public health education, and faculty governance bodies must be at the forefront of addressing these issues thoughtfully and creatively to remain relevant.

In RSPH, governance bodies lead by building support and consensus among faculty, lining up the ways and means, and putting the energies of committed faculty members to work planning for the future of the school and of Emory at large. Their leadership flows from having creative vision, drive, and purpose, rather than from authority, and much has been accomplished under this model. Important questions remain, however. Is this governance structure well prepared to respond to crisis or disruption? How effectively can it fulfill the constructive role of providing “checks and balances” within RSPH leadership? Will its influence rise or fall in times of economic uncertainty? Can it have an impact outside the school by achieving better integration of the school into the larger Emory community?

These are only a sampling of major open issues, reminding us that while RSPH has an increasingly respected and effective platform for faculty voice and action, RSPH faculty governance is not yet where it could be in addressing the challenges our community faces.
There is broad consensus that Emory College needs “strong faculty governance.” Yet there is a remarkably diverse range of interpretations of that phrase and the specific roles faculty should play. This diversity of opinions no doubt reflects the tremendous diversity of academic pursuits in which our faculty and students are engaged. This variety is surely a strength of the college. And to maximize our potential, a similarly broad range of perspectives must be included in our governance conversations and decisions.

In our view, the broad aims of faculty governance should be focused on the academic mission of the college—that is, teaching and research. Central to that mission is the creation and assessment of innovative curricular programs that create synergies among our faculty to offer the best possible education to our students. We do not want our bureaucracy to inhibit the creativity and passions of our faculty and students. Our faculty governance structure should instead facilitate our ability to innovate, be creative, collaborate within and across departments and divisions, and build on our many strengths inside and outside of the classroom.

A year ago, the Emory College faculty elected a Shared Faculty Governance Committee to study and recommend a new governance model for Emory College in order for faculty to be maximally influential and effective participants in institutional leadership. This committee, on which the two of us served, recommended the college faculty adopt a representative governance model—a College Senate. The full report and final recommendations from the Shared Governance Committee are available at the AE website (click on the link with this essay). The report places the committee recommendations in a historical context and reviews current models of faculty governance at Emory and at our peer institutions.

In this article, we focus on why we believe a faculty senate is the best structure to support informed, consultative, transparent, and therefore effective faculty governance.

No doubt there will be a great deal of change within higher education over the next several decades. Emory College can and should be positioned to be a leader by confronting challenges and embracing new opportunities as they emerge. It is impossible to predict what the important issues facing the college (and thus faculty governance) will be, but it is clear that responding to future challenges will require creativity, flexibility, and the capability to make strategic choices. To be informed and effective partners in institutional leadership will require faculty to invest the necessary time and effort to investigate issues, gather data, discuss and debate ideas and solutions, and ultimately arrive at optimal decisions.

Our current system of governance by the whole—in which all issues of substance come before the entire faculty—has not always been effective in achieving this level of informed decision-making for three primary reasons. First, it is cumbersome, and faculty are often unable to respond to challenges in a timely manner. Efficiency must be balanced against careful consideration, including open consultation with the faculty, and we believe a senate can more effectively achieve that balance. Second, as noted above, faculty engaged in governance must be well informed. This requires a more significant investment of time than most faculty members are able to make on an ongoing basis. Faculty serving on a senate would be committed to thoroughly studying the issues, and this important commitment would be recognized and respected. Third, important decisions must be made over time, through a series of discussions and data gathering. Because governance by the whole means that faculty come into and out of discussions at different points, it is difficult for faculty to reach a stable consensus. This inhibits the faculty’s ability to make important curricular decisions and to provide informed and impactful guidance to the college administration.

A college faculty senate that is dedicated to full consideration of issues at hand, in open dialogue and consultation with both the full faculty and the administration, and that is ultimately responsible for being the voice of the faculty, will address these problems and best achieve the objectives of shared governance. The role of a faculty senate is to enhance our ability to succeed in our individual and collective missions, and to foster an environment in which faculty efforts to create outstanding and innovative curricula and research endeavors can flourish. We note that faculty governance will only be influential and effective if faculty members are able to work together to set goals and priorities, and to partner effectively with the administration. Productive collaboration among faculty, and between faculty and administrators, which we call “shared faculty governance,” is critical to the success of this (or any) governance model.

