

Opportunities Committee meeting; March 5, 2004

Attending:

Sarah Berga (SOM)
Robert Drazin (GBS)
Sharon Lewis (OX)
Marcia McDonnell (NHSN)
Bryan Noe (GSAS), Convener
Michael Owens (SOM)
Jill Perry-Smith (GBS)
Jesse Roman-Rodriguez (SOM)
Richard Rubinson (GSAS/College)
Darla Ura (NHSN)
James Zaidan (SOM)

Executive Summary/Recommendations:

- **Create a reward system that places value on teaching (all schools) and clinical practice (SOM) at levels equivalent to those placed on research.**
 - Create a 3 pronged route to tenure: research, clinical practice and teaching.
 - Provide release time for research and teaching
 - Create endowed teaching chairs or rotating teaching chairs
- **Provide release time or “slack time” for faculty innovation.**
 - development of a faculty “innovation fellowship” program to provide such time
 - program to be implemented at the departmental level
 - development of programs for clinical faculty to compensate for time away from clinical duties.
- **Diversify scholarship to include practice based scholarship as well as theory based scholarship**
- **Provide structured opportunities for cross communication between Schools and across departments**
- **Provide central coordination and oversight of research infrastructure and operational procedures**
- **Improve academic opportunities for clinical faculty**
 - provide release time for teaching for clinical faculty
 - create rotating teaching chairs for clinical faculty

- broaden tenure criteria for clinical faculty to account for differences among clinical practice, research, and teaching
- **Enhance technologic support for teaching, clinical practice and research**
 - improve information technology services and accounting for costs
 - grant administration and its accounting
 - record keeping on students, programs, faculty
 - general accounting procedures
- **As a means to enhance Emory's public image, publicize to prospective students the opportunities and outcomes provided by enrollment at Oxford College**
- **Develop accountability regarding the recommendations made by University committees; provide feedback on implementation of recommendations**
 - recommendations of university committees need to be taken seriously and be an important component of university decision making
 - too often the work of committees seems to be lost

Edited Transcript of Discussion

Dean Noe opened the meeting with a brief overview of President Wagner's objectives in appointing the opportunity subcommittees and their charge. The President's purpose in convening these faculty focus groups was to start the process of defining objectives and establishing priorities for the upcoming comprehensive campaign. Dr. Wagner asked that each of the "opportunities" groups define characteristics, needs and opportunities unique to Emory that should be accounted for during the planning process, especially issues and needs that span academic and administrative units.

Prior to this meeting, Dean Noe distributed to each committee member two planning documents, one from Emory College and the other from the School of Medicine Research Strategic Plan. He reminded everyone that his intention in distributing these documents was to provide some perspective on the kinds of things that two subsets of Emory faculty believe to be important and that their content was not meant to be an exhaustive compilation of ideas. He then projected on the video screen a condensed list of priorities taken from these two planning documents and asked the group for their thoughts on these points and for any additional input they might have from their own perspective, or from that of their respective school. The discussion that followed focused on several topics:

Balancing research with community outreach:

Dr. Mike Owens (SOM) was struck by the twin missions expressed in the College strategic plan: to become a destination university and to integrate more fully with the surrounding community. In his view, striving to be a destination university may be at direct odds with integration into the community. Dean Rubison (Graduate School) agreed that reflecting the interests in the local community is often not coincident with the academic mission of departments and programs, since our programs tend to be theoretical while community interests tend to be applied. Further, he noted that what draws scholars to a university is the scholarship, not the surrounding community. Owens added that in the School of Medicine the bottom line for evaluating faculty and departments is scholarship. Taking this into consideration, he wondered if it was realistic for Emory to set community service and scholarship as twin goals and noted that the University seemed to have an unclear picture of itself. Does it see itself as a meritocracy or as a participant in social planning?

Several other members of the committee, particularly those who were clinical faculty, saw the value in joining these two goals, since clinical programs depend on the surrounding community. Dr. James Zaiden (SOM) said that in seeking endowment funds, both scholarship and community service are of value. If the university can market itself as taking an active role in improving conditions in the community through its research, the university improves its ability to reach potential donors. Dr. Sharon Lewis (Oxford College) said she sees community outreach as an ethical issue, a matter of acknowledging Emory's moral concerns with and obligations to the community.

