And Gladly Would We Learn and Gladly Teach

Editing The Herald has brought home to me the inspiring and even dizzying diversity of the faculty at Temple: the range and depth of our different areas of expertise; the differences in our theories and methods for producing knowledge; the differences in the narratives that have brought us to Temple, inflected by our diverse backgrounds; and the differences in the conditions of our employment.

What, then, unifies us as a faculty? There are, of course, important commonalities in our pursuits as researchers and our ethos as scholars, whether we are on the tenure track or not. But the one thing that unites the largest number of us is teaching, and, as Chaucer says in the line I borrow for my title, we should do it gladly, despite the frustrations that come with it. When I find myself explaining to curious (or just plain skeptical) folks just what an English professor does with his or her time, I certainly talk about my scholarship, but since the great majority of my discussions are with people outside my field, I have to be a teacher in those moments, too. When I speak directly about my teaching, I usually feel my audience warming more to my dis-

Best in Show: The Limits of Gentrifying Urban Schools

By Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara, Assistant Professor, Urban Education/Teaching and Learning

It is difficult for Philadelphians to be optimistic about the future of public education these days. Even for a city accustomed to doomsday budget scenarios, this year’s fiscal crisis is staggering. The School District of Philadelphia, with a total budget of $2.1 billion, faces a shortfall of $300 million. In an effort to close this gap, the district has shuttered dozens of schools, laid-off thousands of employees, and made previously unimagined cuts to school-level programming and staffing. The consequences of these cutbacks were apparent when schools opened this September: in many schools, classrooms are severely overcrowded, secretaries and assistant principals are gone, materials are in short supply, key staff (such as guidance counselors and nurses) are dividing their time between several schools, and arts and other programs have been scaled back or cut altogether. And, perhaps most disheartening of all, district officials are forecasting yet another huge budget shortfall for the next school year.

An Interview with Dean Anderson

On October 9, I sat down to interview Temple University’s new Dean of the College of Education, Gregory M. Anderson. I thank him for his time and his thoughtful responses. I think his answers are interesting enough to warrant being published in full, but you can jump to specific topics by clicking on one of the buttons below:

Temple’s Mission and Bridging the Research-Policy Divide
How Temple Should and Shouldn’t Be Involved in Public Schools
Truly Recognizing Diversity and Ensuring Educational Access
Evaluating Good Teaching: Disciplinary Limits, Competencies, and Finding Good Metrics
Tenure, Colleagues on the Teaching/Instructional Track, and Valuing Teaching
Conclusion: Plans for Research and Teaching

Temple’s Mission and Bridging the Research-Policy Divide

Steve Newman (SN): I guess I’m an emissary from the Faculty Senate and The Faculty Herald, so first let me welcome you to Temple! What drew you to Temple from the University of Denver?

Greg Anderson (GA): There are many reasons. First, I’m excited about the historical mission of Temple University; it’s very much aligned with what I
An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 1

personally feel education can do under the best of circumstances, which is to transform students’ lives. That was really attractive to me. Second, the College has so many strong faculty and they have so many assets. It really is a plum of a job. As a dean coming into a situation, you would ask: “What kind of strengths would you like to have in an organization?” And you always start with human capital. I felt that the faculty were really strong, and I felt that they were open, open to change and that they wanted to help improve the College. Third, the students. I listened to President Theobald at his inauguration. He shared demographics in regards to our students, and I was really struck by the fact that Temple is the largest recipient of low-income students in the entire region, and others pale in comparison. If I heard the Chair of the Board correctly, I think he said that the number of low-income students at Temple was larger than the number from all the other area schools combined. That’s really attractive to me. I have that background myself. I’m a first-generation college student, and because my parents came from South Africa, and I know what that is like, and they know what it’s like, actually, to struggle for educational opportunities.

And then Philadelphia. I really missed the East Coast. I like Philadelphia a lot; I went to the City University of New York, where I got my PhD in Sociology; I got tenure at Columbia University. I really love the East Coast. I like Philly: It’s a gritty town, it’s a real town, and it has real passion. I also think it’s a city on the upswing. So those are all the reasons.

SN: When people ask me what Temple is about, I cite that mission as well. I answer that it’s something like CCNY—[City College of New York]—a place where first-generation college students have gone—with a more robust commitment to research and an array of strong professional schools. I know of colleagues here who could certainly get jobs elsewhere, and they stay here because of that history and mission. It’s not because they are full of some missionary zeal; they’re properly aware of the complexities that are a topic of your research. I think that mission is at the heart of this place, and it’s something that distinguishes Temple.

GA: It does. And you can see it in the research the faculty do, and in the way they teach. You don’t always see that sense of mission in other places. You’re absolutely right. Everything that I have experienced so far has reaffirmed that this was the right decision.

SN: I want to ask you about one thing that may be one of your priorities. I was reading one of your recent articles in The Review of Higher Education where you point to a troubling disjunction between what schools of education focus on in their research and projects and the issues that policy centers and institutes focus on. Since you were a program officer at the Ford Foundation, you’re particularly well-positioned to perceive this gap. One of the things that doesn’t seem to inform how policy centers operate is critical race studies, which is quite important on the academic side. This seems to me particularly important because of the growing importance of foundations setting policy—not just the Ford Foundation, but also the Lumina Foundation and Gates.

GA: Absolutely.

SN: Another phenomenon is that we’re looking toward more intervention from the states. I think you’ve probably already read the Pennsylvania Post-Secondary Ed report, and the faculty were not, let us say, very present in that effort. Sorry for the long preamble: is it one of your priorities to help us figure out how to figure out how to bridge that gap between policy and very vibrant academic work?

GA: It is. I think we need to widen the scope and engage in the arenas where the decision-making is happening. Both universities and colleges should also pay attention to decisions that impact our students and impact us. One way I think we can improve in that regard is to extend the notion of what constitutes impact in research and scholarship. In particular, in colleges of education there has always been a complicated relationship between research and scholarship because education is a field, not a discipline. We have folks coming from the disciplines, but it’s a field. As a result, when we’re looking at evaluating the quality of their work, we’ve always been in a somewhat nebulous position in relation to disciplinary identities. And I honestly believe that this diversity of expertise is a strength, and that we should own it.

GA: I’m not opposed to that under certain circumstances, and in certain subfields or disciplines that makes perfect sense. But impact can be measured in multiple ways, and I think one way to measure it is to ask: Do we have an influence on educational practices and policies that are being designed? Is research being used to make decisions? Often, truthfully, policy makers are data-proof.

How do we increase our impact in this way? I believe that we put ourselves in positions in the context of organizations and partnerships in which we take the assets that we have—and our ultimate asset is two-fold, our students and faculty—and we ask what do we do that our partners need that they don’t necessarily have the skill-set to do themselves. One is research, but we’re going to have to change the nature of some of the research that we do so to be relevant and have impact in the field.

SN: We’ll have to make the research look to them like something they could use.

GA: Yes. And sometimes it’s quick-and-dirty research. One way is to enter into research consortia arrangements in which we help school districts make good decisions. We’re trying to do that now in Philadelphia. That may mean working with Penn or Drexel, and we should do that as well. Another piece of that is helping faculty understand that there are many ways to do that. You might start with quick-and-dirty research that informs a decision or policy, but then gives you inroads into large databases and a relationship with the school district that allows you then to build your scholarly and research career.

How Temple Should and Shouldn’t Be Involved in Public Schools

GA: I think we should collaborate with the school district and not just with public schools but also charter schools when they are fulfilling a mission that is aligned with ours. And we should be humble about the way that we partner. We should recognize that we don’t have all the answers; however, we have strengths that can add value. We should figure out how we can work together. Those are the ways in which we can bridge this gap between research and policy.

We also have to engage with legislators. We have to. Traditionally, universities and colleges have had this notion that they have the luxury of being able to operate in a way so that the things we believe don’t necessarily have an impact.

SN: We’re insulated, for better and for worse. Actually, we’re not as insulated as we sometimes think we are.

GA: Right, and so we can take a principled stand. And we won’t have an impact on the legislators, but we leave the room feeling good about ourselves. I think we need to be strategic about the way we engage. We need
Protecting Faculty at Temple: The Aftermath of the October 29th Assault in Anderson Hall

By Steve Newman, Editor

Like every other Temple faculty I’ve spoken with, I was deeply disturbed by the brutal attack on Prof. Gopal Veeraswamy, an 81-year old faculty member in Mosaic, on October 29th in the middle of the day while he was in his office in Anderson Hall. To discuss the case and the university’s response, I emailed Acting Executive Director of Public Safety, Charles Leone, and in his reply he generously suggested that we talk face-to-face to explore these issues in a more substantive way.

In response to my first question, about the health of Prof. Veeraswamy, Mr. Leone said that Public Safety was adhering to the family’s request for privacy. As for the alleged perpetrator, Darryl Moon, how he got into Anderson is still under investigation and he had not at the time of my exchanges with Mr. Leone on November 7th and 9th entered a plea on the many charges against him, including aggravated assault, robbery, theft, and making terroristic threats.

The question now before us is how to increase security without becoming Fortress Temple, an outcome that Mr. Leone agreed would be unacceptable both because of the inconvenience it would pose to students, faculty, and staff and because we need to remain accessible to our neighbors.

An attack like this in an academic building is extremely rare, Executive Director Leone told me, and showed me statistics from the last year that indicated that no other crime of this sort has happened this year, and he could not remember a similar case. Most of the crime in university buildings—and it occurs more often in dorms than in academic buildings—is property crime, and violent crime typically occurs between students. Through October, he informed me, crime is down 13% overall and 20% on campus, though, Mr. Leone added, “When something like this happens to a professor, it’s not like people feel 20% safer if we tell them that. The reality if what people see, what they feel, and what they know.”

So what steps does Temple plan to take to enhance security? President Theobald has announced that security is being integrated into the campus Master Plan, which will be released in early 2014. But what changes have already been made, and what is being planned in the near term?

The first task is to deal with the problematic architecture of Anderson and Gladfelter, referring here not to their shocking ugliness and sterility, but the challenge their multiple entrances and exits pose to security. To control access through the misbegotten plaza above the ground floor, officers have been posted to ensure that no one gets in when someone goes out; signage has also been added to discourage this. An extra security person has already been added to handle the increased flow during rush periods. “It’s tricky,” Mr. Leone observed, since Anderson “was made mostly for administrative use and faculty offices... and then we had the classroom wing added on and we’re using space in the upper floors for classrooms, too.” Public Safety has met with Facilities Management and the Fire Marshall to see “what we can do within the code to make things more secured.” In the next few months, the plan is to add alarms to the doors leading to the plaza, and for the exits in Anderson that lead directly to the street, the plan is to make them “delayed egress,” which means that they will open only if the fire alarm is tripped or with enough pressure for a certain amount of time, but this will trip an alarm. Mr. Leone assured me that the plan is in its final stages, and these new entrances and exits will mean that there will be only one regular entrance and exit in Anderson and Gladfelter. This may lead to increased traffic, but in this case it seems a necessity to make these buildings safer.

This, according to Mr. Leone, is Public Safety’s aim for all academic buildings—“single entrance points and all of the other doors to be for emergency egress only.” When I brought up the swipe system at the Law School, mentioned by a colleague on the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, Mr. Leone said that installing such a system campus-wide is “our goal. We did a test program in the Tech Center for the past few years…. It seems to be working well. We’re looking for a similar set up in all the buildings where we can have you come in, swipe your ID card, and your picture comes up on the screen. It also gives you a reminder, please remember your id next time. And the security guard sees that picture and can verify the student’s identity. We do something similar in the residence halls, but we also want to bring it to the academic buildings.”

One building that has concerned me is Barton Hall, given that there is no security at any of the many entrances and given that the labs there house many dangerous materials. Mr. Leone informed me that he has a roving security person patrolling Barton and that they have not had a single incident of security there. Mr. Leone said that they have invested in public safety in a meaningful way: “In the last year that indicated no other crime of this sort the sanctions are of 15% down, and it occurs more often in dorms than in academic buildings—is property crime, and violent crime typically occurs between students. Through October, he informed me, crime is down 13% overall and 20% on campus, though, Mr. Leone added, “When something like this happens to a professor, it’s not like people feel 20% safer if we tell them that. The reality is what people see, what they feel, and what they know.”

Another topic that has been raised at the FSSC and elsewhere is what faculty should do if a student becomes aggressive in class or in one’s office. While the student Code of Conduct mentions the sanctions for student-on-student aggression, we on the FSSC have found nothing dedicated to protecting faculty. Mr. Leone encourages faculty to focus on dealing with troubled students before they act out, directing them to the materials on civility put out by the Tuttleman Counseling Center and encouraging them to contact their department chairs or the counseling center or Public Safety if they see any warning signs. I then asked what faculty should do if they miss these signs—or if there are none—or if their prior attempts at intervening fail and a student becomes belligerent or actually assaults them. Could panic buttons or the like be installed in classrooms? Given that wifi is now available all over campus, Mr. Leone said that instead Public Safety is considering an application for smart phones that would allow a faculty member to instantly contact the police with the push of a button. Of course, Mr. Leone agreed, faculty would need to keep their cell phones charged; I would add that this also assumes that all faculty have such phones—probably true of the vast majority of us, but almost certainly not true of everyone—and that the wifi is operative.

I also asked Mr. Leone about the possible effects of Decentralized Budgeting on security—he feels pretty sure that it will lead to no ill effects—and, at the suggestion of one of my colleagues, queried him about the organizational structure at Temple, which lacks a Vice President for security. Mr. Leone agreed with this and noted that when they recruit officers, they make sure they see any warning signs. I then asked what faculty should do if they miss these signs—or if there are none—or if their prior attempts at intervening fail and a student becomes belligerent or actually attacks them. Could panic buttons or the like be installed in classrooms? Given that wifi is now available all over campus, Mr. Leone said that instead Public Safety is considering an application for smart phones that would allow a faculty member to instantly contact the police with the push of a button. Of course, Mr. Leone agreed, faculty would need to keep their cell phones charged; I would add that this also assumes that all faculty have such phones—probably true of the vast majority of us, but almost certainly not true of everyone—and that the wifi is operative.

We also should avail ourselves of the resources that our Public Safety office provides for faculty. Mr. Leone is particularly keen that we know of The Walking Escort program on Main Campus. From 4:00 p.m to 6:00 a.m., faculty members on Main Campus can be furnished with a security escort from any location within this area—East-West: 6th to 16th Street; North-South: Oxford Avenue-Dauphin Street. For phone number and more info, see http://www.temple.edu/safety/events/documents/Walkprogrampub_000.pdf. Faculty on the Health Sciences Campus can call 204-1234 for a police escort.
Prefatory Note
I have for some time wanted to engage students and faculty in a dialogue about how we evaluate teaching, and the decision to release some Student Feedback Form data to students spurred me to contact Jerry Iannelli, the Opinion Editor of our student newspaper. Happily, he was game for a discussion, and I then recruited Profs. Rebecca Alpert and Deborah Stull, who won last year’s Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. Jerry secured the participation of one of his columnists, Grace Halloran.

Our assignment was to write brief pieces—around 800 words—about what we might mean when we identify good teaching and bad teaching. As with my dialogue last year with Temple News staff members, we would then read all of each other’s essays and gather for a one-hour conversation. Unfortunately, Grace couldn’t make it, but I am grateful to her for contributing her essay and to Rebecca, Deb, and Jerry for their essays and for participating in the follow-up dialogue. Finally, both newspapers would publish some version of this discussion and link to each other’s publication. Jerry’s column can be found here.

In the first issue next Spring, Dr. Pamela Barnett, Director of our Teaching and Learning Center will contribute a commentary on these essays and dialogue as well as a brief bibliography on teaching: I have also been in contact with the Student Feedback Form Committee about how to best present their data in The Herald. I also invite our readers to contribute to this discussion through letters to the Editor. Please contact me at snowman@temple.edu.

Rebecca Alpert, Professor, Department of Religion and Chair of The Faculty Herald Editorial Board

GOOD TEACHING: Asking What Will Stick After the Course is Over
Good teaching demands that instructors ask ourselves this question: “A year (or more) after this course is over I hope students will ___________.” Research tells us that students will retain only a small fraction of the information they learn, so hoping they’ll remember details of what they studied a year before is not a good way to fill in the blank. It’s up to us to make sure we set realistic goals for what we want students to take away from our classes; things we believe will have lasting value. I hope that students remember one particular moment when they encountered the unexpected and it shifted the way they looked at the world: seeing the wild and beautiful murals at the Church of the Advocate might cause them to look at art more closely and encourage their own creativity; participating in a lively (and provocative) classroom debate about female genital cutting might make them realize that there is more than one credible way to view a controversial issue; doing research for an oral presentation on contemporary Hindu pilgrimage holy days might pique their curiosity about another culture and maybe even their desire to travel. But even more important to me is what those moments allow: students become aware of assumptions they had when they walked into the classroom and reevaluate whether to hold on to or change those assumptions. That’s really what I hope students will be inspired to do for years after.

BAD TEACHING: Forgetting to Question Our Own Assumptions
Teaching goes awry when instructors don’t remember that we, too, come to the classroom with assumptions that need to be noticed and sometimes challenged. In the course I teach for graduate students earning a certificate in higher education teaching, I ask them to recall their favorite teacher. They respond with wonderful stories about the instructor who changed their lives, made them excited about their subject and made them want to become teachers themselves. We often teach as if our students were all just like us. Challenging the assumption that all of our students are inherently interested in learning what we teach or want to be professors just like us makes us think more about making the classroom a place where those who aren’t that interested in the content might pick up tools (seeing the world around them in new ways, developing comfort with public speaking, etc.) that will stay with them after the course is over. We also go awry when we fall prey to the assumption that all students are like us in other ways as well. As a student I hated taking short-answer tests. Assuming that everyone shared my dislike I never gave exams or quizzes, until one student pointed out to me that she rather liked the opportunity to study for such tests and got much satisfaction out of doing well on them. This student really hated being judged only on the criteria I found enjoyable and meaningful—public speaking, writing reading responses, and doing research. Clearly, my assumption was not helpful to her or students like her. Now I include some short answer tests in my courses. And I try to pay more attention to the assumptions I make, applying my new awareness that while something may have been true for the student I was, it’s not necessarily true for the students I teach.

Jerry Iannelli, Opinion Editor, The Temple News

GOOD TEACHING: Stressing How to Learn Over More Information
Throughout my time in college, the best professors have always been the ones that value intellectual curiosity over informational accuracy. The best ones have lauded me for sticking to my guns, praised me for delving deeper into a book than anyone else in the class and debated respectfully with me on matters that we disagreed upon. They have valued my opinions over their own.

That is to say, they’ve cared more about teaching me “how” to learn than about teaching me information.