One important challenge facing any representative governance model, such as a senate, is to define the appropriate notion of representation. Currently, representation in college governance is organized around the three divisions: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Across divisions, we share core values regarding a liberal arts education, including critical thinking and writing skills, knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, and the creative and ethical engagement in solving real-world problems. At the same time, we acknowledge differences exist. These differences may pertain to doing our research in the library or the lab, or different career trajectories and needs at different points in our professional lives. It certainly is in the best interest of the college to fully value creativity and leadership from all of its faculty members, and this collaborative spirit ought to be reflected in senate representation.

This raises an important question: what or whom are faculty senators representing? In considering how to define representation, we return to the notion of shared faculty governance. In our view, representation from across the College will be essential to ensuring that diverse perspectives are included in governance dialogues and decisions, yet it will be equally important that senators not understand their roles as serving only a particular constituency. Rather, the senators ought to represent the College.

Ideally, governance of Emory College will include an ongoing dialogue among faculty, and between administration and faculty, to accomplish the shared mission of the college. Shared faculty governance must bring in all voices, across all ranks and divisions, with the goal of creating an environment in which all of our faculty can pursue eminence as scholars and teachers and can work together to provide an exceptional education for our students.

A faculty senate is the best structure to support informed, consultative, transparent, and therefore effective faculty governance.

We do not want our bureaucracy to inhibit the creativity and passions of our faculty and students.
Ad-Hoc Committees and Task Forces
Incubators of controversy, innovation, and governance

A

a the sun streamed through the windows on a blustery fall afternoon, individuals streamed to microphones in Glenn Memorial Church for over two hours. They expressed outrage over on-campus rapes, ineffective policies, campus lighting, and more. President Laney responded to each one and a few days later announced the creation of the Task Force for Security and Responsibil-

ity, composed of 20 faculty, staff, and student representatives from across Emory. Their recommendations, filed in Spring 1990, yielded the Women’s Center and the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services. Three years later, an Ad Hoc University Committee, galvanized by a demonstra-

tion led by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Office, leveraged Emory’s late 1980’s non-discrimination clause into full partner benefits.

As these two examples show, ad hoc structures for university change and governance often begin, well, badly.

The “ad hoc committee” and “task force” idioms in higher education translate slower governance processes into accelerated collaborations for change. Their work, in semi-governed and temporary structures, incu-

bates innovations needed now. But how do they work, and more importantly, why do they work?

None of these temporary structures, to my knowledge, flies totally beyond the radar of some university official or governance body. They are not anti-governance. Rather, they press the usually deliberately glacial pace of higher education decision-making, especially in times of wariness or resistance. Consider their crucial roles in early traction for Emory’s Cre-

ativity and the Arts Initiative, African-American Studies, the Transforming Community Project, and the Emory-Tibet Partnership. Urged to life by different constituencies of students, staff, and faculty, these defined task groups contribute valuable energy and innovation in our life.

For example, a small, grassroots faculty group in Emory College started a study group on experiential pedagogies and community engagement, which generated a series of workshops that became the Theory Practice Learning (TPL) Initiative. The energy spread, shaping Oxford College’s Theory Practice Service Learning program and other community-engaged initiatives across the university. Emory’s initial policies related to sustainability arose from a similar group that is now integrated through a spring semester Academic Learning Community, Climate@Emory, sponsored by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence. The consistency with which higher education turns to these collaborating collectives suggests we take a second, serious look at their potential for engaged change in the academy and in relation to existent policies, procedures, and functions, including those of traditional governance. Because they work on different levels, with different resources and intentions, they energize agency for change through a constellation of players and structures, often crossing multiple campus governance arenas. The first stage of the Dissent, Protest, and Community Task Force began with a small university-wide group created in response to the April 2011 student arrests. When the University Senate approved their statement of Emory’s fundamental commitments to dissent, protest, and community, the work then shifted to an implementation group within regular governing and administrative bodies.