Diversity and scholarship:

Owens felt the link between diversity and scholarship as put forth in the College plan needed to be better clarified. He questioned the intent of the university in addressing this issue. Was its

aim to increase diversity in the student body or to increase intellectual diversity? If the former, he wondered if diversity necessarily improves scholarship. Sharon Lewis said she thought what was of most concern to the University with regard to diversity was addressing the composition of the student body. According to Lewis, in peer comparisons Emory performs poorly in this area. Furthermore by not giving this issue the attention it deserves, Emory has sent a message to the nation that we are here for only a certain type of student, a type not based on intellectual ability, but on ethnicity and finances. The university wants to correct this reputation and send the message that Emory wants to accept and integrate individuals from all ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds. However others noted that published peer comparisons rank Emory among the top Colleges for diversity of student body and faculty.

Regarding the link between scholarship and diversity, Lewis said that in producing world citizens, diversity on campus is essential because it brings global concern to the topics handled in the classroom and to other campus events. Dr. Marcia McDonnell (Nursing) emphasized Lewis' point by adding that diversity within the Nursing classroom brings to light differing perceptions in healthcare that are based in ethnic and cultural differences. Owens agreed with these arguments, but pointed out that today's scholar keeps ethnic and cultural perspectives in mind when conducting research or teaching. Is it necessary, then, to have a diverse student body in order to ensure that these differences are addressed in research and teaching?

Roman-Rodriguez (SOM) said he liked the statement in the College plan about attracting "the best and brightest students." While this statement is not purely about diversity, "best and brightest" implies diversity. In his view scholarship and diversity go together, but while it may be true that diversity does not necessarily improve scholarship, he feels that keeping an eye toward assuring diversity does not harm scholarship. Owens expressed concern that at Emory it might harm scholarship because of the tuition gap. Dean Noe agreed that until the tuition gap has been closed, the university can not be truly inclusive. Zaiden (SOM) and others agreed with Dean Noe on this point. Unless the university makes it financially possible for intellectually qualified individuals from all socio-economic and ethnic groups to attend Emory, an all inclusive increase in diversity cannot occur.

Dean Rubinson said it was important to distinguish diversity as an issue of student and faculty composition from integrating with the community in academic terms. As an example, he noted that because of the increased Hispanic population in Atlanta, one hears people say that Emory departments should focus on developing programs relevant to this population. This may initially sound appealing until you realize that Emory departments are theoretically oriented, faculty research is, and should be, directed by the latest theoretical developments; and there may be no necessary connection between theoretical advances in a field and community interests. Programs may be explicitly designed to connect with the community, such as our very successful Office of University-Community Partnership (OUCP), but such programs are different than the regular research program in most departments. They are intentionally applied.

Clinical faculty have very different, and much more practical, concerns about university – community relations. Dr. Sarah Berga (SOM) noted that there are cases of universities changing their entire nature in a positive manner by reaching out to their surrounding communities. Atlanta offers a lot in terms of possibilities for partnering, so finding some way to bring the research of the university and the needs of the community together in a way that would benefit

both should not be problematic. Furthermore, she warned that a university that ignores its community risks peril. Several ivy league schools are struggling at present because they didn't reach out to the general public in their immediate vicinities. Their physician training programs have weakened as a result of disassociation from the surrounding population. Yale is a prime example of the dangers of isolation. Yale turned a deaf ear to its indigent community because they did not want to become identified as a provider of healthcare to indigents. Paradoxically, now Yale is the only place at which indigents in the immediate area near the school can seek medical care.

There may be a potential similarity to a growing problem with Emory HealthCare. People in the surrounding communities hesitate to seek health care at Emory Hospital and Emory Clinic. They tend to turn to other area hospitals and healthcare facilities first because of the inordinate amount of time from initial contact until one can be scheduled for an appointment to see a physician at Emory. Roman added that very little is ever done to address the clinical side of things in the School of Medicine. The focus is research, not clinical practice. Education is also short changed in favor of research. As Noe and Lewis pointed out, unfortunately, education doesn't generate the money or recognition that excellence in research does. Others suggested that in order to shift the focus to include more emphasis on clinical practice and education, the reward system within the University must change. A system based on research dollars is not going to prompt an emphasis on excellence in either teaching or clinical practice. Roman and Zaiden agreed that the value placed on education is strikingly different in the College and SOM. In its strategic plan the College recognizes the importance of teaching and attempts to address and reward it, but the SOM makes no such attempt. Everyone agreed that unless the university pays better attention to its educational programs, it will become less successful in fulfilling its core mission.