They have almost exclusively been teachers for General Education classes, courses all students are required to take, but ones in which too few students pay attention. All students, be they STEM majors or experts in classic Norwegian literature, must exit college more adept at critical thinking and problem solving than they were when they first stepped onto Temple’s campus. Of course, nursing students should always be able to alphabetically recite the names of human bones at will, but they must also be able to improvise on the fly when a patient walks into the emergency room with his or her hand trapped in a fax machine.

Case in point: Without naming names, my Mosaics I and Mosaics II professors provided drastically different windows into the pedagogical world.

For lack of a better word, the former insisted on ramming her interpretation of Sigmund Freud down our throats, cramming her opinions into our brains in the form of heavily biased "reading checks" each day. Freud, a man hotly debated up until today, had in her eyes attained enlightenment and could not be debated critically. Dissenting opinions were treated with a visible sneer of disrespect and accusations that we hadn’t read the text “thoroughly enough.”

The latter professor instead sat patiently, listened more than he spoke and waited for chances to ask follow-up questions that would keep students speaking for the entirety of the class. We could vehemently hate Thomas More’s Utopia or the works of Galileo as long as there was some logical punch behind our thoughts. The instructor held us to a high standard, and was visibly disappointed if he found that one of us had skipped out on the day’s reading.

“I care about your opinions,” the instructor would often posit. "Why don’t you?"”

To this day, I hate Freud and adore Thoreau. I don’t think that’s a coincidence.

BAD TEACHING: Disconnects Between Classroom, Homework, and Tests
Every single time I’ve taken a course where the entire class has struggled to appease the professor or merely achieve passing grades, it’s been for nearly the same reason: In-class lessons and homework assignments have been wildly unrelated to and inconsistent with the lecturer’s lesson plan.

Taken from a professorial perspective, it’s easy to see why an instructor would assign readings or assignments wholly separate from the in-class content in a given week. Textbooks do not typically follow the objectives of a given course on a day-to-day level, and furthermore, it may outwardly make logical sense to cram as much separate-but-relevant information into a course as humanly feasible in a given semester.

In practice, asking students to read complicated and often cryptic texts at home without discussing them in class the next day has almost always contributed to class-wide confusion and frustration on the part of the thirty or so students trapped in a course without clear objectives. Reminding students every few weeks that they “should have been reading the text this entire time” the day before an exam does nothing to explain what portions of the text the instructor found particularly relevant or useful in day-to-day life.

Furthermore, forcing students to read the works
The College of Education’s Link with Philadelphia Schools and a Look to the Future

College of Education continued from page 1

of ways. The College of Education has provided and continues to provide more teachers for the School District than any other institution of higher education. We have partnered with the District in a number of large-scale initiatives and college faculty have continuously worked with individual teachers or schools in a variety of ways. We are very excited about our current efforts to develop deep and sustainable partnerships with the District. To understand those efforts and where we are going, it helps to take a look back at where we have been.

"...we cannot be the kind of university the president has committed us to be unless we articulate our commitment to the city and develop initiatives that will allow us to work together to meet that commitment."

The Early Years: 1920 to 1965

As Joseph S. Butterweck comments in his history of the College, the connections between Temple and the School District throughout the first half of the 20th century were extremely close in at least two ways: first, a large majority of the College’s students were either already teaching in the District or were planning on teaching in the District; and, second, a majority of the faculty in the College had taught in the District, had obtained either a master’s or a doctoral degree from Temple, and joined the faculty as a function of this training. This use of what were considered master teachers was common in education during this time and clearly characterized Temple’s College of Education. The same was true of the College’s training of administrators, as many of the principals in the District’s Schools had been trained at Temple, and in many cases taught in the Educational Administration Program. Thus, the College had an extremely local quality as the faculty had come from the very schools to which the College was sending its graduates.

The Expansion Years: 1965 to 1980

When Temple became State-related in 1965 the College underwent an enormous expansion, growing from a faculty of around 65 to one of approximately 230. With this expansion came a change in focus as many of the faculty who were hired were no longer former teachers in the School District and were not exclusively concerned with teacher training as the focus of their research. While the training of teachers for the District was still a major part of the College’s mission, the expansion of graduate education and the increased emphasis on research produced what was basically a split within the College. On one hand, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction maintained in large part the College’s historic local connection. On the other hand, the remaining parts of the College were not primarily concerned with the preparation of teachers for the District, nor, in fact, with the preparation of teachers in general. Moreover, as Temple began to change from a local institution to a regional one and then to one with a national focus, the training of teachers began to reflect this change. Increasingly, the College viewed itself as preparing teachers for the surrounding suburban school districts as well as for the SDP. Moreover, as the College hired scholars as faculty members, the District became an arena for their research, both as an object in itself and as a source of research subjects and locations. At times, the purposes of the College’s research did not match the District’s goals, which weakened the traditional connections between the College and the District.

The Holmes Group

Partly in response to this weakened connection, Richard Englert, the Dean of the College at that time, decided that the College should join the Holmes Group as one of its founding members. The Holmes Group mandated that each participating College of Education develop an intimate relationship with a school district and to create within this district what was termed “professional development schools.” As part of this commitment, the College established partnerships with a number of Philadelphia elementary, middle and high schools, placing both student teachers and faculty within these schools, and inviting School District teachers to become instructors within the College. Among other things, the College created a parent’s center within one of the professional development schools, took over complete control of the professional development of the teachers within the schools, and provided tutoring and other professional support for the students in several of them. During the active phase of its participation in the Holmes Group, the relationship between the District and the College flourished. Unfortunately, the commitment became increasingly costly, and the College was forced to drop many of its activities.

The School Reform Commission Era

In 2001, the School District of Philadelphia was taken over by the State of Pennsylvania, and the School Reform Commission was established to oversee this takeover. As part of this reform movement, Temple was chosen to manage four area elementary schools and one middle school, schools that were known as the five schools. Although the College is commonly associated with this initiative, it was managed out of the President’s office and few College of Education faculty were extensively involved. Despite the fact that Temple managed the schools, it had no control over the make-up of the faculty and administration and could only make slight modifications to the District’s instructional program. When the original contract was completed, the University decided not to renew, in part because of the recognition that the University had no expertise in some aspects of running a school (e.g., taking care of the physical plant); in part because it had insufficient freedom in the areas that were most likely to have an impact on student achievement: the make-up of the staff and the curriculum.

The lessons of the five schools seem clear. The University in general and the College of Education in particular should invest its energies in those domains in which it has sufficient expertise and to the extent possible, should seek relationships with schools in which it can enact what we know about best practice. Indeed, those principles informed the University’s exploration of working in partnership with the SDP to found an early college high school as part of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation’s network. Over 70 faculty from across the University participated in planning the proposed school, which planned to offer all students a rigorous, inquiry-based interdisciplinary curriculum and to provide individualized out-of-class academic and non-academic support. Additionally, the early college high school would have provided a natural laboratory for educational and social science research. The university chose not to proceed with this initiative because of funding uncertainties.

Looking Forward

The College continues to be dedicated to preparing the best possible teachers to serve urban schools and to doing research that will help those teachers meet the challenges they will be facing. We realize that we need to partner with K-12 schools to achieve both goals. Although the Holmes Group work and the early college high school initiative were thwarted by concerns about costs, those concerns have not stopped our striving to develop deep and sustainable partnerships with Philadelphia schools. We have learned that those partnerships need to be ongoing, mutually beneficial, and built with an acknowledgment of the different kinds of expertise partners possess. We recognize that our commitment to social justice means that we cannot merely work with the most capable students and the best performing schools, so we are committed to continue working both with neighborhood schools and special admission magnets. We recognize that we need to do far more with in-service teachers to help them develop professionally. These recognitions will inform the next chapter of our history.

Currently, our work within Teacher Education revolves around developing a range of partnerships with District Public and Charter Schools, some deeper than others. In general, the Philadelphia school leaders we have approached (or who have approached us) have responded enthusiastically to our outreach. We work closely with those school leaders to encourage them to use field-based and student teaching placements strategically to strengthen new programs and school change or improvement efforts. All of our students across all programs complete some (and sometimes all) of their field experi-

College of Education continued on page 10
On The Inauguration of President Neil Theobald

By Mark Radert, Charles Klein Professor of Law and Government, and Vice President of Faculty Senate

On October 18, 2013 Neil Theobald was officially inaugurated as Temple University’s Tenth President. Taking place at the Historic Baptist Temple that goes back to the University’s earliest days, President Theobald’s Inauguration was at once both majestic and intimate, formal yet also forthright, combining the time-honored traditions of an academic ceremony with the straightforward clarity that has always been one of Temple’s hallmarks. It was also very much a faculty-centered event. Faculty members thronged the preceding academic procession, helped to fill the hall for the ceremony, crowded the luncheon tents along Liacouras Walk afterwards, actively participated in the several symposia that studded the campus during the afternoon, and came to the reception and concert that evening. Those who attended the ceremony heard an array of speakers, but the centerpiece of the event was President Theobald’s powerful inaugural address, in which he set out six ambitious but achievable commitments for his presidency that I think all of us can enthusiastically share.

As President of the Faculty Senate, I had the honor of representing the faculty on the dais, and of offering our greetings to our President. One rarely gets the chance to be part of such an auspicious and historic occasion, so I decided to use my five minutes of fame to say a few words about Temple’s special character, the challenges we face, and what we the faculty are seeking from our leader.

After the event, several individuals suggested that my remarks should perhaps be shared more broadly with faculty members who may not have been able to attend the ceremony. After discussion with other leaders of the Senate, we decided that the best option was to have them published in the Faculty Herald. They are reprinted below. I hope they capture for you, as they do for me, something essential about Temple’s special role as a Commonwealth University, the contributions that we as faculty make, and our hopes for Temple’s future at this challenging juncture in the history of American higher education:

Chairman O’Connor, President Theobald, honored guests, and members of the Temple community:

I am here on behalf of Temple’s faculty to honor and congratulate President Theobald on this momentous occasion. Temple’s full-time faculty is over 1500 strong, and we are joined by an equal number of highly skilled and committed part-time faculty members.

We are a diverse and accomplished group that includes teachers, scholars, and professionals of nearly every description. The excellent students we teach today will become doctors and lawyers, nurses and accountants, pharmacists and teachers, entrepreneurs and managers, scientists and inventors, artists and performers, journalists and public servants, and members of countless other professions, who will contribute in every imaginable way to the quality of life in our community, our nation, and throughout the world.

Yet diverse as we are, we all share one thing in common: a passionate dedication to Temple University – its proud traditions, loyal alumni, students, and its bright future.

Temple is a Commonwealth University, and there is merit in reflecting on that designation. It signals our role in achieving, expanding, and preserving the common wealth of Pennsylvania. The wealth we safeguard is far more than mere economic wealth. It is a wealth of the human spirit, of knowledge and understanding, of ideas and creativity, of responsibility and community, and of freedom.

As a great public university, we at Temple bear responsibilities not only to our students, but to our city, region, nation, and world. We also owe a duty not just to the “here and now,” but also to the “there and then,” binding past, present, and future in a constantly developing and evolving vision of progress toward a better society.

Temple’s mission was famously described by Russell Conwell as mining the “acres of diamonds in our own back yard” – discovering the as-yet uncarved gems of human potential that lie all around us, then shaping and polishing them into something that is brilliant, lasting, and of immense worth. Temple has always embraced that core value.

To do so, we must teach our students skills that make them ready to meet the world. We must help them discover new opportunities in a rapidly changing global community. We must keep the cost of their education affordable. But we must do more. We must open their eyes, expand their horizons, inspire and channel their passions, and enrich their lives by cultivating the mind and Temple’s diverse and talented faculty is equal to the task, but to accomplish it requires leadership. President Theobald, that is where you come in. We need your vision and guidance to give our efforts unity, direction, and purpose. That is why your inauguration as President matters so much. It captures and reflects all the best of what Temple has been, and all the potential of what Temple can be.

Leadership is much more than telling us what to do or how to do it. It involves inspiration, motivation, encouragement, resources, and the constant articulation of a future vision that engages our intellect, unites our energies, and ignites our enthusiasm. Leadership also requires special gifts of personality – the capacity to make connections, to model integrity, to encourage boldness, to summon courage, and to convey a sense of common purpose.

President Theobald, we have already seen that you possess these talents in abundance. We need them.

Temple University faces steep challenges. This is a great university, but one of limited means. We are situated in a great city and region, but one that is experiencing substantial cultural, structural, and economic change. We are poised at the epicenter of a groundswell of revolutionary change in higher education that promises to transform nearly everything we do.

We can neither hide from nor escape these challenges, but must meet and transcend them. To do so, we need a leader who will chart our path forward through an increasingly labyrinthine thicket of financial, organizational, political and technical complexity. President Theobald, we are confident that you are that leader – an extraordinary person who will successfully guide this great institution through extraordinary times.

The theologian Paul Tillich is credited with the claim that “being is becoming.” Whether true or not for the individual, it is surely true for an institution like Temple. We must always be evolving and changing – becoming – or we will decay and wither. We must continually grow in maturity and understanding of ourselves, our society, and the University’s role in achieving a brighter future. President Theobald, on this day we share great confidence that with your leadership and guidance, Temple will grow and mature, will flourish and endure, contributing to the common wealth of Pennsylvania, the region, the nation, and the world, for generations to come.

Two CLA Programs Reach Historic Milestones

The Faculty Herald would like to congratulate two CLA programs that have celebrated historic milestones this semester. Twenty-five years ago the Department of African American Studies launched its Ph.D. degree program, the first ever of its discipline. This past October, African American Studies fitted this landmark with a conference at Temple featuring the scholarship many of its distinguished alumni with President Theobald in attendance. The Department of Religion also just commemorated the 50th year anniversary of its founding with a reception in Baltimore at the annual American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature conference.

If any other programs are reaching momentous achievements, please let sneuman@temple.edu know so we can share your accomplishment with all of our colleagues.
A Status Report on Two Crucial Tests of Faculty Governance: Deans’ Reviews and Budget Committees

By Steve Newman, Editor

There are many processes underway at Temple that will test whether the new administration is serious about shared governance, but two of the most important are faculty review of deans and the establishment of budget committees to advise Deans as we move into De-centralized Budgeting. It is important, then, that the faculty be informed on the status of these two processes.

Just last week, the faculty were informed that a new policy on reviewing Deans had been passed. Among the Deans to be reviewed next year are those at the Schools of Law and Dentistry. It is gratifying to see the President and Provost make good on this promise; it is also gratifying to see that the pressure exerted by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee had an effect, putting paid to the notion that Faculty Senates never get anything done. If faculty end up having a real voice in this process, it will provide new opportunities for Deans to receive feedback that will improve their performance or, in some cases, be told that their contracts will not be renewed. Individual colleges and schools will benefit and so will Temple as a whole. So this looks like potentially very good news. But I do wish that the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, as it requested, had been given a chance to offer some suggestions about the policy. Speaking just for myself, I would have liked for the policy to have included more of the elements proposed by Senate President Mark Rahdert in a column published in The Herald. And we on the faculty will need to be vigilant that these reviews occur as designed.

As the chart below indicates, the current status of the second issue—the establishment of committees to advise Deans on the budget—is more mixed. When I asked President Theobald at the December 6 Senate Meeting to identify best practices for these review committees, he said he didn’t want to assume that one particular form would suit all colleges and schools. But he did say that “meaningful faculty participation” was essential; that is the standard we should hold the Deans to. For that to happen, the FSSC would like to see committees that are at least partially elected by the faculty, meeting regularly, and provided with the training in De-Centralized Budgeting and data they need to offer truly informed counsel. The delay in some of these cases seems to be due to the remarkable number of Deans recently-hired, including one who will not be starting until March 1st. And it is good to see that in these Colleges and Schools, that there has been some movement. But with De-centralized Budgeting going live next year and decisions already being made to prepare for it, it is crucial that these committees be given a representative faculty voice, be convened as soon as possible, and be provided with the training and data they as soon as possible.

The Herald will keep running this chart to track the progress of this effort, and I look forward to changing the many “To Be Determined”s and question marks. If I have made any error in gathering this data, please let me know and I will rectify it as soon as possible.

I also invite members of the faculty to write Letters to the Editor on this issue or any other issue of interest to the faculty. Please send them to snewman@temple.edu.

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TBD = To Be Determined
This year’s budget crisis, like those that have preceded it and those that will follow, can be traced to the vicious combination of middle-class flight to the suburbs and a school funding model that relies on declining local property taxes. The results are a cycle of underfunded schools and rising poverty. In 2010, the School District of Philadelphia spent $13,000 per pupil on a student population that is 77 percent poor and 76 percent African American or Latino. A few miles away, in the affluent suburb of Lower Merion, where the student population is 7 percent poor and 10 percent African American or Latino, per-pupil spending neared $27,000.

Though stark, these numbers will likely not be surprising to Temple faculty familiar with the vast differences in wealth and resources between Philadelphia and many of its near neighbors.

Temple faculty are also all too familiar with the tensions between Philadelphia and the rest of the state and how many state lawmakers are to the prospect of sending resources to Philadelphia and its educational institutions. With respect to the School District of Philadelphia, the dynamic is even worse because the schools serve a mostly low-income population which lacks the political clout of more powerful groups. The voices crying out for more funding for Philadelphia’s schools—though particularly fervent of late—still seem to fall on deaf ears at the state level.

In 2004, I began studying the Center City Schools Initiative, a Philadelphia campaign designed to attract Center City professionals to the downtown public schools. (My project on this topic resulted in my recently published book, Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities: Who Wins and Who Loses When Schools Become Urban Amenities [University of Chicago Press, 2013]). At first, I thought this was a promising strategy for reversing the patterns I just described—the flight of the middle class, the corresponding decline of the public schools, and the lack of political clout on the part of public school parents. After all, if professional parents living in and around Center City could be convinced to remain in the city and use its public schools rather than moving to the suburbs or using private schools, not only would our tax base increase but the schools would have a more powerful constituency on their side, combining increased expectations for educators and students with calls for more funding and resources.

However, I soon learned that the task and its consequences were much more complicated than I had imagined. Ultimately, I concluded that while more middle-class families in cities and city schools would certainly help, attracting such families does not and cannot substitute for reforms that address the root causes of concentrated poverty, budget shortfalls, and failing schools. Below, I provide an overview of the consequences of the Center City Schools Initiative and outline some potential lines of action for Temple faculty and others.

The Center City Schools Initiative, which lasted from 2004-2008, was a partnership between the Center City District (Center City’s business improvement district) and the School District of Philadelphia. It involved marketing a handful of relatively high-performing downtown elementary schools specifically to professional families with young children. The marketing campaign began with a professionally designed website, intended to provide parents with a “customer-friendly virtual front door” to the downtown schools. It also included a school fair, public meetings, and fliers promising parents that sending their children to Center City public schools would allow them to “personally” introduce their children to Philadelphia’s rich culture and history. In addition, public and private funds supported staffers to serve as liaisons between Center City parents and the school district, often facilitating special access to district officials. Meanwhile, district leaders urged principals in the area to improve their customer service and changed the admissions policy for elementary school to provide Center City families with “enhanced school choice,” giving them priority over other families in admissions to downtown schools.