Adaptive, semi-governed structures
A simple taxonomy of these groups further clarifies their adaptive potential for engaged change in the academy and in relation to existent governance procedures and processes.

1. University-initiated: receives general access to school-wide communication, space, and data. Their reports are high profile. The Committee on Class and Labor, appointed in re-

sponse to relatively recent demonstrations against Sodexo, studied university contracts and interviewed workers and supervisors across the campus. After public communications and presentations to the University Senate and others, their 50-recommendation report is now being implemented with oversight by the University Senate.

2. Focused on a specific research, service, or teaching agenda: begins with less public notoriety and often less structural support. The Center for Community Partnerships (CFCP) grew, relatively quietly, through several iterations from early TPL roots. Not quite twenty years after TPL began, a university-wide task force proposed that community-engaged scholarship, research, and teaching across all schools be better coordinated and supported through what we today call the CFCP. Regenerating and innovating forms of research, teaching, or service alliances, this type can work with relatively little public communication until a formed program is rolled out.

3. Responds to terrain shifts in the broader world of higher education: Think initial stages of groups supporting minor-

ity, ethnic, and/or differently abled students, staff, and faculty. These incubators include first thoughts toward our current Commission on the Liberal Arts, digital initiatives, and pedagogies attuned to internationalization. Students often lead these, just as Wendy Rosenberg and Debbie Genzer started Volunteer Emory in the early 1980’s. Emory medical students have successfully organized and lobbied state gov-

ernments through this third type of group, accomplishing major goals for increased medical access for children and im-

igrants. The current China-Tibet student group encourages a dialogue-based approach to campus life, which may impact curriculum development.

Could any single governance structure hold these groups accountable? How might their purposes find even richer exposure and engagement? Let me begin the conversation.

At issue is clarity and stability, the structuring glues of governance, which these groups creatively smudge and weaken because they work in-between. They embody multiple constituencies willing to come together to stretch, resist, and complement existent policies, procedures, and functions, including those of traditional governance. Because they work on different levels, with different resources and intentions, they energize agency for change through a constellation of players and structures, often crossing multiple campus governance arenas. The first stage of the Dissent, Protest, and Community Task Force began with a small university-wide group created in response to the April 2011 student arrests. When the University Senate approved their statement of Emory’s fundamental commitments to dissent, protest, and community, the work then shifted to an implementation group within regular governing and administrative bodies.

In-between: problems and possibilities
Problems can arise when these groups grow averse to conversations with governing bodies. Often unfamiliar with administrative policies and procedures, these borderland groups get frustrated when a governance body or leader bristles over a sudden “ask” for last-minute funding or complex data. From a different angle, many of us have opened the Emory Report or Emory Wheel and muttered, “How come I never heard they were meeting?” or, “Who made these recommendations?” We are and our representatives intentionally left out? From a last perspective, rarely does an individual or small group successfully lobby to become a group of the third type above, just to serve their own interests. In my thirty-

plus years at Emory and around a number of these committees and task forces, such groups may initially flash, but without broader faculty, staff, and student support, they fizzle.