Countering this argument, Owens reminded everyone that as a Research I university we have a much stronger reputation than our peers for teaching and being available to students. Rubinson agreed that Emory does have a good reputation among its peers and past and present students for achieving a strong balance between research and teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This reputation for balancing teaching and research is a strength that Emory should draw attention to. Zaiden suggested that perhaps Emory needed to discover the reasons students and peer universities think teaching is a strength at Emory and use this information to appeal to prospective donors. Other committee members suggested that perhaps it is time for taking the balance that has been achieved a step further so that teaching is acknowledged by the university as a scholarly enterprise that is just as valuable to the intellectual life of the university as research, and not merely an obligation that has a much lower priority than research. Knowledge generation and its dissemination should be considered as being of equal import. This concern with teaching not being given sufficient value, however, is much more an issue in the professional schools than in Arts and Sciences.

Integrating the College and the SOM:

Looking at the planning documents from the College and the SOM, several committee members noted that the language used in the College plan sounded insular, reflecting a growing divide between the College and the SOM. Bridging this divide should be a core area of concern for Emory.

Owens asked the committee what in the SOM contributed to amplifying this gap. In Zaiden's view the divide is a matter of time, money and space. Shortcomings in these areas need to be addressed in order to facilitate integration between the College and the SOM. Other persons suggested that the route to tenure needs to be three pronged: research track, clinical track, education track. The University needs to find ways to reward teaching, beginning with ways to release people from clinical duties in order to focus on teaching. Others suggested that some Medical School faculty need support in refining their teaching skills.

Dean Noe wondered if there was a way to provide hard money for release time for teaching. Currently, faculty are expected to juggle teaching with service and research duties. Owens suggested establishing endowed chairs for teaching, named outstanding teaching positions, or rotating teaching chairs as examples of ways to provide release time for teaching. The creation of faculty positions that place a primary focus on teaching might appeal to potential donors.

Rubinson asked if the SOM had a system in place that allows them to hire more faculty without increasing the clinical load. Zaiden said that usually additional faculty are hired to meet increased clinical demands. Berga added that lack of office space for faculty is a factor that must be taken into account when hiring additional faculty.

In the context of release time for teaching, Drazin noted the lack of "slack time" for faculty. All the best business organizations have funded slack time – time which is used to encourage creativity. The University makes no provision for slack time. What the University does provide, sabbaticals, is not substantial enough. Owens suggested that if this idea is to be funded with external funds, it might be helpful to attach another name to it other than "slack time". "Slack time" could have negative connotations for the general public. Lewis suggested something more compelling than "opportunities" for the title, something that would sound tangible, concrete and productive. Noe suggested calling them "Faculty Innovation Fellowships." Drazin suggested something along the lines of the IBM Senior Fellows Program for a name. Lewis and others stressed the need for some sort of selection criteria for determining who would be awarded these faculty innovation lines. Additionally Drazin emphasized the importance of slack time being administered by departments and programs and not centrally administered. Everyone strongly agreed that such a program would dramatically improve faculty life in the departments of all schools in the university.

The value of cross institutional focus groups:

Zaiden commented how helpful this particular meeting (opportunities subcommittee) had been for making meaningful contact with faculty from other areas of the university. He pointed out that providing this sort of forum for exchange among faculty is something that Emory does not do often enough. Furthermore, what efforts the University has made in the past to provide opportunities for cross communication have not been developed sufficiently well to be beneficial. Lewis cited the LUCE Seminars and the Teaching Commission as two events in which she participated which were eye opening just in terms of learning what faculty life is like in other areas, and allowing her to make scholarly connections with faculty across the university. In addition, she stressed the important role these two opportunities played in presenting her with ideas for new research projects. Owens brought up the idea of a faculty club as one means to encourage cross talk, an idea that has surfaced during discussions about creating intellectual community in previous years. Lewis did not think a faculty club would be helpful in promoting

cross disciplinary communication. In her opinion, the busy schedules of faculty necessitate a more structured environment for cross disciplinary communication than a space dedicated for that purpose would provide. Creating a space for meeting does not necessarily bring people together. It leaves communication to chance meetings. However, gatherings thoughtfully coordinated on a regular basis, perhaps once a year, would go much further in promoting the type of intellectual exchange that encourages an expansion of scholarship and research. Roman suggested that rather than construct a faculty club, a better use of University funds would be to bring together groups of faculty a few times a year for discussion of issues to which everyone present could relate.