The areas targeted by the initiative (Center City and its surrounding gentrifying neighborhoods) were largely white and middle- and upper-middle class. Proponents believed that if these parents became invested in their local public schools rather than moving to the suburbs, all of Philadelphia would benefit from higher property tax income, increased downtown revitalization as more affluent families continued to live and spend in the city, and—eventually—a better school system.

The marketing worked: By 2009 the number of Center City children enrolled in first grade in the three most desirable public schools had increased by 60 percent, from 111 to 177. Through fundraising and the activation of social and professional networks, new families helped bring resources to the schools, including new playgrounds, libraries, and arts programs. But these Center City children weren’t taking empty slots. When they enrolled, they left fewer spots for low-income students from North and West Philadelphia, who had for years used those schools to escape failing ones in their neighborhoods.

During this period, the number of first graders in Center City schools from outside the neighborhood decreased by 42 percent, from 64 to 37. Not surprisingly, this shift had racial dimensions: The percentage of white students in these schools in the early grades increased by 30 percent, and the percentage of African American students decreased a corresponding 29 percent.

My ethnographic research at one of the targeted schools showed parents received very different messages about their importance to the school community. Recruitment efforts were so intense for one white, middle-class mother that she mused, “If I had been an athlete, maybe I’d have gotten a car!” In contrast, an African American, low-income mother who did not live in Center City was so frustrated by the fixation on “neighborhood” (or Center City families) that she exclaimed in an interview, “What’s so important about this person from the neighborhood coming here? It’s not like this is a private school, where their money is cash and mine is from the government!” Whereas middle-class parents received special treatment and attention from school and district officials, low-income parents felt marginalized and excluded.

In addition, there is no evidence that middle-class parents’ efforts on behalf of the schools reached beyond those their children attended. Despite public and private spending of more than $500,000, the vast majority of Philadelphia’s schools—and especially its poorer students—did not benefit. The marketing initiative targeted 13 elementary schools, and actually focused on only four or five in the most affluent downtown neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the other 16 elementary schools received no special attention. As a district official observed, comparing downtown schools to those in poorer neighborhoods, “making sure the schools in Center City are successful is pretty high on the radar screen. As opposed to, say, Tilden [in impoverished Southwest Philadelphia]. Nobody is really that focused on Tilden, until there’s a major incident.”

Finally, the greater investment in the part of middle-class families in some Philadelphia public schools did not prevent the district’s latest—and most severe—budget crisis. The story of this initiative should remind us that the demographic shifts and fiscal policies that led to the current situation defy reforms or marketing efforts (however well-intentioned) that focus on a few schools or a small group of families.

All of this is certainly not meant to discourage Temple faculty from using Philadelphia’s public schools and supporting their neighborhood schools in a variety of ways. Of course, committed and involved parents and community members can help improve schools. But my research does suggest that these efforts will not be enough and may actually distract attention from the real problems.

The funding shortfalls that plague Philadelphia’s schools will not be resolved without concerted political action on the part of Philadelphia’s citizens and powerful local institutions. Thus, President Theobald’s recent promise for more engagement in Philadelphia and with Philadelphia’s public schools is exciting, particularly if it presages Temple’s active involvement in coalitions with other institutions and organizations in support of public education across the city.

These coalitions could help challenge two aspects of the present education system that Pennsylvanians tend to treat as a fact of life. First, we appear to be resigned to the idea that Philadelphia’s schools will always have financial struggles. Second, we do not discuss the divisions between city and suburbs and what they mean for our schools. Yet these divisions and the vastly different fates of urban and suburban schools they have created are not inevitable; rather they can be traced directly to a 1974 Supreme Court decision, Milliken v. Bradley. In this case, the Court rejected a plan to create a “metropolitan” system that integrated the largely African American school system in Detroit with the white suburban systems surrounding it. This decision essentially created an institutional wall between city and suburbs, meaning that cities have to deal with their social, economic, and educational problems alone, without their more affluent neighbors who nevertheless choose to live near cities because they remain centers for the arts, culture, government, and employment.

Cucchiara continued from page 1

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Cucchiara continued from page 1
Best in Show: The Limits to Gentrifying Urban Schools

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Perhaps it is time to start questioning this decision and the educational inequality it has led to. Perhaps it is time to acknowledge that our problems, rooted in policy decisions and institutional structures, call for political (rather than simply educational) solutions. One would be to increase funds for urban schools. In Pennsylvania the bulk of funding for schools comes from local property taxes, a system that creates vast disparities between wealthy and poor districts—indeed, Pennsylvania’s school funding system is one of the most unequal in the country. If Pennsylvania were to shift its funding formula so that a smaller portion of district resources came from local taxes, and then supplemented these funds with money collected statewide, it would significantly alleviate the current crisis and help disrupt the larger pattern of scarcity and failure in urban schools.

Our upcoming gubernatorial election provides Temple and its faculty with an opportunity to make sure that adequate funding for Philadelphia’s schools is one of the decisive issues in the 2014 campaign. Governor Corbett’s administration, which has been devastating for public education in Philadelphia, is testament to the impact a governor can have on schools. Corbett has consistently moved to cut funding for Philadelphia’s schools, decisions which have certainly exacerbated Philadelphia’s budget shortfalls. Whether or not Philadelphians, or Pennsylvanians in general, will hold him accountable for these decisions remains to be seen.

Temple faculty could also—in their teaching, scholarship, and political engagement—revisit the conversation, active during the 1990s and early 2000s, about regional approaches to metropolitan development and governance. The fragmentation of our metropolitan areas, which inhibits regional cooperation and planning, has a myriad of negative consequences, including suburban sprawl, the deterioration of inner-ring suburbs, reduced economic competitiveness, and entrenched inequalities. In his book Hope and Despair in the American City, sociologist Gerald Grant shows that Wake County, North Carolina’s plan to bring city and suburbs together into one system allowed district leaders to create economically integrated schools that were so successful that “there are no bad schools in Raleigh.” While efforts to integrate Philadelphia and its suburbs would certainly face formidable political challenges, they could also prompt a larger conversation about our shared destinies. Short of full integration, it is certainly possible to imagine greater cooperation across districts, including the implementation of programs that allow students to attend schools in other systems and/or the formation of Philadelphia-suburban coalitions advocating for more equitable policies.

In his inaugural address, President Theobald called Temple “Philadelphia’s Public University.” This phrase should be a reminder to Philadelphians of the important role Temple has played, and will continue to play, in the life of the city and in the lives of so many of its citizens. However, it is also a reminder to the Temple community that our fates and that of the School District of Philadelphia are intertwined. Not only do we have a strong interest in the students who graduate from Philadelphia’s schools (many of whom, after all, will become our students), but we have a duty to serve the public good in the city and to be actively engaged in pressing for solutions to the problems our city faces.

A version of this article recently appeared in www.theatlantic.com.

Distinguished Professor of History Visits Temple to Talk Lincoln

By Kime Lawson, Assistant Editor

On October 24th, one of America’s most prominent historians visited Temple University to deliver the latest lecture for the College of Liberal Arts’ Leonard Mellow Visiting Scholar Series. Eric Foner, DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University, described the evolution of Abraham Lincoln’s political and moral position on American slavery and race during his early career through the 1840s and his famous Proclamation of 1863 in a lively talk entitled “The Emancipation of Abraham Lincoln.” Well over 200 attendees, the majority of whom were huddling masses of undergraduates, crowded Kiva Auditorium so that many were piling on the floor or standing abreast at the back of the room. A respectable number of faculty, administrators, and graduate students also filed in to hear one of the leading authorities on the Civil War and Reconstruction Era speak.

With this year marking the 150th anniversary of the two most famous actions of arguably America’s most influential President, much attention has been directed to Abraham Lincoln in print and on film during the past couple of years. Stephen Spielberg’s blockbuster epic Lincoln grossed easily over $200 million and even the more farcical Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter made nearly $50 million, while a number of titles about Lincoln by historians and pundits alike have surfaced the New York Times Bestseller List since 2010. Foner playfully admitted Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter was his favorite interpretation while taking humorous jabs at historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, on whose work Spielberg had based his film. Insisting that most of these recent treatments had rendered “historical character studies” of Lincoln, Foner challenged common misperceptions that cast an uncomplicated Lincoln either as a racist for his views on African colonization or as an anti-racist hero often referred to as “the Great Emancipator.” The source of his lecture was his latest work The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery (W.W. Norton & Co., 2010), for which Foner won the Bancroft Prize, the Pulitzer Prize for History, and the Lincoln Prize in 2011.

Foner’s mentor, American consensus historian Richard Hofstadter, admonished us throughout his body of work that successful politicians must be constantly shifting creatures of circumstance and opportunity to stay in power. Foner invited his audience to view Lincoln’s evolving position on Emancipation during the two decades prior to the Proclamation of 1863 in a lively talk entitled “The Emancipation of Abraham Lincoln.”

Foner continued on page 24
Student Access to Student Feedback Forms vs. Faculty Privacy

By Shannon Miller, Professor of English

Over the last 15 years, I have shown what -- to me -- seems like extraordinary restraint: I have never looked at my student rankings or comments on RateMyProfessors.com, and I do not want to know what is written there. It is not that easy to remain insulated from this information. My family continues to want to tell me what they say. When I tell my colleagues I have never looked at these ratings, they helpfully will start to summarize them. I cut off both family and colleagues, insisting that this isn't a format that I find a productive or reliable source for information. If I want to know what the students in my classes have to say about their experiences, I have -- or, I should say, I had -- much better data from the student evaluation forms that they filled out in class. While all student evaluations have limitations, there was a reliable and representative source through which I could assess students' views of the successes or shortcomings in my courses.

That was until we turned our evaluation system into a version of RateMyProfessors.com. We have now institutionalized the randomness of student response rates; and, worse yet, the University is now making those unpredictable rankings available to the students. Heck, at least there are comments on RateMyProfessors.com.

I hope that all faculty are aware that select information from the Electronic Student Feedback forms (e-SFFs) are now made available to students. The people I have spoken to outside of Temple University are appalled at this. Those outside Temple who have done union negotiations view it as a violation of the contract, specifically a non-negotiated change in working conditions. As the Temple website on the e-SFFs states, "Student feedback also helps instructors and administration make merit, tenure and promotion decisions, as well as other important decisions about how courses are taught at Temple" (my emphasis). One clearly stated purpose of these documents is to determine our promotions and raises. These e-SFFs, then, are explicitly being used for personnel decisions. In addition to the publically stated use of e-SFFs for such "decisions," colleges list these e-SFFs as required documents for third year reviews, annual merit decisions, and tenure and promotion cases. To say that these are NOT personnel documents -- which is the position of Human Resources -- is beyond disingenuous.

The University's position seems to be that the students wanted to see our course evaluations. The students might also like to have video footage of us grading their work, but I think we would agree that this would be a significant violation of our privacy. The same issue seems at play here: faculty should not have student evaluations, designed in an ideal world, to help us improve our teaching, but essentially used to reward or punish us, made public. That the students have a very limited snapshot of information from the e-SFFs seems a moot point. That the response rates on these is significantly lower than the forms the students filled out in class only points up the problematic information that we are now making available to students.

The Union has raised this issue with the administration, but the administration's position has not changed. I think the faculty needs to enter into a vigorous debate about whether these flawed instruments -- with something like only 50% of the students responding (and that's a very generous number: many are in the 20-30% rate response) -- are appropriate for public consumption. I would say absolutely not. More importantly, the university should not be allowed to publicize our personnel documents. If I see a few options. If the university wants to continue to make these documents public, they must stop using e-SFFs for any merit, renewal, or promotion decisions. Evaluation of teaching would need to be conducted in another way. This would end the conflict that the administration has created between student wishes and faculty privacy issues. Alternately, these e-SFFs could continue to be used for merit, renewal, or promotion decisions, but a voluntary system of public student evaluations could be initiated through the Temple student government. This kind of system has worked well at other universities throughout the country for years, and most of these evaluation systems are much more robust: the reports produced have student comments and show answers to a much larger range of questions. The students would be able to get information from faculty willing to allow these to be administered, but Temple would not be violating faculty rights. A third possibility might be to allow faculty to opt in to the e-SFF system: if you have no problem with these records, used for personnel decisions, to be made available to the students, fine. But if you object to the exposure of these records to students, you could limit the use of your personnel records to personnel decisions.

I hope that faculty will make their views on this clear, either to the union or the administration, ideally to both. This will not address the significantly lower rate of response on the e-SFFs, but the faculty can do something about this as well. I would encourage every faculty member to assess the students themselves in some format, consistent with standards that governed the former, paper SFFs: students should be responding anonymously, and their responses should not be available to the faculty member until after grades are due. In all of my courses, I currently distribute the same form we used in the English Department before the CATE/SFF system was instituted. I would encourage departments to establish a system that faculty can distribute in their classes; this would establish some consistency across departments. Obviously mid-semester evaluations and peer reviews are excellent opportunities for students and colleagues to provide feedback.

The college's Link with Philadelphia Schools and a Look to the Future

College of Education continued from page 5

ences in Philadelphia schools. Our new partnership model also recognizes that there is power in numbers by assigning cohorts of Temple students to each school, offering more school-based courses and meetings, and using school personnel as university faculty. This model also encourages COE faculty to teach or supervise in the field at least once every three years. We expect to implement this model fully over the upcoming years.

Our recent work has provided a solid foundation of evidence on which we can draw to improve our programs and hold ourselves accountable. We anticipate that the upcoming years will be especially challenging (but also encouraging) as we further work out the details of our school partnerships and create partner schools within a school district in great transition. We look forward to studying and refining the new practices we have introduced and to making further progress at strengthening our methods for preparing teachers to succeed in urban schools.

We also look forward to working with our colleagues from across the University to enact President Theobald’s commitment to focus Temple’s intellectual energy toward addressing the needs of K-12 education in the city. The annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association is being held in Philadelphia this year and the Social Justice Special Interest Group is sponsoring a symposium comprised of Temple faculty and our community partners to discuss the Philadelphia school closings. We hope to be able to arrange for that symposium to be held somewhere around the University and if we are successful we will invite our colleagues from across the university to join us in that discussion. As a follow-up to that symposium, our new dean, Gregory Anderson, will invite the University community to a town hall meeting to discuss what the nature of Temple’s involvement with city schools should be. We think such a conversation is especially important to have now because RCM is likely to turn our focus inward. But we cannot be the kind of university the president has committed us to be unless we articulate our commitment to the city and develop initiatives that will allow us to work together to meet that commitment. ♦

Miller continued on page 17.
And Gladly Would We Learn and Gladly Teach

Editorial continued from page 1

course (and to the fact that I draw a salary for doing this). They often want to share their own stories of their teachers, good and bad, and their insights into teaching. When I reflect on my job, my time in the classroom and during my office hours is surely as vivid to me as my time grappling with the complexities of Adam Smith’s or Robert Burns’ or Joanna Baillie’s theories and practices of value along with current conversations and conflicts about the value of the humanities.

So, for reasons both personal and professional, I decided to devote the bulk of an issue of The Herald to teaching. But I wanted to approach it in ways that might cast some new light on some specific issues bound up in such a large and complex topic as pedagogy at Temple.

The first has to do with how we evaluate teaching. What do we mean by “good teaching” and “bad teaching”? And what do we mean when we say “we,” since faculty are certainly not the only people evaluating our teaching? Administrators do so when deciding about renewal, tenure, promotion, and merit. Of course, students have done so for as long as there have been teachers. (One wonders how Socrates was rated back in Athens and would rate now.) More recently, they have gone online to ratemyprofessors.com to contribute to at least anecdotal accounts of their instructors, even awarding chile peppers to the “hot” ones, which is among the many things that tend to raise questions about the validity of that site.

“...what are the past, present, and possible futures of the relationship between Temple and the School District of Philadelphia (SDP)? What can faculty in and outside of our College of Education do to strengthen that relationship?...”

Addressing the role students play in evaluating teaching has been made more timely by a decision made last Spring, long-recommended by the Student Feedback Form (SFF) Committee and long-wished-for by Temple’s Student Government. Starting this Fall, students who have just enrolled at Temple or who filled out the previous term’s SFFs will have access to some of the data from them. To bring students and faculty together in thinking about how we evaluate teaching, I decided to revisit an experiment from last year in which The Herald and our student newspaper engaged in a dialogue printed in both papers. This year’s Opinions Editor, Jerry Iannelli, was receptive to the idea, and I then recruited two award-winning teachers, Prof. Rebecca Alpert and Deborah Stull to join me, while Jerry and one of his columnists, Grace Holleran, contributed their perspectives as students. You can see the results of our discussion here.

But our discussion hardly exhausted the issues raised by the sharing of SFF data. After some colleagues raised the question whether making this data available to students violated the confidentiality faculty have the right to expect for records used in personnel decisions, I invited one of them, Prof. Shannon Miller, to write a column on this issue, and I’m grateful that she agreed to do so.

My hope is that this is only a first step in a wider and deeper dialogue about teaching. I have been discussing with the SFF Committee how best to present in The Herald the data they have assiduously collected. I also agree with the Committee and every other faculty member I have talked to that whatever we think of the SFFs, they should not be the only yardstick we use to evaluate teaching. In this vein, I’m happy to report that Pamela Barnett, the Director of our Teaching and Learning Center, has agreed to comment on the dialogue published in this issue and to furnish a brief bibliography of resources for evaluating teaching.

The other perspective on teaching I wanted to investigate has to do with the fact that we teach at “Philadelphia’s Public University,” as President Theobald refreshingly called Temple in his inaugural address, a motto I nominate as a replacement for “Temple Made.” That is, what are the past, present, and possible futures of the relationship between Temple and the School District of Philadelphia (SDP)? What can faculty in and outside of our College of Education do to strengthen that relationship? These are question made more urgent by the full-bore fiscal meltdown of the SDP. The health of our city’s public schools will shape Temple’s destiny. The SDP supplies many of our students, including many who represent the best of the Conwellian Mission; we supply the SDP with more teachers than any other college or university. More broadly, the well-being of the city that gives Temple its pulse depends in no small part on its public schools.

To answer this question, I went, naturally, to my colleagues in our College of Education, and they were a great help. I sat down with the College’s new Dean, Gregory M. Anderson, and as we touched on topics ranging from Temple’s relationship with the public schools to evaluating teaching to making educational research more relevant, he proved to be a stimulating partner in conversation, as I think you’ll agree. Prof. Michael W. Smith, Joseph DuCette, Wanda Brooks, and Peshe Kuriloff contributed a lucid and informative history of Temple’s relationship with the SDP and some ideas for next steps. A member of our Editorial Board, Prof. Will Jordan, directed me to Prof. Maia Cucchiara who significantly revised an article she wrote for The Atlantic online that details her sobering research on attempts to improve Philly’s schools by making some of them more attractive to the more affluent residents of Center City.