Where are the possibilities? I suggest legitimized cooperation and leveraged complementarity would finally and best turn the usefulness wheels of these groups. They can be positive partners of innovative and integrative change in research, teaching, and service. Often drawing more diverse constituencies together, energized by common cause, all these types include voices not usually drawn to the consistent and demanding duties of governance. I suggest that these quasi-structural spaces offer a unique place to introduce these voices and ideas into regularized governance. Providing multiple pathways for engaging in university life, they serve as core sites for thickened and broadened community-building and communication. Their work depends more on listening than talking, especially when initial energies surge and disrupt. If done well, that listening bolsters strategies for agency that shapes real
While immersed in the endless cycle of grad school reading and writing, I was frequently pulled into media production work, producing instructional DVDs and video content for the online journal Southern Spaces. I finished my Ph.D. in 2008 and served as a visiting instructor when the term “alt-ac” didn’t exist a generation ago. It first appeared in the academic work lexicon around 2010 as shorthand for “alternative academic”—a term that comprises a range of full-time positions involved in academic labor but not in the traditional roles of teaching and research. Primarily they are staff and administrative positions, and often their occupants are trained in traditional doctoral programs. The jobs are often technical in nature, but by some definitions they can also include academic affairs, student affairs, development and research, business affairs, and others. Alternative academics have likely been around in some shape or form since the beginning of higher education itself. But as colleges and universities have expanded and become more ambitious over the past generation, huge gaps have developed between what institutions want to offer and what traditional faculty and staff can provide. As a result, opportunities for alternative academics have increased significantly over the past few decades.

Few alternative academics can cite an early formative moment when they absolutely knew they had to pursue alt-ac. I say this not to denigrate the career choice, because I myself am a practitioner of the dark arts of alt-ac. I say it to recognize that many of us somehow found ourselves there at some point in our career trajectory. Some might have pursued the tenure-track teaching path but realized the increasing difficulty of securing tenure-track teaching gigs, so they decided to find different, non-teaching options within the academy. Or perhaps others started in the commercial IT or software development world and found working on projects within higher education to be a much more satisfying and decidedly less stressful career path.

My own career path to date has been a series of zigs and zags through education, music, technology, and filmmaking. In the late 1990s I completed an MFA in video and film and taught filmmaking at an art school for two years. Beckoned back to Atlanta by my brother, we started an independent record label and released more than two dozen records in five years. Sensing the collapse of the music business (and our own label), I went back to school for a doctorate in American studies at Emory. While immersed in the endless cycle of grad school reading and writing, I was frequently pulled into media production work, producing music instructional DVDs and video content for the online journal Southern Spaces. I finished my Ph.D. in 2008 and served as a visiting instructor at both Georgia State and Emory. I recognized my chances of finding a tenure-track teaching position to be slim, but I didn’t want to relocate my family out of Atlanta. I pursued freelance production and documentary work for a couple years before returning to Emory in 2010 to accept a position that fuses my scholarly training with my media production experience.

I can only speak from my own experience, but I see two key areas for alternative academics in the coming years: technology support and media production. Students and faculty now have huge expectations about the technological infrastructure that institutions need to provide in order to facilitate academic work. Twenty years ago, it was noteworthy if a university provided students with a university email address, but today students expect a wide range of academic technologies, including learning management and lecture capture systems, blogging platforms, online exhibition and portfolio tools, and robust digital library catalogs. In addition to keeping up with their own fields of expertise, we can’t expect faculty and students to keep up with all the latest technologies. Technology moves swiftly and is often complicated. That is why the instructional technologist has become increasingly important on campuses in recent years. An instructional technologist helps faculty and students navigate the shifting sands of digital tools and recommends the appropriate resources for a faculty member’s class or a student’s project.

Digital tools are transforming the whole shape of teaching and research. One of the primary factors driving this transformation is an increasing acceptance of the visual in pedagogy and scholarship. While the transformative power of MOOCs (“massively open online courses”) has undoubtedly been overhyped, the MOOC phenomenon demonstrates the appeal and effectiveness (if executed properly) of online video in education. The short-form video modules of MOOCs feature instructors lecturing alongside slides but can also feature a wide range of other visual materials, including animations, screen captures, and even media captured in the field. Of course, it’s not practical to expect faculty to have the skills and resources to produce media for online courses or for digital scholarship projects. To pull these initiatives off, faculty must rely upon people trained in media production.

