

**University Faculty Senate Special Meeting
February 8, 2012
Minutes**

Attendance:

Representative Senators and Officers – 37

Ex-officio – 0

Faculty, Administrators and Guests – 47

Total attendance – 84

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 a.m.

2. President's Statement

President LaFollette began the meeting by reading the following statement:

The FSSC has been in conversation with the Provost about this White Paper for many months. Throughout that time, we have asked for concrete proposals to solve concrete problems accompanied by careful, fact filled analyses of these proposals.

It is the position of most of us that without a thorough understanding of the short and long term costs and benefits, and the intended and unintended consequences to our mission, our students, and the health of our institution, we cannot choose between nor support any of the proposals in this paper, including the restructuring of schools and colleges.

Most of us would not remodel our kitchens without first evaluating the usefulness of the new design, the cost of the project, and the effect on the market value of our house. We believe that the same principles should apply to any redesign of Temple. Without this kind of analysis, we are simply discussing the re-arrangement of the department chairs and ignoring the iceberg.

We are here today to discuss the question as to whether, beyond failing to support, we should actively oppose, the specific proposal to create a new school for the arts.

This question is complex, and in order to consider it in detail, today's conversation needs to be a focused discussion. I am, therefore, going to present some fine-structuring for the agenda, and adhere to the timelines therein, and generally conduct the meeting more formally than I usually do.

3. Discussion Agenda

President LaFollette outlined the following agenda for the meeting, set in consultation with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee (FSSC):

11:30-11:45 Introductory remarks

11:45-12:15 Reports from Boyer, SCT, Tyler, and Education

12:15-12:45 Discussion of the proposal to create a combined school for the arts

12:45-1:15 Discussion of the proposals involving the College of Education

1:15-1:45 Discussion of other aspects of the White Paper

1:45-2:30 Formulating a response and possible action

4. Presentations

Boyer

Jeffrey Solow spoke regarding Boyer's response to the White Paper. The collegial assembly of the Boyer College of Music & Dance held a special meeting on February 1, 2012 to discuss the White Paper. At the meeting two motions were passed unanimously, and their contents were transmitted to the Provost, along with a request to meet with him on the issue. He has responded and a meeting has been scheduled for February 26.

The essential content of the motions was the following:

- In the first motion, the collegial assembly expressed that the Boyer faculty do not agree that the benefits suggested in the White Paper would be achieved through reorganization, nor do they understand the timeline outlined in the Paper. Additionally, the faculty does not understand the reason for such a timeline given the ongoing search for a new president. They want to be sure that any reorganization, if undertaken, does not occur in an untimely way, nor undermine the prerogatives of the new president.

- In the second motion, the collegial assembly concluded that because (1) questions raised by the Paper have yet to be answered, (2) the timeline appears to be recklessly hurried, (3) Boyer faculty concerns expressed to the Provost about two years ago appear to have been forgotten or ignored, and (4) those concerns appear not to have been considered or answered in the White Paper, the Boyer faculty is opposed to the ideas promulgated in in the White Paper regarding a reorganization of programs at Temple University, particularly those centered on the arts.

Additionally, the minutes of the Boyer collegial assembly noted that faculty at Boyer expressed "grave concern" that a group of Boyer faculty had met with the Provost about two years ago "and raised virtually every one of the concerns raised today, yet not one of these concerns has been acknowledged in the White Paper."

Solow also observed that the Boyer faculty are concerned about what they perceive to be a lack of attention to academic quality issues in the White Paper, an equal lack of attention to potential impact on faculty experience, a lack of inquiry into the current impact of having one Dean serve as head of two distinct arts schools (Boyer and Tyler), and a failure to identify what additional cost savings (if any) could be realized by further consolidation of arts programs.

SCT

Andrew Mendelson presented on behalf of SCT. He observed that chairs of 6 SCT departments met with Dean and Associate Provost Stroker to present a unified set of reasons why those departments believe they should remain united in a distinct school or college, rather than being merged into a larger unit. A letter to that effect has been sent to the Provost. The SCT departments are not opposed to change but believe it can be better accomplished in the existing structure than in a model that involves incorporation into CLA. Since the White Paper gives no financial information, the SCT letter focuses on programmatic concerns. Most SCT programs have characteristics that would make them a poor fit in an integrated arts college, but they would risk a loss of impact if merged into CLA. Their educational models are different

from those in nearly all CLA departments, and the disciplinary standards for tenure and promotion also do not fit well with CLA practices. Linkage with Education would make no sense, because of the lack of any disciplinary connection. Rather than merger with another unit, the best option would be to expand SCT programs into a freestanding College of Communications.

Mendelson noted that two SCT departments, Theater and Film and Media Arts, have signified in a separate letter to the Provost that they are interested in exploring closer integration with other arts programs in the University.

Tyler

Stephanie Knopp gave a presentation on behalf of Tyler. Tyler's faculty has not yet had an opportunity to meet collectively on this issue, either as a collegial assembly or with the Dean. Knopp's comments are therefore based on conversations she has had with other faculty members at the school.