This last piece brings me to a final, personal reason I chose this topic—my own kids. My wife and I decided to live in Mount Airy because we loved the beauty and diversity of the neighborhood and because we wanted to be in the city. But, like so many better-off parents in Mt. Airy, we decided not to send our daughter, Talia, to the school she was zoned for to or to a nearby school with a better reputation that we probably could have gotten her into. For even there the class sizes were too large; we feared that her sweet temper would lead to her being overlooked and that the dreaminess that by turns charms and exasperates us might develop into a more serious lack of focus. We also worried that she’d get the wrong type of attention, her intense curiosity drummed out of her by a grim testing regime. Add to that a subpar library, no foreign language instruction, and a general lack of resources so common to Philly’s public schools.

We decided, then, to send her to Plymouth Meeting Friends School, though we could barely afford it (and it’s not expensive by private school standards). She loves the school, and so do we. It’s diverse, racially, ethnically, and socio-economically, its curriculum well-conceived and innovative, its teachers both demanding and supportive, including its librarian and specialists in music, art, and Spanish. We’ll be sending her brother, Sasha, to the same school. Our predisposition to do so has been strengthened by the further deterioration of Philly’s schools thanks to the assault by Harrisburg, and by the fact that he was born with microtia and unilateral atresia—that is, he doesn’t have much in the way of an outer ear left and is thus functionally deaf on that side. We worry that his disability would not mesh well at all with the large class sizes and the bad acoustic of the public schools we have seen.

Although we are convinced we have made the right choice, we can’t help feeling guilty, a common sentiment among certain circles in Mt. Airy. We went to public schools K-12, and I am, after all, a faculty member at “Philadelphia’s Public University”; and our financial ability to bring our children into such a rich learning environment is unavailable to a great many Philadelphia parents. But a long, sorry history of Liberal Guilt instructs me that feelings alone don’t do anything but make the guilty liberal feel the weak-teacher virtue of regretting that things have come to such a sorry pass. While my children will not attend Philly’s public schools for at least the next few years, I plan to follow the advice of this issue’s columnists offer for dealing with the crisis at hand. I plan to continue working with groups that fight for more equitable funding for Philly’s schools. I also plan to continue fighting against “reforms” that inflict even more high-stakes testing on schoolkids and that demonize the many hard-working teachers and parents doing their best in the midst of immiserating circumstances—a woeful lack of resources and growing income inequality among them. Finally, I will continue looking for opportunities to help Philly’s public schools through Temple’s efforts. If the experts in the field, including the teachers, administrators, students and parents in our North Philly neighborhood, think I may have something to offer, I will gladly learn from them and gladly teach.
An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 2

to continue to be open to working across divides, and even working with folks who have a different perspective than ours, as long as what we’re doing has some sort of consensus about the outcome. For example, some may disagree that charter schools are the best way to reform the public school system, yet they have completely changed the Philadelphia school system.

SN: It’s not like they’re going away.

GA: Right. They’re not going to go away. So to me, a mature college or organization engages with them. Regardless of our ideological perspective.

SN: That doesn’t stop us if we wish to from advocating for fair funding formulas, etc.

“...I think we should collaborate with the school district and not just with public schools but also charter schools when they are fulfilling a mission that is aligned with ours.”

GA: Absolutely.

SN: Back to the view that universities shouldn’t be running K-12 schools. I think you say that in one of your YouTube talks.

GA: Yes.

SN: It brings me to one idea that has come up here, actually, twice, which you may know well of, which is the possibility of our establishing an early college high school.

GA: Yes.

SN: From one perspective that seems exactly like a meeting point of research, policy making, and praxis in terms of training teachers. On the other hand, I guess the question is what you mean by “running” the school? I asked President Theobald about this when I interviewed him, and he has misgivings about professors running the day-to-day operations of a school; but, of course, that’s not necessarily what would happen in an Early College High School. I feel pretty certain that you know of these schools, but do you know the history of the idea at Temple, and whether that seems like an idea that Temple should consider?

GA: That’s a really good question. I think to do that you would need to have a clear sense of what the responsibilities of the universities were, and that those responsibilities would have to be codified over the long haul.

SN: No mission creep.

GA: Right. My philosophy on colleges and universities running public schools, is that I feel like this type of “partnership,” receives a lot of attention, and we’re a magnet for resources, and we prove that we can create formulas, etc.

SN: As we did not do with the five schools that were handed to us a decade or so ago. I came to Temple just as the State took over the Philly Schools and initiated their Let a Thousand Blooms Reform. We were given schools to run, and the College of Ed had nothing to do, I think, with running them.

GA: There were many moving parts and things happened too quickly without a clear understanding of expectations from both sides.

SN: I have to admit that I have a personal stake in this because when I was Director of Undergraduate Studies of English, now some years ago, Michael Smith, a professor in the College of Ed, asked me if I wanted to play a role in this proposal. It was great that they came back to us. As you may know, when the Gates Foundation, working through the Woodrow Wilson Founda-

tion, first came to us, if I have the story right, the person then running the schools through the President’s office said, “No. Not interested.” They came back when President Hart was in office, and there was more interest, and we had faculty members who did site visits; we had a theme for the school, Civic Engagement; the School Reform Commission seemed interested, we were putting together a curriculum. My very minor role in this was trying to think about what the English curriculum would look like there. Then we were forced to say no a second time because in part it just sat on the President’s desk awhile. Who knows what led to that delay?

You and President Theobald are the experts in the field, and so your reservations would have to be addressed. And I think many of us involved in this project were scared as hell, thinking, “What if this fails?” On the other hand, if we could address these concerns, this idea is, to pardon the cliché, right in the wheelhouse of our mission. I mean, a neighborhood school that would head on the question of educational access and that might put things like Critical Race Studies, into practice. Right?

The other piece of it is that we can run demonstration or model schools. I’ve done that at the University of Denver. We had two of them. But they weren’t embedded in the public school system. And there weren’t promises that should be ingrained not forever but for the long term. There was always an out clause for us.

SN: We should really commit.

GA: We should commit. I believe, honestly that one of the issues is, and I’m not speaking for President Theobald, is that we already have a commitment to our students here, and can we do both exceptionally well? That’s an empirical question.

SN: As I was trying to figure out what are the costs here, one of them would be, if we had faculty here going to that academy, that would mean a section here that doesn’t get taught. Or do we bring those students to Temple, and what would the concerns be there? I think there would be a lot of sticky structural issues even I can sense as someone outside of the field.

GA: There are.

SN: And I wouldn’t minimize them. I hope, though, that an Early College High School is something we’d give a good, hard look at. I think that if we could do it in the sort of responsible, committed way that you properly demand, the upside is huge.

GA: The upside would be incredible. There’s one last thing: We’re confronted with choices in an environment characterized by scarce resources. Look at our school district and what it’s suffering through at the moment. In the case of North Philadelphia. I just went to Duckrey [Tanner G. Duckrey School], which is just down the road. And Duckrey, after staving off closure, was forced to double its enrollment in order to stay open.

SN: But I’m sure not with double its resources.


SN: And probably no librarian.
An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 12

GA: The College’s student organization is working on building up their library. And what I’m asking myself is: “Would we be doing the right thing by creating a new high school? Or should we be redoubling our efforts to work with schools that are in dire need of support?”

SN: What would you imagine that we would do for and with Duckrey?

GA: Again, let’s start with our assets, the faculty and students. We often think of our students as ambassadors. What if we built an incredible internship programs that addressed a severe scarcity or need in the school district that would give our students an opportunity to do service in the way we look for when we admit them. That adds value to their educational experience and their professional development and adds value to the children in the schools.

That I think we should be doing. What kind of programs? I have a school psychology program. I have a counseling psych program. How many counselors and psychologists are there right now in the system? We have students that could advise on college choice or support student in times of distress. So I think that before we talk about putting our eggs in one basket, we should look at all our assets and say, “Yes, we absolutely have to do something. It may not be that, but it should be spread across the system in ways that address immediate needs, the needs that are going to impact children for decades if we don’t intervene right now.” That would be my personal choice. Not to do not doing anything, but to say, “They desperately need help. Dunbar desperately needs help.” Our responsibility should first be to the schools that already exist.

So, for example, Ms. Scott, the principal at Duckrey told me that they have piles of library books they don’t know what to do with. They need to think about reconstituting their library. Those are the kinds of things we can do to support them. And here is the College’s student organization helping them build that. I feel way more comfortable doing those things because I know that if we get the right people in the room that we can do them or building up something, working with large foundations and putting together a beautiful, glossy thing but then always having an out clause, which is that if it fails, it was a great experiment, and we tried our best. But Duckrey is hopefully still going to be there, and Dunbar is going to be there. That’s my commitment.

SN: The further students get along in academic chain, it may be true that the less effective the intervention can sometimes be.

GA: It’s funny you should say that, because that’s something we’re grappling with right now. Knowing that the market is saturated in Philadelphia, we have to maybe move away from a mass-production model, from producing the most teachers to producing the most influential teachers. And so we need to be more strategic about where we are producing teachers. I would argue that the middle grades is an area that we really need to focus on because there’s a desperate need in math and science, in special education, in ELL [English Language Learning] and math and science. I feel like we need to be more nimble as well, and, again, when we put all of our eggs in one basket, we divert from all the other aspects of our mission

SN: As the person managing the college, that has to be a question for you—

GA: Yes, it really bothers me that we end up singing that James Ingram song, “I did my best. But I guess my best wasn’t good enough.” But those kids are still there.

Truly Recognizing Diversity and Ensuring Educational Access

SN: I’d like to pivot a bit to talk more about properly engaging with race and diversity, which is clearly very important to you. Your interest emerges from your own family background, having emigrated from South Africa, and you returned there for your dissertation, which became your first book, to study these issues in action by looking at the University of the Western Cape. I’m wondering how your experience with that project informs your view your of how higher ed does or does not fulfill the imperatives and the promises of diversity. How are we doing and how are we not doing well, and how to make diversity real?

Even in South Africa, if I grasped your study correctly, where you didn’t have people stigmatizing non-white students as needing remediation, even that experiment has had mixed results. What lessons have you drawn from that research and your experiences since about how Temple in particular and how higher ed more broadly could be better realizing these goals of diversity?

GA: That is a huge question and one of the most important questions facing the nation. I think we really need look at diversity and socio-economic status simultaneously. We still tend to separate them.

I feel that there are a couple of ways in which we can intervene. We’re going to have to acknowledge that race and class are intertwined. If you actually look at particularly the way selective institutions admit students, they tend to separate the two. I feel that given the demographics of the country, we have to stop doing that, we have to acknowledge both at the same time. Pedagogically, we have to stop celebrating diversity—and I have to be careful how I define this—and we have to start contesting diversity. By contesting, I don’t mean not acknowledging the importance of diversity. I mean actually getting students to engage in what it’s like to come from different backgrounds and to have different perspectives and to figure out a way to learn from that diversity. Instead of just learning that we should celebrate it.

There is research in higher education around diversity that indicates that when you teach a different curriculum to a predominately white, elite student body, they actually learn to mask their biases and to articulate them in a more sophisticated manner.

SN: They haven’t actually had to face up to their own presuppositions.

GA: That’s right. I feel that one of our responsibilities is to get students to engage in what might be challenging issues and to work through them in a critical, analytical way that allows them to come to some understanding of how complex these issues are in lived experience.

Coming back to the idea of what we need to do as a College of Education, I believe we need to find more pathways for students to Philadelphia who come from diverse backgrounds to have access to higher education. That is not just access to higher education at Temple. I’m not sure yet that we have fully reached our potential or honored our commitment to educating as diverse a student body as possible. I fear that the way that post-secondary policy has been going is that we have been primarily thrusting that responsibility on to the community colleges. But one of the ways to develop a policy is to enhance the number of pathways and choices for students and try to avoid trickling them at all costs. So at Temple, we can do a better job of increasing our diversity, and I know that our President is committed to doing that.

But it’s going to be interesting to see how we balance, as you mentioned, the hybridity of this institution, as having aspirations as a research university and also an historical mission.

SN: Yes, this issue seems a local example, important as it is, of a larger question about the state of higher ed. I’ve had a couple of interviews with the Provost and heard him address the question of how we apportion our aid. Temple is hardly alone in this, but we have decided to send more money to merit-based aid, which then makes Temple more attractive to students with high SAT scores, which increases our US News and World Report ranking, which leads to more giving, which we then use to fund more need-based aid. That requires a lot of dominos to fall, and I think there’s some concern among the faculty that they won’t, though I know this isn’t the only tool in

Interview with Anderson continued on page 14
An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 13

the Provost’s tool-kit, that his is not a one-track strategy.

On the revenue-producing side, we know that when you have scarce re-

sources, you have to find some way to increase them. And marketing our-

selves so that we have more students who can pay full freight is a way to do

that. But then at what cost to our mission to serve less-advantaged students? And

how do we ensure that we provide all of our students a quality educa-

tion?

We’re admittedly in a tough spot. I was looking back at one of the issues in

our archives—we’ve been around for 45 years now, and I read a column

from way back in which the President of the Faculty Senate was waxing

wroth over the subsidy from the state supplying only 55% of our operating

budget.

[Laughter from both]

And I think we’re down around 15% now. I think that those tensions at

Temple are tensions between our historical mission and research aspirations

and then the challenges facing us to get the resources we need to fulfill either

mission.

GA: Temple is not different than any other institution. That’s true because

the demographic nature of the students is changing in front of us. They’re

coming from lower-income backgrounds, more diverse backgrounds in terms

of language, ethnicity, and race, and our system hasn’t caught up to that shift.

Now, I honestly think there are ways that de-centralized budgeting can allow

us to address some of these tensions. But I want to be really clear about my

perspective: I believe that merit narrowly-defined is not actually merit at all.

I believe there are tons of ways to look at merit. Someone who overcomes
difficulties in their lives, goes to a Title I school, has responsibilities for

siblings, has struggled economically—all of those things should be factored

in when we talk about the merit of a student because Acres of Diamonds, that

idea, the idea of a diamond in the rough is something we stand for.

I feel what the de-centralized model gives us is the opportunity to calibrate a

portion of the students that are coming in that are better-prepared—

preparation is usually a proxy for socio-economic status, as the research has

shown—and those students can help in multiple ways with the Research I

aspirations but they can also support broader notions of merit in terms of the

dollars we can put towards students. It’s a question of how we balance them out.

We’re not being responsible if we’re not figuring out a way to fulfill our

mission in both aspects of it in a sustainable fashion. That means we have to

change the economic model, and if we don’t do that, we could fall on either

side of the equation and fail, regardless. That’s a pivotal responsibility.

SN: As the Dean of the College of Ed, you have something of a bully pulpit.

You are saying that we need a new economic model because this one is not

sustainable. How then would you go out and make that case? And to whom

would you make it?

GA: Well, you know you have to make it on multiple grounds and to multi-

ple stakeholders. To the business community, you have to say to them, we

can acknowledge the reality of what’s it like for a graduate to leave the uni-

versity and be in massive debt or to leave the university and not be prepared

to fulfill the responsibilities of the job that they thought they were going to

get. We need to vigilantly improve. I don’t think we’re beating up on our-

selves when we say we need to vigilantly improve. We expect that from our

students, and so we should expect that from ourselves.

I’m proud to be the Dean of a College of Education, of being a part of a Col-
ge

lege of Education. We need to focus on using our skillset to validate our

record. We don’t use data as effectively as we can. It comes back to the

policy issues we talked about. Also, we need to use metrics, legitimate and

appropriate metrics, to see how we can improve, to get ahead of the curve, to

get ahead of the critique. So that’s one piece.

To the school system, and I’ve had this conversation with Superintendent

Hite, I shared with him that I understand and deeply appreciate the con-

strains; I told him, “We have to partner with you differently.” For example,

if we have access to a foundation, if one way in which we increase our Re-

search I reputation is to increase our sponsored research dollars, we might

have to re-direct those dollars toward the school district and we might have

to make a choice to do so because that’s the right thing to do because that’s

what the school district needs.

SN: Right. What you would do, I guess, is when you frame the research

problem, you’d say, “Look. This money you’re giving us will yield impor-
tant, useful research, but in order to accomplish those goals, I need to get

those resources into action.” We wouldn’t have a lab school, but the schools

would be labs for what we were doing in an ethical way.

GA: Right. Another component is that we need to find a way to this: If the

students are good enough to admit, we have to ensure that they maintain their

grades to graduate. If something is happening between admission and

graduation, we need to vigilantly interrogate that. We need to focus on reten-

tion.

This is what I learned in South Africa. It’s one thing to open up a university

and bring students in; it’s another thing to educate them; and it’s another

thing again to fulfill your responsibilities to the students. This is what Presi-

dent Theobald’s been talking about, our responsibilities to the students.

While we diversify, we have to ensure that we are actually retaining those

students, and we have to change the way that we educate, and we have to

change our practices and policies. All of those things, we’re capable of de-

termining. We have to talk with the individual stakeholders and make good deci-

sions and not get caught up with the idea that there’s only one way to meet our

outcome. So if we want to increase our rankings, we don’t have to make an

impossible choice—either we have to bring in high SES [Socio-Economic

Status] students, and exclude low SES students. I don’t believe in those

choices; I believe we can do both simultaneously, that’s our responsibility.

And if not a College of Education, what other college is supposed to be lead-

ing that fight?

Evaluating Good Teaching: Disciplinary Limits, Competencies, and Finding Good Metrics

SN: I believe you’ve said in the same talk captured on YouTube that al-

though we teach teaching and learning, we don’t do a very good job of apply-

ing that knowledge to the academy itself. This actually gets to a question I’d

like to get to about evaluating good teaching, which is a hot topic on this

campus right now with the discussion around Student Feedback Forms. As

someone whose life has been the studying of teaching and learning, could

you give examples of where faculty have a mote in our own eyes, that we can’t

see what we can’t see about how we’re teaching and learning? Could you

give me an example of a pedagogical practice that seems to you either

unsustainable because of the fiscal environment we’re in or, just as impor-

tant, that doesn’t seem to work.

GA: I’m a sociologist and come out of a specific disciplinary background.

But I believe that helping resolve major social problems extends beyond one

expertise domain and we need to stop just talking about interdisciplinary

approaches and find major ways to incent and reward such approaches in our

research, teaching and scholarship. Subject matter is critical, but subject

matter can cut across disciplines. What we’ve done now is that we’ve cre-

ated a system in which we’ve at times reified the discipline at the expense of

teaching and learning. It’s almost as if we have to revisit our fundamental

mission. What does it mean to be a faculty member? Again, it speaks to this

tension between research and our other missions. We get this all the time in

Interview with Anderson continued on page 15
Interview with Dean Anderson

An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 14

the College of Education, since we are known for our teaching but we also do cutting edge research as well.