I believe that alt-ac’s have helped bolster the legitimacy of digital scholarship. The debates about whether articles in electronic journals should count as tenure-worthy publications appear to me to be waning. And digital scholarship continues to challenge the hegemony of the academic article as the primary form of scholarship, opening up a whole range of new forms of scholarly inquiry, including visualizations, data mining, GIS projects, and documentary filmmaking. I think about the work I did with Professor Allen Tullos for the Southern Spaces “Poets in Place” project, in which we filmed poets reciting their work in locations where their poems are set, adding a whole new set of visual and performative dimensions to their work. I also think about the many professors I’ve assisted in developing a “flipped” classroom approach, helping them create and deliver online video lectures so that in-class time is more focused on collaborative, interactive, and dialectical forms of learning. The flipped approach reflects the “on demand” nature of learning today, while acknowledging that some forms of debate and inquiry are best handled in a face-to-face context.

I feel grateful to serve as an alternative academic at Emory in the realms of both technology support and media production. As an educational analyst in Academic Technology Services, I consult with faculty about the best ways to use video in teaching and research. I am also a lead video production specialist, assisting specific instructors and departments but also fielding inquiries from anyone who has a question about how to use video in an educational context. On the production side, I am part of the Emory Coursera team. We produced three online classes for the Coursera MOOC platform in 2013 and are set to produce six additional courses in 2014. Beyond Coursera, my production work is also expanding into flipped classroom content and material for projects coming out of the new Emory Center for Digital Scholarship. My managers have been supportive of the creative projects I’ve undertaken outside of Emory, from a tribute to pioneering blues piano that I worked on with my father-in-law, Chuck Leavell, to an in-the-works feature-length documentary about the Decatur-based gardener Ryan Gainey.

Now that there is a self-consciousness about “alt-ac” as a viable career path, people seem to be pursuing it directly and not just finding themselves ensnared within it at some point in their trajectories. Who knows? Maybe a generation from now it won’t seem so far-fetched for someone to say, “When I saw that amazing digital humanities project, I knew I wanted to be an alternative academic!”

The Rise of the Alt-Ac
How “alternative academics” are changing the nature of academic work
A National Perspective

The faculty continues to fall

In 2011, I published The Fall of the Faculty, pointing to the problem of accelerating administrative bloat at America’s colleges and universities. The book’s reception exceeded my expectations. Professors throughout the United States (as well as Canada and Europe) wrote to me with stories of mismanagement, administrative incompetence, bureaucratic waste and fraud, and the sheer arrogance and stupidity of their administrators. Many letter writers declared that I must have done my research on their campuses, since everything I described had happened there. Others declared that my examples were not extreme enough and offered stories from their own schools that often topped mine.

Everywhere, it seems, legions of administrators are engaged in strategic planning, endlessly rewriting the school mission statement, and “rebranding” their campus. All these activities waste enormous amounts of time, require hiring thousands of new “deanlets” and, more often than not, involve the services of expensive consultants. This rebranding business is so foolish that it is difficult even to caricature. With the help of consultants, the University of Chicago School of Medicine rebranded itself “Chicago Medicine,” while my own university’s medical school rebranded itself “Hopkins Medicine.” I hope these new brands came with consultants’ warranties.

Despite its reception from the professorate, I would have to say that The Fall of the Faculty has been a failure. One early reviewer in the Wall Street Journal predicted that as a call to arms the book was “bracing” but came too late, and he may have been correct. Two recent articles—one by Richard Vedder and published by Bloomberg News and the other by Scott Carlson in the Chronicle of Higher Education—point to the onward march of the administrative vandals across the wreckage of America’s campuses.

Vedder, one of America’s most distinguished educational economists, shows that in 2010-11, less than 30 percent of the $849 billion spent by American colleges and universities was spent on actual instruction. Indeed, for every $1 spent on instruction, $1.82 was spent on non-instructional matters including “institutional support”—that is, the care and feeding of deanlets. Vedder goes on to show that if the ratio of deanlets to professors in 2010 had been the same as in 1976, there would now be nearly 400,000 fewer deanlets whose combined salaries account for one-fourth of all tuition dollars paid by students and their parents in 2010. I guess financially hard-pressed parents can take solace in the fact that their children will have no difficulty finding deanlets with whom to work—though professors might be in short supply.