Tyler welcomes greater collaboration with other arts programs in the University, but it sees collaboration and merger as two entirely separate enterprises. The faculty at Tyler have expressed a strong desire to retain the school's separate name and identity. That identity has been a major factor in attracting highly qualified students to the school and in earning the school's national reputation. It is critical to the school's membership in the National Portfolio Day Association, an organization of prestige art schools. Tyler was originally a free-standing school of art long before it joined Temple, so the singular identity of the school has deep roots. This distinct character has contributed to the school's high national ranking in U.S. News & World Reports and elsewhere. It has also been emphasized as a source of strength by accrediting agencies. The school's small size has been a big factor in its reputation, since it facilitates individualized advising and the development of strong mentoring relationships with students. Faculty at the school fear that merger into a much larger unit would jeopardize these unique school assets.

The faculty are also concerned about the lack of detail in White Paper on many important factors that would bear on the success or failure of a merger. Issues of administration, allocation of space, funding for undergraduate and graduate programs, and myriad other issues that would arise in restructuring have not been addressed. Without knowing the specific financial implications, programmatic implications, and criteria for success or failure, it is difficult to argue either for or against any of the various possibilities that the White Paper outlines.

Education

Ken Thurman, chair of the College of Education's (COE) collegial assembly, reported that the COE has drafted a response to the White Paper that was unanimously endorsed by the collegial assembly. The COE faculty have scheduled a meeting with the Provost that will take place in the coming week. The COE fails to see how combination with another unit would result in any significant budgetary savings or accomplish any of the other goals set out in the White Paper. The COE currently operates with financial surpluses, and it is in the process of developing and implementing new programs to increase enrollment and enhance efficiency. Consequently, it is not clear what value would be added to the current undertakings by combination with another unit.

As with Tyler, COE programs enjoy strong national reputations and rankings, and it is clear from a review of peer institutions that nearly all of the highly ranked programs nationally are freestanding schools or colleges. Other universities have experimented with combining education with other schools or colleges, and many institutions that have done so have since reverted to freestanding administrative structures. Temple should investigate the experiences of these other institutions before it goes down that same road.

Additionally, the COE faculty believe that any decision to undertake fundamental restructuring should be preceded by careful, thorough, and data-supported analysis of the potential costs and benefits. The White Paper does not include that kind of content.

5. Discussion of Art Reorganization

In the discussion of the arts reorganization proposals in the White Paper, the following observations were among those made:

- The White Paper rightly emphasizes the importance of student experience, but it offers no positive arguments for reorganization on that score. Instead it relies almost entirely on an assertion of potential gains in efficiency that are not particularized or quantified.
- There are numerous arts programs at other institutions in the Philadelphia area, and some of them have been combined. For the most part, the experience has not been successful. The best programs in the city are those that have retained an individual identity.
- It is a mistake to view the arts programs at Temple as interchangeable, fungible, and moveable units – as so much “chum” that can be indiscriminately “spread on a Temple sea.”
- Temple should be studying the results of recent program mergers, such as the recent merger of Social Work into the College of Allied Health Programs. In many ways that merger has worked out, but there were some real costs, such as Social Work’s loss of an individual academic identity, loss of dedicated representation in university matters, loss of a unique faculty listserv, and the like. Before we embark on new reorganization ventures we should take time to learn from our own past experience.
- The positions taken at Boyer represent the views of some, but not necessarily all faculty members. There are other Boyer faculty who hold an opposing view, some of whom were unable to attend the meeting at which the Boyer motions were discussed.
- The issue of merger was considered and discussed at length by SCT faculty a year ago, and the faculty came up with detailed responses supporting the view that it was not a good idea. The issue seemed to disappear after that. It is surprising the White Paper neither mentions nor responds to the matters that were raised in that earlier discussion.
- Theater, as well as Film and Media Arts, are in a different posture from other SCT departments. Their needs would support a bottom-up, rather than top-down discussion of what form of organization would best serve their programs. One good possibility would be to form a separate new school of Theater, Film, and Media Arts. Faculty in those departments share many of the concerns that have been raised about the White Paper’s lack of supporting detail, but current arrangements have created significant barriers for successful development of these programs.
- Tyler was also approached about merger in the past, approximately 3 years ago, and it gave a detailed response at that time. Tyler faculty were interested in developing some type of umbrella structure to coordinate arts programs at the university and enhance their visibility, but they were opposed to merger. As with SCT, there was neither a response from the central administration nor any further discussion.

- There should be careful consideration of the nature of the arts. Artistic expression has many different definitions and venues, so it would be a mistake to assume that all programs can be lumped into a single model. Diversity is critically important in the arts, and it is supported by allowing diversity in programs, method, and instruction.