Central Coordination of Infrastructure and Operational Procedures:

Dr. Berga cited that faculty in her department who are housed at Grady complain that they don't get enough opportunities to further their professional education. The physical separation of the two facilities, Emory Hospital and Grady, create a natural chasm that is hard to bridge. Exacerbating this sense of separation, are the difficulties with information technology encountered by personnel at both Emory and Grady. Currently there is no equipment available at Grady to allow conduction of virtual Grand Rounds. Email communications between individuals at Grady and those at Emory are problematic as well, compounding the sense of isolation created by the physical distance between the two facilities. Roman said he does not experience this with his faculty who are located at satellite facilities. Others present confirmed that this type of problem is not evenly spread across departments and programs. The cost of IT services is shouldered by individual departments. Those with experienced technology staff in place to support their needs, or those departments with the funds to establish the services and hire the staff needed don't experience the problems that other departments and programs without financial means to do so experience. Yerkes is yet another example of a unit of the university that does not have the IT services it needs in order to be fully productive. Berga added that rectifying this problem would have tremendous appeal to potential donors. The myriad uses of technology in education and medicine, virtual ORs, virtual grand rounds and virtual classrooms to name a few, are at the cutting edge and would thus carry a certain allure that education or needs associated with education would not typically convey.

A similar problem experienced by many departments is the lack of a central oversight with regard to grants. Each grant must have an administrator, but staff and staff time are not always available to shoulder this responsibility. The lack of central coordination and oversight is risky. As Berga points out, in the case of offices put in place to help with information technology and the research administration needs of departments, the problem is often one of too many requests and not enough funds to meet the assistance requested by all departments.

Drazin said the School of Business experiences the same problems previously expressed by others, outdated technology that doesn't address the requirements of essential tasks or work load. Admissions is a problem area for the Business School. In addition to problems with electronic communications, grants administration, and admissions, others cited problems with the accounting system and record keeping. Rubinson agreed that Emory's infrastructure is lagging. It hasn't kept up with the growth in research or teaching. The University needs to address its shortcomings in IT infrastructure and research infrastructure. Zaiden feels that improvement in these two areas represent keystones to Emory's advancement. Without the infrastructure, how

can improvements be made in teaching and expansion of research. Inadequate infrastructure hinders productivity in all areas.

Drazin stressed that faculty should be included on any steering committee charged with addressing the problems with IT infrastructure. Others strongly agreed with this suggestion, stating that it makes sense to have the user identify needs to professionals who translate those needs into solutions. Sharon Lewis added that IT staff are just as frustrated by these problems as faculty because IT is not budgeted sufficient funds to meet the demands being made. Zaiden acknowledged that currently the overhead for IT is enormous, even so, it still does not function as it should.

Oxford College; a unique Emory asset:

Owens asked how many Research I universities could boast of having a feeder college like Oxford. He felt this was a strength that Emory should draw on. Lewis agreed that it was a unique arrangement among Research I universities and a positive one, but didn't know how Emory could spin this attribute to its benefit. Oxford is generally thought of as offering an opportunity to those students not prepared fully for academic requirements at Emory. Berga suggested focusing on the fact that Oxford caters to students who for one reason or another want the experience that a smaller campus provides: more contact with faculty, closer student community, etc. Lewis agreed that this facet of the Oxford experience could work to Emory's benefit. In terms of a rising consumerism, an attitude which prospective students and their parents bring more frequently to the college decision making process, smaller campuses are considered a better bargain since they are known for being very successful in terms of student outcomes.

Outcomes assessments:

Lewis strongly suggested that University institute some system of accountability with regard to the findings and outcomes of these meetings and others like them. She pointed out that often a lot of work is put into committees by faculty and little is ever communicated to the community about whether the findings were applied and how.