Carlson confirms this sad tale by reporting that increases in administrative staffing drove a 28-percent expansion of the higher education work force from 2000 to 2012. This period, of course, includes several years of severe recession, when colleges saw their revenues decline and many found themselves forced to make hard choices about spending. The character of these choices is evident from the data reported by Carlson. Colleges reined in spending on instruction and faculty salaries, hired more part-time adjunct faculty and fewer full-time professors, and yet found the money to employ more and more administrators and staffers.

Much of the ongoing growth in administration, it seems, is connected with “student services.” Colleges argue that contemporary students are constantly demanding more services, while the federal government is forcing colleges to provide disability services and other counseling services that were unknown even three decades ago. These claims are not completely false. Students do want services, but it is often the case that they are given services they neither want nor need. Every professor can point to examples of the foolishness and extravagance of student service activities on their campus. On many campuses the student services deanlets have organized a shadow curriculum of inane and trivial courses (my personal favorite is the “learning kitchen” at one school in the Washington area) that they encourage, and sometimes even require, students to take. My general impression of student services is that seldom in the course of human events has so little been done by so many at such great expense. Come to think of it, the Department of Education may be another example.

As to government mandates, certainly the federal government does mandate a variety of expensive activities on the part of universities. As economists Robert Martin and R. Carter Hill show in an excellent 2012 paper, however, external cost drivers such as federal or state mandates are far less important than internal or voluntary factors, particularly growth in administrative spending, in explaining rising costs on college campuses. Schools have chosen to spend more, not been forced. And what they have chosen to spend money on is the administrative superstructure, not the education of students.

I ended The Fall of the Faculty with a call to action, and I have been happy to see that on a growing number of campuses professors have begun to do battle with their administrators. Angry professors have succeeded in forcing the resignation of a president here or a provost there. Satisfying, though, as these faculty revolts may be, they are ultimately futile. Like third-world peasants who overthrow a tyrannical regime, rampaging professors are likely to be tyrannized again by the next bunch. Faculty need to learn to convert their anger into institution-building. Undertaking the construction of faculty senate budget committees to conduct regular audits of administrative practices might seem to be a good start.

Professors should also push for the enactment of state and federal legislation modeled on the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. “Sarbox” was designed, among other things, to curb insider dealing and irresponsibility on the part of corporate boards. The legislation does not apply to the non-profit sector but is badly needed there. Why not make boards responsible for the actions of the presidents, provosts, and deanlets they employ? Perhaps board members would become less tolerant of administrative misbehavior if it affected them. Why not prohibit board members from doing business with the university—a common practice today? If members of the board had no financial stake in the administration, they might be more ready to listen when the faculty pointed to administrative incompetence.

So, as Vedder, Carlson, and others have shown, the fall of the faculty continues, while the deanlets spread blight across the academic landscape. But there is always hope. The faculty can and should demand more information, greater financial oversight, and changes in university governance processes. At least for now, the university remains an institution worth fighting for.
The Enemy is Partly Us
Faculty governance beyond the right to say "No"

When asked to comment on Professor Ginsberg's article, I was less than enthusiastic about accepting. The issue of unsustainable increases in college costs and the associated relative increases in administrative costs are real concerns, and no faculty member wants to be even perceived as arguing for administrative bloat. I believe the topic requires faculty engagement, however, so I will comment, restricting my remarks to the situation at Emory.

Although we are not completely in “Pogo Land,” we are part of the way there, in that the enemy is partly us, the faculty. The first responsibility we must shoulder is that faculty governance at Emory is relatively weak. Weak faculty governance can allow administrative proliferation to occur, essentially unchecked. In addition, Emory has experienced unusual growth in the past few decades, rising rapidly from a relatively small regional university to one of the best national universities. We have benefited greatly from the generosity of various donors during that time, and although our resources have never been without limits, until the Great Recession we enjoyed relative abundance and were spared from making difficult financial decisions, either academic or administrative. This circumstance has made administrative growth both easier and less visible.