I think that what we need to do, and where the College of Education can lead, is to work across these different areas of expertise, with one goal in mind: What adds value to our students’ experience? Maximizes their learning, their educational outcomes, and the opportunities they’re going to have when they enter into the labor market? I think collaboration is the future. Now, universities have talked about interdisciplinary research forever. But they don’t incent it. In fact, if anything, they punish it.

SN: There’s some worry that the de-centralized budget model will discourage it, though we’ve assured that that won’t be the case.

GA: It is a concern, and it’s an empirical question. I believe that as the Dean of the College of Education, one of my responsibilities is to promote within the college the way we want to operate on behalf of our students. We are working together to encourage and incent ways for our college to work across departments, disciplines.

SN: What I’ve wanted to do for years now is to teach a Gen Ed class: What is Literature (Good For)? What I’d hope to do is work to have grad students from both English and Education, and it would be a pedagogical training ground for them. They would lead break-out sections and then we’d be able to make the competencies we’re trying to foster more explicit. Not just what is literature good for, but what is teaching literature good for.

I had a discussion with the folks involved in Gen Ed that I’ll be publishing in the upcoming issue about competencies. We have to figure out a way to talk about competencies that aren’t like other ways, which will run us over like a Mack truck, which don’t care what we care about.

GA: That’s right.

SN: But we can’t pretend as if that talk is going away. And good teaching should be able to specify what it is that your students will be able to do or think or how on the other side of it.

GA: That’s absolutely correct.

SN: A more concrete question in this line: I read an article of yours about transfer articulation agreements. One of the challenges we face here is that we take in more transfer students per year than first year students. If I remember your study correctly, it suggests that states with explicit articulation agreements don’t do any better in terms of student achievement than those who don’t. But you also said that we needed more data, and whether it has proven out any differently.

GA: It’s starting to look like it’s having an impact. But at the end of the day, what matters is what’s happening inside the institutions in question.

SN: So it won’t be enough to have the state wave its magic wand and say, “You must admit these students.”

GA: To come back to the question about policy: We have so much to add to the policy world because we know what goes on inside. We just have to combine it and present it properly. On competencies, I totally agree. We need to say what in the 21st century our students need in order to have as many opportunities and choices as possible. If you look at how we’ve created the higher ed system, we have these very narrow competencies: “This will equate to being an engineer, and this will equate to being a physician, etc.” But if you actually look at the transformative industries that have emerged, they are coming from all sorts of disciplines. They have certain core competencies—the capacity to think critically and analytically, the capacity to communicate, to lead, to collaborate. Those skills aren’t in any one’s discipline per se.

I think Vice Provost Jones is amenable to adding those functionalities, and that the SFF committee has done an enormous amount of work for which I’m quite grateful. I know that they are interested in the same thing I and so many faculty care about: how do we enrich the discussion around the evaluation of teaching? What have you seen as a dean and a program manager that might indicate how we could do that?

SN: The project I’m working on right now looks to a moment before the disciplines hardened and you had someone like Adam Smith who could write on political economy and aesthetics and moral philosophy and was a crack university administrator to boot...

GA: Right. If you look at some of the really impactful scholars, Enlightenment scholars, post-Enlightenment scholars, take someone like Jürgen Habermas, he cuts across philosophy, economics, sociology, political science...

SN: He’s not bound by those disciplines.

GA: That’s right. To me, that’s impactful. And our students, armed with that, enter into the world with a greater knowledge base. Again, to me, life is always about choices.

SN: A few concluding questions. On teaching and learning, first: How do we evaluate teaching, since we’ve having so much pressure put upon us through outcomes evaluation? This is a timely question, because we just got the memo from [Senior Vice Provost] Peter Jones on the sharing of some data from the electronic SFFs with certain students. And I’ve talked with him a fair bit about this.

GA: I’m meeting with him directly after you.

SN: One question that he and the SFF committee are considering and a question we all need to consider: How do we make sure that the SFF is only one tool in our kit in evaluating teachers? This is in part an abstract question, but then there are questions about resources. How can we observe all of us? How common is it for a peer teaching observation to offer truly helpful formative feedback?

There are questions about releasing data to the students through the SFFs—about whether they’re personnel records, for instance. And then there is what they’re actually presented with, which is right now a bunch of bars that look like a measure of cell-phone reception, when what the students need is something much richer with syllabi, etc.

I think Vice Provost Jones is amenable to adding those functionalities, and that the SFF committee has done an enormous amount of work for which I’m quite grateful. I know that they are interested in the same thing I and so many faculty care about: how do we enrich the discussion around the evaluation of teaching? What have you seen as a dean and a program manager that might indicate how we could do that?

GA: It’s such a complicated, challenging issue, but it’s so important. We’re being pushed by metrics that I’m really concerned are at times perhaps the wrong metrics. And we tend to look toward shortcut answers to large, intractable problems. The work I did in South Africa in terms of celebrating a
An Interview with Dean Anderson

Interview with Anderson continued from page 15

Rainbow Nation in post-apartheid society without actually dealing with the fundamental racial conflicts is analogous to what we’re doing now in celebrating metrics without engaging with what would constitute success and an equitable timeline we’d use to measure it.

The best, the most re-affirming things I ever experience as a professor is when I hear from students I haven’t heard from in 10 years or more. This just happened the other day and the graduate said—she’s now teaching in a charter school in New York—“What I learned from you in that class has had a massive impact.” (I still have to write back to her.) But there are systems we could put in place to evaluate impact over time. It would require us to really value teaching, and here we are back at that research-teaching tension.

“I think we are going to have to as a university community acknowledge that teaching is itself a core component of being a faculty member of equal worth.”

SN: Let’s look at the merit numbers. Let’s be honest about this. This varies college to college. Your college tends, not surprisingly, you could phrase it either as mistakenly de-emphasizing research or as being more equitable. My college, CLA, not so much. CST, not so much.

GA: I think we are going to have to as a university community acknowledge that teaching is itself a core component of being a faculty member of equal worth. I shouldn’t say this, but I remember my tenure process at Columbia. My chair came up, and he was trying to be informative and supportive after the college-wide meeting regarding my tenure and promotion, and he said, “Good news, we had a great discussion about you in the college-wide committee. It was a wonderful discussion. We really focused on the merits of your research and scholarship only, and we didn’t focus at all on your teaching and service as these aspects were less important to the process.” And I thought, “You just threw out 2/3 of the evaluation.”

SN: Right. At Columbia University Teachers College.

GA: Bless his soul, my chair was trying to be supportive. But I left feeling very confused as to what counts, though I felt supported as well. We should value teaching, and there are ways in which we can do peer-to-peer work, but it’s really difficult to do that work. We have autonomy in the classroom; we have autonomy in relation to our programs and departments, and we protect that autonomy with our lives.

SN: I think we are very frightened. Just thinking about my practices, I always tell students that teaching is about reverse engineering. I tell grad students this. But am I really doing that in my own courses? It’s scary. And if we’re on the tenure track we seem to get more defensive once we get tenure. We ask, “Who are you to come in and tell me...” Some of this is defensiveness. We are standing on academic freedom, which is sacrosanct. But a lot of it is fear.

GA: Is it, is it. Being an academic is deeply personal. Name another profession where 95% of the time people say no to you. When you’re sending out publications, you’re going to have to deal with rejection. If you’re passionate about your ideas, it’s a part of you that’s being rejected. But come back to de-centralization. What we have to say, “It’s ok to be great at that one thing that adds value to the college. Yes, you have to meet other threshold standards as well but not everyone has to excel at the same things. And if we value that differentiation and diversity we should give you avenues to do more of what you are really good at because it adds value to our college and our student experience, whether the contribution involves research, scholarship, service or teaching.” We haven’t created a system sophisticated enough to evaluate each other in all our differentiated contributions as a faculty. But that has nothing first and foremost to do with metrics as such and instead starts with an acknowledgment of what we stand for as a college and then making a commitment to developing a system that can measure it equitably and fairly. Which we should be able to do. Right?

SN: Right.

Tenure, Colleagues on the Teaching/Instructional Track, and Valuing Teaching

SN: This brings me to the recent controversy over tenure cases being turned back. Speaking as someone who has been charged with trying to think about the faculty perspective as a whole, I think that on these matters, it needs to be a conversation.

GA: It does.

SN: I would say, “I understand that we may have ideas about tenure standards not quite in line with yours. But we need to talk it out, and we can’t be changing rules in the middle of the game. We have to abide by the letter and the spirit of the contract, which sets rules for tenure even in non-TAUP units.”

GA: From my perspective, any college, any unit, any organization has to state a position and stick with it. Not if it’s empirically incorrect. But stick with it because that’s what we represent. That’s what I meant about not apologizing for being a College of Education. We are what we are. The diversity of our expertise is our greatest strength. You’re not going to then fit it into someone else’s idea of what should be valued without stating what you as a college values as a unified position. If this position is a divided one you know what happens with a divided organization. For me, it’s our responsibility to our colleagues to state what we are and then live that approach.

SN: One of the things that brings up, if we’re going to value teaching, we have an increasing number of colleagues not on the tenure track but are on the teaching/instructional track.

GA: Yeah.

SN: How do value them more properly? This has something to do with wanting longer contracts but then there is the competing need for flexibility in staffing. I have so many non-tenure track colleagues, who, by the way, are also publishing, but are teaching huge loads. And then they get one one-year contract after another. And I think that’s no way to reward good teaching.

GA: You know the weird thing about metrics? Often they’re misguided, but there’s always an opportunity in the metrics. It’s our responsibility to find those opportunities. One way to do that as the university moves to increasing its rankings, and everyone worships at the altar of the rankings, full-time positions are far more attractive than part-time, adjunct ones. Then there are ways to take what some people might find as the imposition of unrealistic metrics and still support our full-time colleagues. To me, all of this is building a case that you can validate using evidence and then building support for long-term contracts and paths to promotion. Those are things that are possible if you’re willing to engage.

SN: Right—you actually have to make the case. There are structural antagonisms at work in discussions about who gets tenure and who doesn’t. What concerns me is that this take the form of a conversation rather than fiat; so we can proceed at least knowing where we disagree. If we lack that, that’s where opacity and mistrust can be really corrosive.

GA: I agree. We also need to be mature about the process and honest about the process. Every hierarchy has points where choices are made. You can contest it as if you were flat-lining the hierarchy, but then you wake up and the hierarchy is still there.

I believe in this phrase, “sober engagement.” I believe in sober engagement. It’s not to lose your integrity or your principles; but it’s about engaging with
the world as it is even if you see it as potentially corrosive. Because without that, you’re actually letting down, as in the case of tenure and promotion, a whole bunch of pre-tenured folks who are more disempowered than you (if tenured). We cannot afford to give up on them because we are perhaps skeptical or mistrusting about the process.

I remember this story, I’ll never forget it. I was in South Africa in 1994-95, and someone told me that they were at a stop light, which they call a robot, and the squeegee guy was there, and he said to the owner of this beautiful white Mercedes. “Come tomorrow (the day of the first truly democratic national election), I’m coming to your house to get the car.” But the day passed, the ANC won the election and of course he didn’t get the car. It’s not to say that we shouldn’t contest, and strive for a better more transparent world, but we should be realistic about it as well. We should take the same approach with the tenure and promotion process as it is our collective responsibility.

Conclusion: Plans for Research and Teaching

SN: Well, I’ve already kept you an hour, and maybe we could just do a follow-up over email. But I did want to ask you what sort of research you want to do as Dean and what sort of courses you’d like to teach, though I know it’s hard to make time for it.

GA: You know, I can tell you that I’m revisiting the articulating agreements, now that the data sets have been updated. I’m also writing policy pieces and how we can make lemonade out of those lemons.

SN: We have a whole bunch of those.

GA: And yet there really are ways to do this. As far as teaching goes, I love teaching, but in order to do it well, you need to have enough time and a clear head. As a Dean, sometimes I feel as if I’m living in fuzz. I love teaching courses that really interrogate core identities. My whole teaching career I’ve done that. I really love teaching courses where you can teach. I’m going to go back to teaching again when I feel settled. I also love working with graduate students, both teaching them in courses and in my research. I will teach higher ed courses again, just like President Theobald is teaching a course on finance and leadership. As a Dean, I feel that I live vicariously through my faculty; I become sort of an editor as it plays through academic programs. It may be a proxy, but it does fill me with some joy and connection.

SN: I’ve really enjoyed this conversation.

GA: Likewise.

SN: Thank you so much.

The Way-Back Machine

In this installment of The Wayback Machine, from 1996, there are a few topics that may strike a familiar chord, among them the difficulties involved in planning, the need to develop faculty as teachers, and a graphic representation of the imperative balance spending on buildings with spending on “human capital.” (There is also a puckish “Mailbag” that maybe The Herald should revive.) But the most eye-catching story is an extended critique of Responsibility Centered Management. I talked with the author, Prof. Leroy Dubcek, and we both agreed that it would not be fair to compare, without a great deal of qualification, RCM as it existed at Indiana University 27 years ago with how it functions at IU now, let alone how Decentralized Budgeting will function at Temple starting next year. He also cautioned that he could not now find the source of his claim that the College of Arts and Sciences at IU reportedly lost 20% of its enrollment in the first two years to RCM as a result of poaching by other colleges and schools.

Still, he is convinced that many of his basic concerns remain relevant. For instance, if the state appropriation is raised—or, more likely, for us now, cut—how will these increases or decreases be allocated among the schools and colleges? I know that they are interested in the same thing I and so many faculty care about: what might these potential conflicts mean for our research, teaching, and service?

Whatever we think of RCM, it is here; we have to figure out how to make the best of it; and there may be some very good things to make. But the possibility of that happy outcome will depend in part on a clear-eyed appraisal of the system we’re in. I’m pleased to report that Prof. Dubcek has offered to write a column sometime next year to assess our new decentralized budgeting system once its details become clearer.
of Immanuel Kant at home without mentioning the readings in class does not inspire hard work or respect in a class full of admittedly sleepy and easily distracted college students. Of course, the onus is always on the student to perform well in whichever course he or she enrolls in, but listing a textbook on a syllabus and expecting it to be read thoroughly by the time a final exam rolls around often does a disservice to the students in the course.

A textbook is not, in and of itself, relevant to students unless the professor makes it so. There are few feelings worse than being an active, daily participant in class discussions only to find out that they've been wholly off-topic with the test material all year. I've been through multiple instances wherein a professor has assigned a long-term group project, allowed us ample time to complete it in class and then thrown in an exam on a textbook wholly unrelated to the project at hand. If the professor makes the text feel like an afterthought, his or her students will have no choice but to follow.

Any student can buy a book on political science and read it over a summer if he or she so chooses. Professors are here to give learning some personalization.

Deborah Stull, Assistant Professor (Teaching/Instructional), Biology and Member of the General Education Executive Committee

GOOD TEACHING: Flexible Plans

I think that good teaching is a lot like good parenting. Both require a plan, but both rely on flexibility. Both are set to help people succeed, but both recognize that sometimes people fail and that is OK. And both require participants to make hard decisions that look past the immediate present to a more distant future. And it is recognizing that all of these elements are equally important to making teaching successful that, in fact, helps make teaching successful. What do I mean specifically? Obviously a plan is needed for a class to be successful. Without some sort of plan, and some sort of well-considered plan, there would be chaos (according to the second law of thermodynamics, everything is moving towards disorder naturally, so a plan is DEFINITELY needed). But then things come up—not all classes are the same just like not all students are the same, so good teaching requires some flexibility. Yes, keep the overall goal of the course in mind, but change up the approach or take some extra time to work through a particularly sticky topic or let the class's interest fine tune the direction of the course. Likewise, it is unrealistic to believe that every outcome will be immediately good. Sometimes students, like children, fail. But failure is a part of life too, and, in fact, can be something good. During one of my very first years at Temple, I had to give a graduate student a C, which, because it was her second, meant that she was kicked out of the program. It was one of the toughest decisions that I had to make (as I say, good teaching means making hard decisions), but it had a surprisingly happy ending. The student was forced to come up with plan B, but it turned out that she loved Plan B (teaching middle and high school) and she ended up e-mailing me to thank me for making that hard decision. I am not trivializing the pain that failure brings or to say that all failure is good, but I am trying to say that all failure is not bad, and it is an important life lesson, as life is full of challenges and obstacles and hard decisions. And so to end here, I just want to say that good teaching really does involve seeing beyond the here-and-now. It can feel "easier" to give more points or pass all students, and it is easier, but it is not the right decision in the long run.

BAD TEACHING: Focusing Too Much on the Teacher or The Individual Student

It seems to me that there are many practices that could fall under the banner of "bad teaching," but when I thought about which to address here, I realized that to me they all fell under the overarching umbrella of teaching with a focus on either just the instructor rather or just the student—so an imbalance in the dynamics of the classroom. And to me, this stems from a recent trend that actually represents something good in the field—an interest in thinking about different ways to engage students and foster learning in the classroom aside from the traditional forms. But if this is taken to the extreme, either towards fulfilling the teacher's desire to use every new tool (technology!) and implement every new approach regardless of how they really "fit" in the class being taught or towards focusing so much on each student as an individual that the forest is lost for all of the individuals leaves and branches then that is when teaching goes awry. Technology is not the answer, nor is trying to adjust every bit of the classroom for every different learning style. Technology needs someone to lead it/control it/wrangle it, while students need to experience some level of cohesiveness and perhaps "disfluency" (to use a new educational term, which, I know derails my argument here a little) in order to be challenged. I do actually have a funny (well, in a sad sort of way) story for the first point, although I don't for the second—this is just something I feel, listening to students and teachers talk about flipped this and clicker that. But for my funny story; so my mother teaches at La Salle University. One day about 10 years ago she was running over to her class because she thought that she was late. She got to the classroom, and, noticing that the light was off and hearing no noise from the room, she pushed open the door and rushed into the room. ... only to find that the class before hers was still in session. But why hadn't she heard anything? Because the instructor of the class was sitting in the back of the room at a table with the students in front of him facing a screen as he clicked through a PowerPoint presentation, checking only to make sure that all students had read everything on the slide. And then he clicked to the next... So to me, this is a prime example of the belief in technology gone awry. I think that bad teaching really comes often from a lack of common sense and a belief in a magic bullet. Teaching, like learning, is hard....

Grace Holleran, Opinion Columnist, Temple News

GOOD TEACHING: Acknowledging Individual Students' Strengths and Weaknesses

I am the kind of student that teachers have nightmares about. I show up to class, I'm attentive; I make insightful comments during class discussions. I do well on tests. But when it comes to homework or punctuality of important assignments, I have the work ethic of a recently retired grandparent.

To be more concise: I am frustrating to teach, and I am fully aware of that. The best teachers I've had have acknowledged my strengths as a student without letting them compensate for my weaknesses.

In high school, after two frustrating years of receiving mediocre-at-best English grades, I found myself in the classroom of arguably the best teacher so far in my career as a student. He recognized my learning style from the get-go, and made sure to make me aware of that. At one point, he sat me down and said, "Grace, I know you're not just a kid who writes. You are a writer." He understood me.

In class, we ditched essays on Shakespeare and focused on performing it, as it was intended to be. The assignments were discussion-based, but he never invalidated students' opinions or forced his own upon them. He allowed creativity in projects and essays. The result was a group of students who truly understood the literature.

When I slacked off on homework and filler assignments, he was not easy on me. He gave me the grades I truly deserved, so at first, I did not see much improvement in them. But he worked with me, he let me prove myself, and by the time I finished a year of his class, I'd earned a solid A average. More importantly, I had met a teacher who believed in me, and thus, I began to do the same. My work ethic improved with my self-esteem.

BAD TEACHING: Seeing Sharks and Guppies

"You are a shark, Grace, and the rest of my students are guppies," the teacher of my "Advanced" Creative Writing class said.

She had undoubtedly just woken up from a nightmare about me. This teacher was concerned that my zealous approach to writing intimidated my classmates. She was worried about the classroom dynamic, which apparently was the responsibility of me, a student. Her "shark" comment indicated that she saw me as a threat, and her other students as weak. Not only does this demonstrate a glaring lack of ethics as a teacher, it was also uncomfortable for me to hear.

Using several comments like these, she passive-aggressively made me withdraw from the class. My guidance counselor and the English department head turned a blind eye. There were no behavioral problems or even missing assignments. She kicked me out of creative writing.
Dialogue on Good and Bad Teaching

Dialogue continued from page 18

because I liked it too much.

Not all hope was lost. I took on a senior project to replace her class, for which I ended up writing a short novel. She offered to act as my advisor to oversee the project. I politely (I think) declined. She couldn’t keep me from being a shark.

People call me pretentious when I say I don’t think good writers can gain much from creative writing courses. Perhaps they are right, but one bad teacher can heavily alter an impressionable high schooler’s views on education.

Steve Newman, Associate Professor, Department of English and Editor, The Faculty Herald

GOOD TEACHING: Taking Informed Risks

Like most teachers I know, I am rarely satisfied with my teaching. But when I think about good pedagogy in my own classes and in the many fine classes that I have observed, I find that they are often distinguished by the same thing that marks the best student work—taking an informed risk. By “informed,” I mean that these moments occur within a context where the instructor has made the aims of a particular discussion or assignment clear, its value for the course and for the broader competencies a class seeks to foster. By “informed” I mean also that the instructor has given students models of good written work and productive discussion, taking care to cite them when they emerge in class. Too often, I feel, we hide the ball from students. The rules of academic discourse are often hard to intuit, and knowing what a strong example of it like is only a good first step in being able to produce one. Finally, by “informed,” I mean that the professor, with a proper humility about all the things beyond her or his control, still trusts to the dynamics of the class.

It is under these conditions that pedagogical risks stand the best chance of paying off: posing the question to which the instructor truly does not know the answer, and often there is more than one; trying a new assignment that departs from typical academic genres; flipping a class so that time in class is centered on student inquiry rather than professorial talk, however intelligent and enchanting.

Of course, because these are risks, they might not work out, and good pedagogy requires that we acknowledge when this happens. We teachers are often loath to do that, as if our authority flows from being always right. Some years ago, I proposed a panel on “Productive Failures in Teaching Eighteenth-Century Literature.” I received only one submission and so the panel did not make—acknowledging our failures, I guess, is not a popular topic—though I could’ve probably taken up half the time recounting risks of my own that didn’t work out. If we ask our students to take intellectual chances, we must be ready to do so ourselves.

BAD TEACHING: Not Putting Students at the Center

The bad teaching I suffered through as a student and seen in other teachers and in my own case tends to emerge when the teacher forgets the students. A simple enough concept, but the causes are more complex than they may appear.

Of course, there are the more obvious causes of bad teaching—the teacher who can’t be bothered to put in the time required for competent, let alone excellent, teaching, because he or she is too consumed with writing the next article or chasing the next grant. This doesn’t happen as often as rumored, but it does happen. Then there are faculty who have just checked out as both scholars and teachers.

But the problem is less bad teachers, which tends to misunderstand the problem and unhelpfully stigmatize professors, than bad teaching. Many teachers put in long hours, but effective teaching, like effective learning, is not a direct effect of time put in. The problem is that in preparing—and I’ve certainly been guilty of this—we forget that students are neither buckets to be filled nor aspiring versions of us. Effective teaching typically requires reverse engineering, working backwards from where you want students to go and keeping in mind where they are starting from. (Like all metaphors, “reverse engineering” has its limits since the start and finish are often complex and vary somewhat with the individual student, and some attention must be paid to where they want to go.) This pedagogical progress, however, is less likely to emerge if teachers in their good-faith preparation do not provide air pockets, to switch metaphors. This is to say that we teachers are prone to forget that to gauge whether students are really getting the concepts at hand, they need time to talk, to ask questions, to think through things, aloud and in writing.

Being a teacher comes with many temptations, not least of which is the siren song of one’s own voice (again, I plead guilty). And some students, even good ones, can be fooled into thinking they are learning when they witness a powerful performance of this type. While engaging lectures certainly have their place, lecturing is only one string in a good teacher’s bow. Overused, it makes students passive; and this is a predictable effect of not making students visible in the first place, of keeping them in mind, of keeping them in the center of things. Which is where they must be.

A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Rebecca Alpert (RA), Professor, Department of Religion and Chair of the Editorial Board of The Faculty Herald

Jerry Iannelli (JI), Opinion Editor, The Temple News

Steve Newman (SN), Associate Professor, Department of English and Editor of The Faculty Herald

Deb Stull (DS), Assistant Professor, Department of Biology

How to Evaluate Teaching: The Insights and Blind Spots of the Student Feedback Forms

JI: It’s really hard to get a gauge from professors as to how they feel about teaching, so reading these essays was very enlightening for me, and I think it will be enlightening for all of our readers. So thank you guys for that.

To kick things off, if you’re looking for some student feedback on the Student Feedback Forms… I just did mine last night as a prep for today. I realized kind of offhand, I really only get in depth if I had a bad experience, which I’m sure you guys are probably concerned about. I think I may have gotten an off crop of teachers this year, which may be unfortunate, but I think I was a little bit too negative. I gave a couple multi-paragraph answers—I’m a writer, so I’ll write more than most people. I gave a few pretty in-depth critiques of a few of my professors, which I’m not typically wont to do. But the good ones I just gave two sentences and then I’m out. The ratings were great.

What portion of the SFFs [Student Feedback Forms] do faculty get?

DS: Everything. The whole thing. Pages and pages when people don’t comment, we get pages and pages of blank responses. Whatever goes in, comes out.

RA: The difficulty in elaborating on success extends to grading as well. I find that I have a very hard time when I’m grading—it’s very easy to grade bad papers because you know exactly what’s wrong, you know what the problems are—it’s very hard when you have “A” papers to really help the students figure out what you can give them. Sometimes I spend more time on the positive ones, just thinking about how do you really explain to this person what they did well. You just kind of assume…

JI: We have the same problem here at the paper. It’s really easy to walk over and kick over the sandcastle and tell someone all the things they’re doing wrong. It’s really hard to pick out good things to write about.
A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Discussion continued from page 19

SN: Also, with good students, it’s also a matter of figuring out what their next step would be. They’ve done everything well in the context of this class—but what is the next step? One of the nice things about it is that it makes your goals more present to you when someone has hit them. Why is this a good paper? You have your rubric, but I find even good rubrics have some trouble catching the finer points of evaluation that are often quite important. I’m thinking about, well, if this student were taking a more advanced class with me or one of my colleagues, what would I want to tell them? I find myself actually writing more or at least as much on really accomplished papers, though it takes longer, I agree.

One of the other things is that it raises the question of how we know whether a course has gone well. This is always one of the real challenges. This may speak in some sense to Grace’s contribution. The students who are really motivated, you want to do whatever you can to encourage them, but you also want to give them breathing space to develop, and one suspects that they would have done pretty well with a range of teachers. Whereas you feel like that the students who go in who need more help. Do you judge based on the best-prepared students are doing? The least well-prepared? How do you gauge that?

DS: And part of it, too, is that sometimes you don’t know until later, especially if it’s a new course. You have a feeling, but you don’t know until you get feedback, sometimes a long time afterwards. I teach a writing course for which I get the most fabulous emails that say, “I really hated that course and everything about it because I hate to write, but boy am I glad I took it.” But I didn’t realize that at the time. It wasn’t until like eight months out when I had to x, y, or z.” The course is a friendly environment, so that kind of late response is fine. I know that that is how many of them feel. I ask them at the beginning, “Let’s raise our hands, on a scale of 1 to 10 how many of you would rather have all the bones in your body broken than write?” Ok, if you’re a 1-3 I’m trying to move you to a 4 to 5.” But sometimes you don’t know until later on. Or till you’ve taught the course again.

SN: The valuable responses Deb describes are something that the SFFs will tend to miss because of when they’re administered. I’d say the same thing about Rebecca’s goal of getting students to question their own assumptions, since students don’t become conscious of this until well after the course ends. Then there’s Deb’s analogy between teaching and parenting—that we need to be flexible about how we seek to impart the competencies keyed into the course. This is the sort of wise pedagogical approach that will register subliminally, if at all, in SFFs. This doesn’t mean that we just throw up our hands and say we have no way of assessing teaching. But it does suggest that some of the value of what you do as a teacher can’t be known immediately.

J1: Until students are in the working world, even.

RA: I give mid-semester evaluations on my own. And that’s so much more helpful, since I can change what I’m doing. The students are more invested, too. They can say, “I didn’t like this.” Or “This was great—can you do more of this?” I can take the opportunity to collectively say, “You really missed this in the class. I can add it.” Or “Here’s why I’m not going to.”

J1: That’s wonderful to hear.

RA: But at the end of the semester, it’s like, “I can’t do anything for those guys anymore.” And I think part of the attitude that a student has in filling out the form at the end of the term is, “I’m grading the professor; I’m not really engaging or helping the teacher much.” Sometimes I’ll use a comment in the future to plan the class another time I often think things are going well when half of the students tell me they love it and half say they hate it.

SN: One of the things that I’m hoping, and I believe this hope is shared with the committee dedicated to SFFs, is that the SFFs are going to not only be a gateway not only to looking to what has to be said is a pretty barebones representation of teaching but also a gateway to statements of teaching philosophy, to syllabi, to explanations of what we think went well or didn’t in a course. So my hope is as long as we keeping making this data available to students, that it really is just one method, one yardstick of teaching quality. So have you checked out the online SFF data?

DS: Does the data matter to you?

J1: A great deal. Since day one, I’ve used whatever tools I can. I’ve used ratemyprofessor pretty extensively.

DS: So, word of mouth from people who have taken the class.

J1: Word of mouth. For the most part, it’s really helped. Any tool I’ve been able to use has really helped… I firmly think that any rating system is a net positive, but the new one doesn’t seem in-depth enough.

DS: My question is not should there be anything that gets shared but rather is what’s getting shared helpful. Ratemyprofessor or word of mouth, they probably will be somewhat less about the score and more about the comments and the commentary. In contrast, the SFF data the students see is a slew of Us and Ls and Ms [Upper, Lower, and Middle].

SN: At least for now.

J1: I completely agree with that. The biggest value I get from ratemyprofessor… I look at it from a journalistic standpoint, so I’m looking for repeating comments. If there’s one “This guy sucks,” that doesn’t really carry any weight, but if you get 15, “This guy just teaches from the book.” If you get that repeatedly, it’s illuminating.

SN: There might be something there.

J1: Right.

RA: I didn’t think that the goal of making the SFF data available to students was a pedagogical goal; they want more of them. They know that negative incentive makes for bad teaching evaluations.

J1: Who is “they”—the committee?

RA: Yes.

J1: And who is on this committee?

SN: If you go on to the Faculty Senate site and go onto committees, you can find it there. It is made up of faculty put forth by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee; there are people from the Law School, CST, Fox and other colleges. And then there are administrators—it’s chaired by Peter Jones, Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. We have a few people from the Measurement Center, Jim Degnan and Sally Frazee. Joe Ducette, who is an associate dean in the College of Ed. I think that they would be happy to talk about their work if you asked them.

J1: I’ll give them a call. Do you think that they’re a fair group of people?

SN: I do. They’ve put in a lot of work putting this instrument together. It used to be that Temple did not use a university-wide form. Then one was mandated by President Adamany; and then this committee was formed, I believe, as an ad hoc committee on how to make this a better tool. Still, a lot of faculty I’ve met are deeply skeptical of the SFFs.

J1: Really?

SN: Yes. One of the things that many of them think is that it rewards easy
A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Discussion continued from page 20

teaching unduly and punishes more demanding or harder graders. I would be very interested to see data on that. There’s also a question as to whether it really measures learning or rather measures student attitudes toward their learning. There are some hard questions that can be asked about the evaluations.

The Committee is not ignorant of these questions, but they feel that this is a valid instrument for what they want it to do. I think what they want to do now is to make this not the only way of talking about teaching quality, and I think the rest of the faculty is completely in agreement with that. Ok, so we have this instrument, let’s not let it be the only instrument. Let’s have a richer discussion, along the lines of the statements we all provided for this dialogue, about what we think we mean when we say “good teaching” and “bad teaching.” I think that’s the direction they want to go in but, again, you should talk with them. My hope is that the faculty helps them in that effort since that’s really what we need.

Teaching Gen Ed, Disciplinary Knowledge, and The Transferability of Competencies

SN: If I could, I’d like to ask you a question, Jerry.

JF: Sure.

SN: In your essay, I was struck by your saying that the best teachers you’ve had have been almost exclusively in Gen Ed.

DS: I was struck by that, too.

JF: Me, too. I was when I wrote that. Often, I don’t know what I really think till I’m halfway through writing.

SN: That happens to me as well. It seems that for you teaching often goes awry when the professor is trying to stuff too much in.

JF: Yep.

SN: So that the lectures are on x and the readings are on y and then the test is on z.

JF: Yes.

SN: Which I think is bad teaching no matter what we say.

DS: I was just about to say...

SN: And I’m not defending it. But I’m wondering if that happens less frequently in Gen Ed because Gen Ed courses don’t have that disciplinary burden that non-Gen Ed courses have. That’s just a thought. But I’m more interested in what your ideas about why this has been your experience.

JF: I think that’s definitely true. It didn’t cross my mind at the time but I think that it’s absolutely true. I think it varies greatly with the major, first of all. In more creative-based, English-based classes I’ve taken, there’s been more out-of-the-box thinking. Whereas if you’re a bio major, you need to know the bones of the hand; or if you operate on somebody’s hand, you have to know not to put a finger on a face.

SN: That’s what we’d call a bad surgical outcome.

JF: So there are things that definitely vary by major. But I think it’s a function of the Gen Ed approach, where you’re forced to think outside of what your little world is. Stemming from that, the professors in Gen Ed seem to be a little more invested. Your major is a trade—you’re learning a trade at that point. If this is your 3rd or 4th year, you’ve been getting journalism every day, every day. I think it’s more of a function of the Gen Ed program, where professors are allowed to have at it.

If you’ve taught Gen Ed, you’ve noticed a lot of kids just don’t put the effort in. I’ve found when I’ve put my foot to the pedal in a Gen Ed course, I’ve been able to glean new things to bring into my major than I actually find in my journalism courses.

DS: This is so heartening, since that’s what the Gen Ed program is supposed to do.

SN: I’m wondering if this squares with your experiences, Rebecca. You teach courses both in the discipline and in Gen Ed. Do you find much of a difference in how you approach the classes?

RA: It’s a hard question; my Gen Ed class is in Honors, so it may be a different experience than the majority.

JF: I’m in Honors, too, so...

RA: That might say a lot. People who get to teach in Honors are still really excited about what they’re teaching. I don’t have any CLA students in the Religion in Philadelphia course I’m teaching this semester. For me, it’s exciting. I get to meet film students, science majors, engineers, people from all over the university, and they are coming to this with a fresh outlook. But also Steve and I both—and maybe you too, Deb—we don’t teach professional undergraduates.

DS: I do, sort of; they’re more pre-professional in Biology.

RA: We teach the students who say, “I’m not buying that I have to have a vocation by the time I finish my BA. I’m too excited about this stuff I’m learning and I want to go learn more.”

SN: We are lucky that way, though I think we have to do more thinking about how our degrees lead to making a living as well as making a life.

RA: We are lucky. I teach a religion and sexuality course, and by definition people come excited to it.

DS: Just the title should do it.

SN: This praise for Gen Ed’s distance from disciplinary knowledge is interesting because when I talk to colleagues who don’t teach much or any Gen Ed, many are skeptical for precisely this reason, that knowledge in Gen Ed isn’t as grounded in a particular discipline.

When I teach literature courses, there is a certain body of knowledge I’m working within. If I’m teaching a course on representations of criminality in eighteenth century literature, there is a body of knowledge I’m looking for them to grasp... Or a better example would be the survey of English literature. It’s impossible to give anything close to a complete picture of English literature from, say, 1660 to 1900. You’re always having to choose representative cases. Still, there is a body of problematics and issues, at least. On the other hand, if I think I’ve only taught that, if none of that transfers...

That to me is the real question—the transferability of skills and competencies. I wish I had better data on that. We hope what we’re teaching is going to carry beyond the classroom and the discipline, because a lot of these students are not going to be English professors, and thank God they aren’t, because there aren’t many jobs out there. What could we do to confirm or disconfirm that these skills transfer?

This question also speaks to graduate education. We keep training all these people, and there aren’t many jobs out there, and so our professional organization says, “You should be training them for alt-ac [alternate academic] jobs.” Well, I hope I’m doing that. But what I know best is how to train them to be literary scholars. I don’t know if these skills transfer. There’s
A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Discussion continued from page 21

some anecdotal evidence for it, but I’m not satisfied with that, and I wonder. Do you think about this, Rebecca?

RA: I think about it because I have a very circuitous job history. I did a PhD in my twenties and got tenure when I was 50. In that period in between, I was doing other work. Some of it was academic administration. Some of it was as a member of the clergy. I really felt like the PhD gave me authority. I’d written a book! It’s really huge—I’m in religion, so I view it as a rite of passage. You are a different person when you’ve finished the dissertation. No matter how weird and strange what you’re writing about is, no matter how complicated the process is, no matter how much we might want alter the process itself, that act of completing something that you know more about than anybody else in the world means something. I don’t know if that’s a transferable skill as much as a transferable attitude.