My view of effective faculty governance, at least in the Emory context, appears to differ from that of Professor Ginsberg, who states, "Professors have begun to do battle with their administrators. Angry professors have succeeded in forcing the resignation of a president here or a provost there." I don’t view “doing battle” as a constructive way forward, and his view plays into the model of faculty governance in which we as faculty exercise our rights to say “NO.” Ginsberg goes on to say, "Undertaking the construction of faculty senate budget committees to conduct regular audits of administrative practices might seem to be a good start." Again, his notion seems to be that we look at the budgets to say "NO" rather than to participate in their construction and strategic direction.

What would strong faculty governance look like in the context of dealing with administrative costs? I have argued previously that as faculty we need to adopt a model of "shared responsibility," so that, for example, we participate in developing sustainable models for university financing. It is not enough to look at administrative budgets and say "NO." Rather, we must participate in reshaping the university to reduce administrative costs where possible, at the same time enhancing support for our teaching and research. As part of that, we have to realize that old models of faculty governance are not compatible with a twenty-first-century Research I university. Those old models assume that all faculty have the time and interest to participate in faculty governance and can collectively express our will in faculty meetings of the whole. That model doesn’t work here and hasn’t for quite some time.

The solution, at least for our larger schools, has to be some form of a representative system, and elsewhere in this issue (pages 8 and 9), others discuss such progress in the School of Public Health and Emory College. To make real progress in tackling the issues of administrative costs, those governance structures have to work in collaboration with—and not in opposition to—their various administrations. In the past few years in my roles first in college faculty governance, and then in university faculty governance, I have gotten to know a number of administrators.

They realize the extreme pressures facing our budgets and also understand that Emory will ultimately be judged by the quality of its teaching, research, and clinical missions, not by how many people we have in administration. I believe Emory’s senior administrators are genuinely committed to working with faculty in a spirit of shared responsibility, with all of us realizing that difficult choices will need to be made. One of the pieces of strong faculty governance that we still need to figure out is how faculty participation in governance is valued. In almost all cases, faculty participation is over and above everything else the faculty member does. This model is especially problematic in schools in which the faculty are expected to provide most of their own financial support, regardless of their tenure status.

Faculty also bear some responsibility for increased administrative costs that sometimes we are the ones pushing for increased administration. One example occurred in the college several years ago. At that time, our model of freshman advising was not working well, and two alternate models were proposed: to have every faculty member advise three or four freshmen, or to hire professional advisors who would do all the freshman advising. In my view, this second proposal created precisely the problem of increasing the number of “deanlets” in the college. Yet many faculty argued strongly for that model. This situation illustrates very well the difficulty in which we faculty find ourselves: the pressure for increased research output and visibility has never been greater. Even so, in a college in which 90 percent of our revenue comes from our expensive undergraduate tuition, surely academic advising of freshmen should be done by faculty.

In addition to stopping unnecessary administrative functions (whatever those might be), one way to reduce administrative costs would be to increase the efficiency of administrative functions. The Business Practice Improvement (BPI) initiative is one way Emory is undertaking exactly that function, to improve administrative procedures and thereby reduce administrative costs. BPI has been extremely proactive in meeting with faculty across campus to investigate what is not working well and to explore future best practices. This process has revealed several truths. First, the best and most efficient way to engage with faculty would be through faculty governance structures. BPI has done that with both the Faculty Council and University Senate. At the school level, however, which in most cases lacks representative faculty governance, faculty have been consulted in ad hoc groups that are not necessarily representative. Secondly, we faculty can be as resistant to change as any other body of the university, and faculty pushback has been considerable with various BPI projects. Many faculty have professed ignorance at what BPI was doing, and we all can cite administrative changes made in the past that were unsuccessful. There also exists the very real concern that administrative efficiencies will be achieved in part on the backs of faculty who will be expected to do more administrative functions. Such fears have some historical precedence but should not be assumed applicable to all such efforts today. Constructive and thoughtful faculty governance that can participate in such changes and speak for the needs of faculty as processes are reorganized is critical and seems to be desired and welcome. Any realistic view of administrative reorganization is going to understand that no such change is easy. To make a real dent in administrative structures, we have to be willing to embrace change and to work with the process, ideally through our governance structures.