DS: I agree with that.

RA: The sense you have a power in the world that the BA or the Master’s degree just doesn’t capture.

DS: I, too, went a circuitous if slightly shorter route, and I agree. It’s the process of knowing that you can accomplish something that no one else has done, and on your own, primarily, and facing lots of hardship while doing it. You have to get experiments to work, and they often don’t work, and you have no idea why, and then your PI loses his grant, and you have to figure out how to do something more cheaply, and all these things are problem-solving, critical thinking, and the like, and there’s no way that these things aren’t going to be useful.

JI: That touches exactly on what I found most valuable in gathering all these experiences from Gen Ed. Critical thinking is critical thinking. Your experiments don’t work, you have to figure out why. Newspapers are my thing. Sometimes people don’t want to talk to us about sensitive subjects, and we have to figure out a way to get at the truth.

SN: And also to look critically at what people are telling you. Someone may talk to you but not really be saying anything.

JI: Exactly.

SN: Or may not be telling you what’s true.

JI: I feel like I’ve gleaned more from getting different perspectives, even wildly different perspectives, on critical thinking from Gen Ed than from, “Hey, I’m a journalist; here’s how I did it; good-bye.”

DS: We would hope that that would be a skill encouraged and fostered in your Journalism classes, too.

JI: It definitely is being encouraged; but I think the more perspectives, the better. But back to the question of feedback and evaluation, do you think there’s a way to measure if skills transfer?

SN: I feel we have to ask these questions because I feel that the No Child Left Behind model is creeping up. That is, that what we are facing is increasingly demands for accountability. And it’s not all sparked by the worst sort of reductive thinking that wants to measure faculty worth only by how many students taught or the like. The pressure of mounting student debt compounded by a bad labor market logically leads students to ask “What have I learned? What has this learning done for me?” Learning may be hard to measure and in some respects impossible even in the scope of a four-year experience. But I do think we owe it to our students to ask the questions, “How do we measure learning?” There are ways.

One of the questions is whether we’d want a standardized test at the end of four years.

DS: I’m guessing the answer would be no.

SN: At first glance, it’s horrifying. But then, “Why not?” Why shouldn’t you be able to measure at the end a student’s ability to produce a coherent, analytical account of something, whether we understand the genre produced as an essay, a lab report, or a news article? Are there not we things we could specify as we tested? I’m just playing Devil’s Advocate here. But I think the question has to be asked. And insofar as we can generate good knowledge—it doesn’t have to quantitative—but we can generate good conversation and knowledge around what we’re learning that is specific to disciplines and what we’re learning that is more transferable, I think we’re obliged to it.

RA: Aren’t we talking about the opposite of a standardized test? We’re talking about an un-standard test, something analogous to a PhD dissertation, that would make you feel at the end like you’ve accomplished something, some cumulative moment...

SN: Like a portfolio...

DS: You don’t think taking a standardized, fill-in-the-bubble test would do that for you?

[Laughter]

RA: Right. I do think Steve is on to something in asking, “Wait a minute, how do you pull this together and assess it?” I have one tool that I use in my Honors Religion in Philadelphia. One of the elements of the final portfolio is to write a paragraph on how you’ve met each of the goals I outlined on the syllabus, or to tell me whether these are the right goals, or where you would direct me to bring the course more into line with these goals. I absolutely think that there is something about a project at the end of anything that really makes a difference. But I worry about the bubbles.

DS: But what would that be? It would be different in every discipline. We do that for Honors on some level. In our department you have to do research and have to present it as a poster, and that’s a mini-version of what you’d be doing with the PhD. But what would that look like in other disciplines?

SN: Consider [Richard] Arum and [Josipa] Joska’s Academically Adrift, a text that has been properly controverted. But it did pretend to try to measure student learning across disciplines, comparing how much business majors learned vs. how much science majors learned more, etc.

RA: And what did it say? That science majors and liberal arts majors learned more.

SN: Right. Again, there have been questions have been raised about that data. But it was an attempt to do something in this line. But one of the things that this whole conversation reminds me of—so, the thing about Honors classes is that they are capped at 20.

RA: I was going to say the same thing.

The Material Conditions of Teaching and Faculty Autonomy

SN: One of the points that this raises is that talking about teaching while not talking about the material conditions of teaching is dangerous. Because then we ask, “What is the default going to be for measuring student learning?” The default might be some silly, reductive standardized test because the labor required is just too high when the instructional budget tends to be flat these days. That’s going to take resources, and students might well be more effective than we are in raising why tuition and class size is going up. Faculty get looked at as self-interested, “Of course you want smaller classes because you don’t want more work.” But particularly at Temple, you’d think the students should have a consequential voice in this because this place exists largely on your tuition dollars, given the small size of our endowment and the fact that...
A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Discussion continued from page 22

we still aren’t bringing the grant money you might expect from a research university this size, though we’re getting better at that.

JI: And state funding is shrinking.

SN: And state funding is shrinking. But the question is then if tuition has been raised in part to plug that hole, why are the caps on our classes rising? And who is doing the teaching? And do they have the time to do the reflective sort of teaching we think leads to the best outcomes? A related question is the degree to which good teaching is dependent on the conditions of employment—part time vs. full time, tenure track vs. non-tenure track.

DS: And the sheer number of people doing the job and the space appropriate for the job. All of those things.

SN: We’ve talked about Honors courses, which are small. But I can imagine a well-done 500-person course. I don’t want to be doctrinaire and say, “All classes must be seminars, and we should aim toward the Oxbridge tutorial system.” First of all, because that’s never going to happen. Second of all, it might not be necessary. But I’m wondering, Jerry, has your experience in larger classes tended toward the passivity we often worry about, or have you encountered really successful examples of pedagogy there? Does the size of the class make a difference?

JI: Absolutely. The biggest class I’ve taken is the Intro to Journalism class, with about 250 kids in the giant Anderson lecture hall. Your stereotypical huge class. I was an unmotivated freshman, I sat in the back. I was on my laptop, and as I’m sure you know, I wasn’t concentrating on the class. I was looking at Buzzfeed articles. The smart kids hit the ground running; I was not one of them. Since then, hopefully, I have made up for that.

That aside, I think the issue for big classes, around 50 or 60 kids. I think those courses are just designed to give general knowledge, rather than go in-depth, like your Sexuality and Religion class is a very specific area; you physically can’t do that for 60-70 kids.

RA: I teach 120.

JI: Wow. I take that back.

RA: I grade every week. There was an article in the Times today about how regular quizzes actually work to increase learning better than midterms or finals.

DS: I hate pop quizzes.

RA: I hate them, too, and don’t use them. I give weekly reaction papers. They are only a couple of paragraphs. My frustration with the big classes is that I don’t get to know so many of them. I see them and I smile at them in the hallway. And I’ve read a lot of their work. But I can’t connect the name and the work to their face.

DS: I agree with that, too.

SN: Looking at Grace’s response, we can see that what mattered to her in the classes she cited was whether she was known. Whether she was recognized for who she is, warts and all. I’ve taught pretty regularly the 100 per-section survey of British Lit, and I found with 100 if I would go to the sections and co-teach, then I could get to know most of them, at least. But then the material conditions re-assert themselves. They militate against sections—that’s more rooms, that’s fewer students per TA.

RA: It’s become harder to do.

SN: Yes. It is harder to know the student well enough to provide specific feedback and follow up on it, and large classes constrain the types of assignments we can provide.

RA: It feels like I’m teaching online. I’m reading all of their assignments through Blackboard and writing notes back to them, but there’s not enough face-to-face connection.

JI: Thank you for doing that, because I’ve never encountered that in the larger classes I’ve taken. I’ve taken 1-2 large classes on the CLA side, and we were in lecture 2 days a week and then once a week with the TA, and she was busy writing some sort of academic paper the whole time, trying to get it published, and that was clearly her priority. Not to knock all TAs, of course; most of them have been very nice to me. I’ve enjoyed the lectures in all the large classes I’ve taken, with the exception of the Stats class I’m taking now, but I think that’s a function of its being Statistics. I have not gotten any real personal anything in the larger classes; I’ve gotten information, which has been helpful, and I learn things on my own, which is in part what college is about. It’s really an anomaly that you do what you do.

RA: I don’t like my TA grading, because then I don’t know what the students have learned, I won’t know what they got during the week.

SN: I’m not nearly as noble as you are on this—

RA: I only do one of these classes a year—

SN: What I do is try to grade at least one thing from every student, more if I can. A certain number are double-graded so that there would be some uniformity in the grading.

RA: That’s the hard part with TAs.

JI: To go back to feedback, what has your feedback been for large courses?

SN: When I was Director of Undergraduate Studies, I surveyed our majors. And the students don’t like large lectures. It may be particularly true of English majors, who don’t become English majors to be talked at. They become English majors because they have something to say about these texts. Sometimes it’s the case that what they have to say about the text isn’t as well-thought out as they think it is. But that’s why we all get together in the room, to hash these things out. I think that they find the large lecture classes less congenial to learning. And we have great people teaching these courses, like Miles Orvell, and they do the best they can with the format, and some of them really like teaching them. I enjoy teaching them, too, and I’ve received largely positive SFFs.

But so many things about large classes frustrate me, down to the fact that the seats don’t move. I’ve thought of how to use these numbers to our advantage—say, having everybody who thinks the sonnet says x caucus over there, and everybody who thinks it says y over there, and so on. But the sheer physical layout makes it tough to do something more pedagogically innovative things you might want to do.

For the students, it gives them the chance to be passive. Even if I try to keep them involved by saying something like, “Jenny said something really interesting on Blackboard” and then I call on her to talk about what she said. And then sometimes the students get a bit freaked about it: “I didn’t come to lecture to be singled out!”

JI: I had a professor who put up Twitter feeds of random students in courses.

DS: Biology students don’t particularly like large classes, either. They want to feel that they’re learning something from somebody that they can easily interact with and talk with and that they can raise their hand and shout out wrong answers and it will be fine. It’s harder to feel that in a class of 400, no matter how open and approachable the professor tries to be.

Discussion continued on page 24
A Student-Faculty Discussion on Good and Bad Teaching

Discussion continued from page 23

JI: Something that this conversation may be missing: as a student, we think that this school is designed for business majors. Fox has its banners all over the place. From a sheer numbers standpoint there are more Fox students than anywhere else. They seem to be the face of the university. I don’t know if a sort of business-like, top-down mentality has crept into what the faculty do. Offhand, how much are you told by the higher ups how to teach vs. how much autonomy you guys are given?

SN: There are for some courses common syllabi, as in First Year Writing. But even in First Year Writing, if you have taught the course for a couple semesters, you have freedom to design our own syllabi.

JI: That’s something we have no idea about.

DS: We are very autonomous, and I’m not tenure track, and I still am very autonomous.

SN: We have a lot of choices that we can make. We decide what books we are going to read...

JI: Good to hear.

DS: ...The assignments.

RA: That’s the fun part.

DS: ...What the focus is.

SN: And I wouldn’t want it any other way. The one downside is that autonomy can sometimes lead to defensiveness. “Who the hell are you to come in and tell me how I should teach?” I admit to the same impulse. The instructor’s autonomy has to be honored, but it can sometimes lead to an unwillingness, a resistance to discussions about teaching. That’s in part because discussions about teaching can seem content-free. And the stakes sometimes aren’t clear.

DS: Or they can be driven by odd sources.

SN: The President has gone on record saying that the curriculum belongs in an important way though not exclusively to the faculty. That’s one of the things about teaching evaluations. On one hand, students are often informed judges about whether they’ve learned or not. But there’s a certain way in which finally judging that has to be up to the faculty members.

RA: I think Steve originally decided to do this because of this gap. There is so much that we take for granted, that we assume that you guys are going to know, and there’s a lot you don’t know about us and we think we know about your lives and we think we know about your priorities, and we try to find out, but we don’t.

This year, I was upset that our students didn’t know some basic facts. What do you mean that you don’t know that Kennedy died 50 years ago. But somebody said to me that this is the first class that has gone through K-12 under No Child Left Behind. So if you ask them anything that was on the test, they’ll know, but otherwise... Their teachers are straining to give them what’s on the test.

JI: Unless you’re very close to a professor, you really don’t hear about the process about this came about, why a professor is teaching you this, maybe from a personal experience I want to give to you guys versus what a dean handed you teach.

DS: I just had this conversation today with my class about SFFs. They asked me, “What happens to teachers if they get bad SFFs? What good comes from good ones? And how do they decide who teaches what class?”

RA: I can tell you as a department chair, I understood it was my job to go over every single teaching evaluation for every faculty member in my department. Basically, what I did was look for the people really at the bottom and make sure that they read their evaluations. Mostly, the people on the bottom don’t want to read them. But that’s up to the individual faculty member on whether they want to look at these things.

DS: Actually, the NTTs in the Bio department write reflections on their SFFs as part of their teaching portfolio.

SN: It was kind of Rebecca to mention the idea behind this conversation. I think faculty and students are to some degree black boxes to each other, as teachers and as learners; and to remedy that, we need to talk with each other. My hope is that this will not be the last of these conversations.

Distinguished Professor of History Visits Temple to Talk Lincoln

Foner continued from page 9

in that light. During the 1840s Lincoln had shied away from Abolitionism even though he hated slavery and perceived it as theft of labor, and he had to publicly deny he wanted equality between whites and blacks out of consideration for his ambitions. In the 1850s Lincoln had supported African colonization as an alternative to Emancipation for African American slaves, and this fact is often cited by those insisting that Lincoln was racist. Foner noted, however, that Lincoln had never been recorded as saying anything that endorsed a viewpoint embracing black inferiority. Rather, Congressman Lincoln feared that America was too polarized to ever treat blacks fairly so he thought emigration would be a better alternative. After his election and the start of the Civil War, President Lincoln attempted to work out a compromise with slave border states remaining in the Union, such as Delaware, to free slaves and compensate former owners over a twenty-year period. Lincoln’s effort to compromise failed, and he advised black leaders to emigrate. By 1862, practical war considerations and strategy pushed Lincoln gradually toward Emancipation. Lincoln came to believe that African American soldiers had earned their citizenship. Foner argued that at the end of the war, Lincoln had freed himself from old ideas such as compromise and colonization and had begun to imagine America as a biracial nation that needed to address the injustices of slavery’s legacy. Although Lincoln’s evolving position on slavery and race has been a familiar topic to professional American historians, seeing a master historian at work disseminating that knowledge to undergraduates reminded me what a pleasant atmosphere of collegiality our university can foster between renown scholars and our Temple diamonds.

In other Eric Foner-related news, he has also recently co-edited a compilation of eighteen historiographical essays for the American Historical Association with historian Lisa McGirr, written by influential scholars to highlight the current contours and leading debates within the field of American History. This newly-released volume, American History Now, is available through our own Temple University Press.

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Representative Faculty Senate Minutes, September 9, 2013

Attendance:
Representative Senators and Officers: 43
Ex-officio: 1
Faculty, administrators and guests: 16
Total attendance: 60

1. Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 1:47pm.

2. Approval of Minutes:
The minutes from the Representative Faculty Meeting for March 22, 2013 were moved, seconded and approved.

3. President’s Report:
President Rahdert invited all the faculty to become involved in governance, and invited them to attend further Senate meetings.

He announced that there is much happening this fall. This our first full year with our new President and Provost, and we will have a new agenda and new initiatives. These include:

- The campus master-plan
- A response to the GenEd evaluation
- The new decentralized budgetary model
- Athletics – we have a new director
- On line learning – over the summer we joined a consortium and will continue to develop standards
- We need to review the new E-SFFs now that we have more experience with them
- There will be some new graduate school initiatives.
- There will also be some changes in RPPC

We hope to revitalize our collegial assemblies

Following the President’s report the meetings from April 11, 2013 were approved.

4. Vice President’s Report:
Vice President Jones began by thanking Joan Shapiro and Mark Rahdert for leaving our committees in good condition.

She announced that there is a list of committee vacancies on the Senate web page, and asked that we consider serving. She highlighted several opportunities to volunteer for unfilled seats:

- The Standing Committee on the Continuous Revision for the Faculty Handbook will begin meeting this year after several years of inactivity. This will be an important activity this year because the policies stated in the current version of the Handbook have fallen out of line with both the contract and current practices.
- The Budget Review Committee will also be important especially with the beginnings of RCM.

- The same is true of EPPC.
- CATA is always an important committee.

She announced that we are looking at the Senate’s current committee structure with the intent of upgrading and updating the procedure and charges of our standing committees. We will also be considering how best the Senate committees can best interact with entities outside of the Senate.

5. Dialogue with Dai
Provost Dai began by welcoming us back to a new academic year at Temple. He thanked Shapiro for her work last year, and looks forward to working with Rahdert.

He then made some remarks about the class of 2017. This is the first time the President has used a class’s graduating year to designate the class’s name. There will be many people working very hard to ensure that every incoming freshman has a four year path to graduation.

Average SAT scores are up 19 points from the previous year. This year’s incoming class has 540 students in the honors program compared with 330 last year. Our international freshman students have increased by 45% thanks to Brooke Walker’s work.

Provost Dai announced several new initiatives:

- RCM is coming. This will be our last fiscal year using the old model.
- We expect that RCM will make Temple more competitive in its dealings with the outside world, but we do not want it to encourage competition within the university. Therefore, he is establishing a new committee consisting of both faculty and administrators. This committee will be charged with examining all newly proposed programs and courses. Jodi Laufgraben will be responsible for the formation of this committee.
- The development of the Physical Plant Master Plan is well underway. The progress can be reviewed and commented upon using the website set up for the purpose.
- He emphasized the importance of improving our standing in the US News and World Report rankings. His goal is that we be in the top 100 within the next three years.
- A second goal is to increase the number of tuition paying master’s students by 2000.

Terry Dolan from Tyler asked about the possibility of support for master’s students in Tyler. She stated that Tyler admits many master’s students who go elsewhere because we do not provide support and elsewhere does.

The Provost responded that we want our master’s students to pay tuition. Two thousand more tuition paying master’s students would give us another $50,000,000.00 to use for good things.

- A third goal is to add 2000 more international students.
- He plans a review of GenEd. The outside review was quite positive compared with most of the other GenEd programs in the country, but it still needs to be seen if our GenEd is producing the right skill sets to help our students get jobs.
- We will be finding ways to improve services to our students and to our faculty.

Professor Spodek from CLA proposed that we should be looking at ways to
provide career training for Pennsylvania’s public school teachers.

The Provost responded that the new Dean of Education has recognized this need and is investigating possibilities.

Professor Black from Biology asked whether schools will be given funds to support master’s as TA’s.

The Provost replied that TA’s and RA’s should go to PhD students. Master’s students should be bringing money into the university.

Professor LaFollette from CST asked how much support departments will get for setting up new master’s programs.

The Provost replied that under RCM, schools will be able to keep the bulk of the income generated.

Professor Newman from CLA and Editor of the Faculty Herald asked the Provost if he would make some comment on the letter posted on the Faculty listserv by Professor Angel from the Law School. This letter stated that there had been seven tenure cases that had been approved at all levels prior to the Provost and then turned down. Newman asked whether the facts in the letter were accurate and if so, could the Provost explain why this happened.

The Provost responded that it would be improper for him to comment on individual tenure cases, but that he would give some comments in the abstract.

He stated that he takes his role in tenure cases very seriously. He went on to say that “… these are the most important decisions for the University and for the individuals.” He exercises his own judgment based upon what he sees. He pointed out that as Dean there were cases in which the college voted against tenure and as Dean he reversed them.

The Provost then said that there were some things in the listserv posting that were inaccurate:

This is not the first time at Temple that a provost has reversed a previously positive decision.

These decisions are the result of Provost Dai enforcing the academic expectations, and this enforcement makes it easier to attract top scholars to Temple.

With these cases, we denied tenure to 15% of the candidates. Is this a high rate? He would prefer 0%, but the result this year was 15%. We could inquire of other universities whether that is excessive.

When asked what the rate of tenure denial at the University of Pennsylvania, Dai responded that at the time he left it was his impression that roughly 60% of those seeking tenure were denied.

Vice President Jones from the College of Education asked whether, given these results, it might be better if the University Tenure and Promotion committee went back to reviewing all cases.

The provost responded that he will take this request under advisement.

Presentation by CFO Ken Kaiser:
Kaiser thanked Rahdert for the opportunity to talk with the Senate.

He began his presentation by reminding us that in 1993 Temple began to consider a model similar to our RCM model and abandoned it. He continued that we have on occasion in the past run small test cases.

His presentation is well summarized by the material presented on his website: http://www.temple.edu/cfo/decentralized-budgeting/documents/FacultySenateSteeringCOMmitteeSept32013.pdf

Part way through the presentation, Professor Angel from the Law School rose to make two observations.

First, she requested that PowerPoint slides and similar information be made available for study prior to Senate meetings. She put this into the form of a motion:

Moved – that all written materials and PowerPoint slides be made available to the Faculty Senate at least 3 days prior to a meeting.

The motion was seconded.

President Rahdert pointed out that as a motion from the floor this could not be voted on until our next meeting and requested that we hold discussion until that meeting.

Professor Angel’s second point had to do with the finances of the Health Care System. She is concerned that Hahnemann “grabbed” affiliations that we were expecting to join Temple after our bond ratings fell to junk status. It was stated that Temple University’s bond status fell as well in response to this. She further reminded us that President Liacouras set up two separate corporations, but the “firewall has been breached.” The situation is exacerbated now that Kaiser is acting as both Dean of Medical School and also CEO of the Health Care System.

CFO Kaiser responded that:
- The hospital bonds were already at junk bond status.
- Temple University’s bond rating has not fallen.
- There has been no breach of the firewall.
- Historically, there have been many times in which the Dean of the Medical School and the CEO of the Hospital were the same person.
- The Board of Trustees has said that they will not let the Health System affect the University. We have never given, and never will give Temple undergraduate tuition to the Health System.
- For Temple, parents are more interested in the US News and World Report rankings than in our bond status.

Professor Angel then stated that article from the wall Street Journal reported that physicians are leaving Temple.

CFO Kaiser responded that we hired 42 new doctors this year and will hire 66 next year. He stated that Dean/CEO Kaiser is letting physicians go who are not productive, but we have a net growth in physicians.

Kaiser finished his presentation by reminding us that RCM will start July first, with a policy to hold harmless add colleges for the first year.

Professor LaFollette from CST asked how, under RCM, the budgets for units which do not generate revenue will be decided.

Kaiser answered that budget conferences for such units begin in the spring. There are faculty/administration budget committees who will make recommendations to the President who then makes the decision.

Finally, Kaiser reminded us that his power point slides and much additional information is available on the CFO website.

Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM.

Paul S. LaFollette, Jr.
Secretary
Representative Faculty Senate Minutes, October 8, 2013

Attendance:
Representative Senators and Officers: 50
Ex-officio: 1
Faculty, Administrators and Guests: 13
Total attendance: 64

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 1:47 PM

Approval of Minutes
The minutes were approved as distributed.

President’s Report:
President Rahdert met with the president of Temple Student Government. Student Government requests that the faculty participate in the "Cherry on" campaign by wearing red on Fridays.

Rahdert reminded us that President Theobald’s inaugural is coming up soon and urged us all to participate in the various events it will include.

The FSSC has been and will be meeting with various officials:
- Peter Jones to discuss ESFF’s and student access to some of the data they generate
- Provost Dai to discuss some of the decisions made over the summer without faculty input, and to discuss the bases for some recent tenure decisions. Without considering specific individual cases, we considered the need for clarification of standards and procedural changes in the tenure process. This was a frank discussion, but work remains to be done.
- The FSSC passed the following resolution: "Under normal circumstances, no one invited speaker may present remarks lasting longer than 20 minutes at any meeting of the FSSC or Senate meeting. Response to questions will not be counted in these 20 minutes. When possible, advance copies of PowerPoint presentations and other handouts are encouraged.

Vice President’s Report (presented by the secretary):
The secretary thanked all who have volunteered to serve on our various committees this year, and pointed out several committees which still are incomplete with the request that all senators pass this information on to their schools and colleges.

Dialog with Dai:
Provost Dai announced several new initiatives. These include further development of online education. He discussed the consortium that we joined over the summer with observer status. Later we may become a lite and international campuses.

Guest Jodi Laufgraben:
Laufgraben explained the process by which the new central committee for programs and courses will be organized and begin operations. Her presentation is well summarized by her PowerPoint slides which are included as an appendix to these minutes.

At this point, the discussion returned to the Tenure and Promotion denials. The Provost stated that he had discussed this matter at the previous Senate meeting. He pointed out that 40+ cases came to the Provost and he reversed six of them. He explained that he was not setting a percentage that should be denied. He repeated that it is his responsibility to bring his best judgment to each case. He explained again that he felt that five outside letters is too few because it leaves problems if there are four strong letters and one weak one. A single weak letter is easier to ignore if it is one of eight rather than one of five.

Further questions and answers:
- You said that 60% of tenure decisions were turned down at Penn. Will you reconsider your thoughts no that we know that was a large overestimate? Answer: The provost never meant to suggest that a particular percentage of denials should be our goal.
- Law schools are bound by accreditation standards which state that faculty should have primary control of the tenure process. Answer: We have a procedure to follow and we will follow it.
- Is it true that five of the candidates turned down were women? Answer: The Provost does not know. Moreover five of the seven were not turned down. They withdrew from the process.

The motion was discussed. It was suggested by several that the motion needs to be more flexible. President Rahdert was asked: “what was the relationship between this motion and the resolution earlier passed by the FSSC?” Rahdert answered that the FSSC resolution at the moment is a guideline and provides current default behavior.

Newman CLA proposed amending the motion to add “except in case of emergency.” This was accepted by Professor Angel.

After further discussion, LaFollette-CST moved to amend the motion by striking the entire text and replacing it with “The Representative Senate endorses the resolution previously passed by the FSSC and read earlier in this meeting.”

The motion to amend was passed.

The amended motion was also passed.

Guest Jodi Laufgraben:
Laufgraben explained the process by which the new central committee for programs and courses will be organized and begin operations. Her presentation is well summarized by her PowerPoint slides which are included as an appendix to these minutes.

There followed considerable discussion about the manner in which this committee is to be formed. The concerns centered upon whether the number of faculty is sufficient, and whether it would be better if faculty members on the committee were selected by the FSSC rather than suggested by the FSSC. It was largely agreed that election/selection by a faculty body would be better than sending
nominations to the Provost and allowing him to select from those nominees.

The question was asked as to why committee does not duplicate the work of EPPC. Answer: EPPC only looks programs/courses that involve more than one school. This committee will be in addition to, not instead of EPPC and the Graduate School.

Old Business:
Professor Rahdert asked that any school or college having difficulty establishing their budget review committee please inform him of the problems.

New Business:
None

University Faculty Senate Minutes, May 8, 2013

Attendance:
Representative senators and officers: 37
Ex-officio: 1
Faculty, administrators and guests: 27

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Joan Shapiro at 1:46pm.

2. Approval of Minutes
It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to approve the minutes from the December 7th meeting.

3. Vice President’s Report
Mark Rahdert, Vice-President of the Faculty Senate gave a brief report. He started by asking for a big round of applause for the wonderful leadership that was provided this year by Faculty Senate President Joan Shapiro. Mark indicated that Joan deserves our respect and thanks. She is a great scholar and teacher and has given so much to Temple University through her service as Faculty Senate President. The senators gave Joan a big round of applause.

Mark also reminded senators that he is encouraging applications for committee membership. Applications coming in after today’s meeting will be processed for September by newly elected Vice-President Tricia Jones. Mark noted that we have an urgent need for applicants to fill vacancies on several important committees including EPPC, Budget Review Committee, CATA, Committee for International Programs, Committee on the Status of Faculty of Color, Committee on the Status of Women, Lecture and Forums, Student Awards, and Inventions and Patents. Please send your applications to senate2@temple.edu.

4. President’s Report
Faculty Senate President Joan Shapiro thanked Mark Rahdert for his excellent service as Vice-President. She gave an update on some exciting work at the university and then provided a brief summary of the accomplishments of the Faculty Senate during this academic year.

In terms of exciting projects, she reminded faculty of the Visualize Temple campaign that has just been launched and will be going throughout the summer in terms of planning meetings with faculty. The Smith group is asking for faculty volunteers to serve on committees. There will be a need for approximately 13-15 faculty members from all sectors of the university who are able to work over the summer session 1 period. If you are interested in being a volunteer she asked faculty to send their bio and reason for interest via email to senate2@temple.edu.

Then Joan provided a brief report of the work of the faculty senate and the faculty senate steering committee (FSSC) under her leadership. She indicated that the FSSC meets 2 hours every week and members also contribute additional time and effort on various subcommittees. There are representatives from every school and college on the FSSC. FSSC has met with 20 guests since January on topics including decentralized budgeting, undergraduate education, collegial assembly bylaws, athletics; electronic versions of SFFs, graduate student supports, etc. FSSC has also created two ad hoc committees to focus on (a) disruptive students and faculty and (b) review of faculty governance practices. She ended her presentation by giving her sincere thanks to the members of FSSC, the collegial assembly chairs, the faculty senators and the Faculty Senate executive committee for their work and support throughout this year. And, she ended with a very special thanks to Cheryl Mack, the Faculty Senate staff person for all of her hard work.

She turned the floor to Paul LaFollette, past-President of the Faculty Senate, who brought to the floor the attached motion for a shared task force on undergraduate education (see attached). Paul reminded the Senate that this motion was moved and seconded at the last meeting and that it was being presented now for a second voting. Paul read motion from the minutes of the last meeting. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously without abstentions.

5. Decentralized Budgeting Forum
Joan Shapiro introduced the main focus of the meeting – the Forum on Decentralized Budgeting. Forum presenters included:
- Doug Priest (specialist in decentralized budgeting at Indiana University)
- Anthony Wagner (CFO of Temple University)
- Terry Halbert (Faculty member in the Fox School of Business and member of the University Budget Review Committee)
- Doug Wager (Chair of Theater, faculty member in TFMA, FSSC member, and member of the University Budget Review Committee)

Each member of the panel made a brief presentation followed by a question and answer session from faculty and finally some summary comments from President Theobald.

Tony Wagner: He summarized that he has been making presentations about the DBM (decentralized budgeting model) to groups around the university including collegial assemblies, FSSC, and others. The PPTs of this presentation are available on his website. He overviewed some of the major points about DBM:
- DBM can be an important tool to help us bring new revenues into the university
- Temple formed a steering committee; faculty and administrators
- The core philosophy of DBM is to give revenue ownership to schools and colleges
- DBM better aligns authority with responsibility

Temple is not leading the way on DBM; we have 2 decades of work already on this and a great deal of research on its effectiveness (which is summarized on temple.edu/cfo.)

There is appropriate concern about creating a model too market driven and profit oriented; we need to be careful about how we do this

Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned at 3:14PM
Paul S. LaFollette, Jr
Secretary

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Minutes continued on page 29
University Faculty Senate Minutes, May 8, 2013

Minutes continued from page 28

If there is concern about anybody getting the rug pulled out from underneath them – not the case – we are building into the model a hold harmless year

Terry Halbert: In Terry’s presentation she made several excellent points:
- This process mission driven? The budgetary steering committee developed key principles (transparency, fairness; shared governance)
- Who is defining and defending mission? Faculty participation must be real and significant in order for DBM to work.
- IU visit confirmed her view of faculty involvement in that process.
- Faculty governance is problematic at Temple and that concerns her; faculty are and have been frustrated with getting budget information and access to that information
- We must have a healthy functioning faculty governance
- We need leadership that happens in schools and colleges; we MUST have Deans that support faculty input
- IU has faculty committees active within units and a campus-wide committee (these are largely faculty; trained and supported by budgetary staff)
- How are these committees being developed in our colleges as we speak? There are colleges where Deans are handpicking faculty to say what they want to hear; to hand over decision-making authority to Deans
- Maybe DBM has promise to overcome the strong Dean model, but this will require leadership that must insist on very strong and real faculty involvement in this process.
- There is a strong concern about Undergraduate Education under DBM.
- DBM gives pressure to losing quality control; IU doesn’t have GenEd.
- 1/3rd UG education (GenEd) needs guarding
- Temple must look seriously at how to protect GenEd during the DBM implementation

There is not enough faculty representation on this DBM task force. She indicated that she enjoyed serving on this committee; but we are not at sufficient faculty input, it is too administration-heavy. He explained that at Indiana University they had a three faculty-led and faculty-composed committees and then gave recommendations to leadership.

Doug Wager: Doug Wager discussed a change-based orientation to considering DBM.

DBM is not the be-all and end-all of RCM. It is one component. The committee began with a series of phases and we’re in model development (phase 3). Phase 1 was assessment and alignment. Phase 2 was defining guiding principles and identifying cost drivers
- There are several guiding principles
- Mission driven (what is our mission?) (details in the making)
- Aligning of authority with responsibility – the closer the point of operation to point of impact the better. Decisions have to be made closest to point of consequence.
- Strategic planning is key. To make budget process truly responsive to mission requires strategic planning overall and within each unit. Max Dupreec – Leadership as an Art – said that if you lead from the bottom up you have to look at how your decision-making structure is built . Temple is at point of learned helplessness; we need to be in a state of learned optimism; consciously challenging negative self-talk; move from scared governance to shared governance
- Encourage the use of roving leadership
- Provide and maintain momentum; team’s job is to provide environment that allows momentum to gather

Doug Priest: Doug Priest shared some of his insights from the many years of experience he has had with DBM.

As you go through it is important that faculty concerns be heard; this is not a process that undoes history; we want to look forward

He said that there is a better synthesis of academic and financial planning through this DBM

Questions and Answers (the speaker posing the questions is identified by name and college affiliation and the respondent is identified by initials in parentheses):

Steve Gross (COE) – how does this model account for external economic contexts (like economic hits to K-12)?

-DP – education not one of the highest priority schools on the campus; schools may be able to still have certain things within your control that they can use to move forward
- DW those externals are coming at us anyway; those challenges are best met if response is from the local level

Michael Sachs (CHPSW) – curricular oversight follow-up; how does this work in practice? How has it worked at IU?

-TH in place now is EPPC; the decisions can/should come back to GEEC for GenEd; (one strength is that GEEC has representation across campus – but we don’t have an equivalent structure for all undergraduate education)

- DP – Provost Dai is moving forward with two committees that will oversee undergraduate education

Tricia Jones (COE) – we need full faculty training and awareness so faculty are informed and can engage effectively in DBM; we need to think about developing faculty cohorts that can lead in DBM and provide incentives for that work.

- TW - a critical question is how to build that kind of training regime to meet our needs; should be available to all faculty; will have access to that. We are learning a lot from IU because they have a very robust collaborative training process.

- TH – Leadership Academy; fuse that the DBM understanding into that?

Howard Spodek (CLA) – should we be concerned with role of the Board of Trustees in our plans?

- President Theobald – I think not; role of the Board is to set policy; this is a management issue; they set constraints within which budget will operate but management of that budget is our responsibility.

Steve Newman (Faculty Herald and CLA) – where is discussion on funding for graduate students; may pose a challenge here because of dispersal through graduate school. There are concerns that departments that don’t bring in grants may be at a disadvantage.

- DP – IU started with centralized system and never really got away from it. They have a mixed model and not a perfect one. Colleges where graduate students are valued for program development may have to find the money for themselves rather than depend on it coming from university general support.

Jim Kosh (CST) – what was force or driver for Temple deciding to go to DBM?

- TW – I had heard that there were earlier discussions. As the great recession continued decreasing appropriations we needed investments for student advising, etc. These things really increased the need to consider the different models that could be more entrepreneurial. When Dick Engelt became Interim president he thought about bringing this to the attention of the Board. When we have 10% of funding coming from the state we need to have a different approach – it’s more about culture than finance.

- DW – when budgets got tight you need to think more about a cultural change of how you handle revenue generation.

President Theobald gave a short response in the last several minutes of the meeting. He said the most important thing is to ask faculty to get involved. He got involved as chair of campus budget committee. Why are we doing this? We are choosing to do DBM; we are not being mandated to do DBM. Think of this as more of an academic initiative – push out authority to make decisions. This empowers faculty and deans. DBM makes it very transparent what schools are paying for services.

Minutes continued on page 30
President Theobald then commented on the Visualize Temple process – what do we want this university to look like in 20-30 years? He again encouraged faculty involvement and Joan Shapiro reminded interested faculty to self-nominate by sending bios and statements of interest to senate2@temple.edu.

6. Call to Adjourn
It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 3:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Faculty Senate Secretary
Tricia S. Jones

Motion – Shared Task Force on Undergraduate Education
We have undergone many changes since last we had a University wide discussion of the place that undergraduate education holds within Temple. The discussion at today’s Senate meeting suggests a need for further conversation about these matters throughout the Temple community.

Accordingly, the Senate would like to invite our colleagues in the administration to begin an ongoing dialog to consider how best to encourage and support excellence in our undergraduate programs.

To this end, we propose the formation of a joint Faculty/Administration advisory council for the ongoing purpose of evolving Temple’s philosophy and exploring best practices for our undergraduate mission.

We would propose that this council consist of representatives of the faculty, the Provost’s office, the Deans, the office of General Education, and representatives from key academic support units.

We hope that the Administration will be willing to participate in such an undertaking.

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