It is much easier to throw bombs, verbal or otherwise, but in my view, the best way forward for Emory is to have strong, engaged faculty participation in all aspects of the university. Such engagement comes with a cost, and the question we as faculty have to ask is whether we are prepared to participate, or support those who do.
Endnotes

Stereotype Threat

Chad Forbes
University of Delaware, at the 2013 Neuroethics Symposium, “Bias in the Academy: From Neural Networks to Social Networks,” December 10, 2013, sponsored by the Emory Center for Ethics and the Laney Graduate School

You’re probably aware that there are large differences between men and women in performance on tests like the GRE math test or the SAT math test. This is particularly likely when you get to the cream of the crop, the top performers. There are also racial and ethnic differences in performance on the SAT and GRE. Stereotype threat argues that to some extent that’s due to the fact that these groups are labeled with negative group stereotypes. . . . The first wave of stereotype threat research focused on who was vulnerable to stereotype threat, and what we found was a very simple answer: Everybody. Anybody who has a negative stereotype attributed to their group is susceptible to stereotype threat. This can range from women taking a driving test to a math test; to minorities or low socioeconomic status individuals; first-generation college students taking . . . diagnostic measures of intelligence; or even white males taking a math test when they think their scores are going to be compared to Asian males; or white males completing tests of athletic ability when they think their performance is going to be compared to African-American males; or even males in general, thinking they’re going to be taking some kind of test that’s diagnostic of their emotional intelligence or emotional skills.

Contemporary Challenges in Health Care

Christian Larsen
Dean of the Emory School of Medicine, from his talk, “Emory Medicine 2014,” November 13, 2013, sponsored by the School of Medicine

We face an aging population whose need has never been greater. Ten thousand people turn sixty-five every day, and that will happen for the next eighteen years. We’re being hit with a tidal wave of the diseases of aging: Alzheimer’s, heart failure, diabetes, obesity-related diseases. When our patients come to us now, you feel it in your clinics. They don’t come with a single problem any more; they come with multiple complex chronic diseases, greatly increasing the complexity and challenges to overcome and deliver care for them. . . . Reports from the Institute of Medicine I think really have fundamentally changed the way we practice medicine in this country. The patient safety imperative, recognized by the Institute of Medicine, says a hundred thousand preventable deaths each year in this country are due to unreliable care. The quality imperative demonstrated the chasm between what we could deliver as care and what we do deliver as care. Care is unreliable, it’s fragmented, it’s not patient-centered. And only 50 percent of the time do we practice best evidence-based care in our health system.

Interventions and Student Achievement

Gregory Walton
Stanford University, at the 2013 Neuroethics Symposium, “Bias in the Academy: From Neural Networks to Social Networks,” December 10, 2013, sponsored by the Emory Center for Ethics and the Laney Graduate School

Social psychology has seen an explosion of really extraordinary research that shows how very brief, precise interventions can have large, lasting effects on student achievement. . . . In all of these cases, these interventions are really just small things. None of these last more than an hour; some of them last fifteen or twenty minutes. Yet they have been shown in numerous trials to cause benefits on outcomes like student GPA over months and over years, up to as long as three years into the future. Many people look at this literature—often people in education who aren’t schooled in psychology—and they say, “Wow, they’re magic!” Then they take one of two turns: sometimes they say, “They’re magic tricks, they’re not really real, they’re not really serious, they’re not really genuine efforts to address the endemic problems that exist within our society and our education system. They’re not serious efforts at addressing the causes of inequality or poor achievement, they’re not worthy of serious consideration.” Other people say, “Ah, they’re magic bullets, they’re just what I’ve been waiting for, they’re my savior, they’re the savior of the American education system, so let’s do this everywhere immediately!” . . . These are not magic tricks and they’re not magic bullets, and they do have a role in our efforts to improve education in America.