- The White Paper sets out an extremely tight timeline for decisions that fails to allow adequate opportunity for deliberation and planning. The danger is that we will embark on major change without knowing what we are doing or why we are doing it, and without any measures to determine success or failure. That approach risks a reshuffling of “academic chum” that produces few discernible benefits but risks sustained loss in educational quality.

- The White Paper has an appendix listing schools that have merged arts programs. The implication is that they represent a positive model. But there has been no inquiry to determine why those programs have been structured that way or whether the structure is a success. Faculty at Boyer who have served in other schools organized on those lines report that Deans always tend to emphasize one set of arts programs (usually the one the Dean hails from) to the detriment of all the others.

- Several years ago the Dance department was merged into Boyer. No one seems to have studied that merger to see what worked and what didn’t. We should examine our own experience with reorganization before acting on the current proposals.

- Almost any merger of programs is likely to bring about some administrative savings, if only in the elimination of a Dean’s salary. Also, almost any merger is likely to generate some interdisciplinary opportunities. Merger can break down faculty communications “silos.”

- Presently, Tyler and Boyer have a single Dean and have combined some administrative functions. The Dean (whose background is in music) raises more money for Boyer than for Tyler, which is a huge problem for Tyler given the debt on its new facilities. The Dean has also stated that any possible administrative savings from merger have been fully realized.

- Reorganizations require careful planning. When Tyler was moved from its own campus to main campus, for example, there was no provision made for Art History, which has a different set of physical space needs from the other arts disciplines. Another effect of the move was that budgets were not adjusted to reflect the higher operating costs in the new facility. The point is that reorganization, if it is to work, requires very careful planning and input from a diverse range of sources, including (and especially) directly affected faculty members. “The devil is in the details and the details are not there” in the White Paper.

- Reorganization of the arts will feed the university’s tendency to multiply layers of administration and create distance between faculty and executive decision makers. There is a danger that any efficiencies realized at one level will be offset (or more than offset) by new costs at another.

- There are departments at the University that have been “reorganized” multiple times, with various successive college affiliations. With rare exceptions, the changes have been harmful. They usually entail a loss of identity and a “loss of way” for the affected programs and faculty. If mergers occur, someone should commit to protecting the merged departments, whose resources are at risk of being plundered by their assigned merger partner(s), and whose needs are at risk of being ignored. Temple almost never puts those kinds of protection in place.

- It's a mistake to think that organizational structures produce collaboration or interdisciplinary exchange. That happens at a personal faculty-to-faculty or faculty-to-student level. It also cannot be "planned." It depends on the development of a personal connection.
- The White Paper view of arts leaves some things out – *e.g.*, poetry and creative writing. The point is that any administrative structuring scheme will necessarily be artificial and incomplete.
- The merger of Dance with Boyer illustrates the kind of merger mistake that can be made. In terms of facilities, what dancers need most is positive dance space, but in the merger their space needs were neglected. Music, on the other hand, needs rehearsal space, but this too was shortchanged. The problem is that to an administrator a few square feet here or there seems of minor moment, when to the student and instructor it can prove to be critical. Opera and Theater need space for sets. These things all cost money. If merger came with an infusion of new funds, everyone would be in favor of it. But if it is done on a financial shoestring aimed at budgetary reduction there are bound to be educational losses.

6. Discussion of Education Reorganization

The meeting turned to discussion of the White Paper proposals regarding reorganization of education. The following observations were among those submitted:

- To the extent the White Paper offers criteria for reorganization, it identifies three categories: excellence, efficiency, and economy. Every specific proposal should be tested against those criteria. But the White Paper does not do that. Instead, the sole mover seems to be economy. The administration should be obliged to justify any move on the basis of all three factors. In turn, those factors should be measured in terms of impact on both schools or departments being moved, and schools and departments that receive them. There is no indication that is being done. For example, most faculty in CLA seem entirely unaware that merger with COE is being contemplated.
- The White Paper fails to consider many issues in CLA that could pose barriers to a successful merger with COE. CLA is very big and spread out as it is. Its administration is already stretched too thin. It has financial issues, concerns with the number of NTT appointments, battles over tenure-track appointments, and a range of other knotty internal issues. Adding new layers of complexity through merger would compound the existing challenges.
- The Department of Environmental Design, housed at Ambler, was merged into CLA 2 years ago. The experience has been unsatisfactory on several fronts. The main problem is that Environmental Design's needs get very little attention from the CLA administration, yet the program lacks autonomy to attend to them on its own. In fact, administrative staff at CLA are often unaware that they have any responsibility for the program. The move has also cut the department off from its prior connections to other faculty and programs at Ambler. It is another internal lesson on the difficulties of accomplishing a successful merger.
- Reorganizations tend to enervate the faculty and staff on the front lines, interfering with their sense of connection, their desire for high performance, and their sense of empowerment. Centralization of authority inevitably leads to centralization of resources, diverting them from the base to the administrative center. Reallocating centralized resources to individual schools, with the autonomy to set their own destinies, could produce fascinating possibilities. The White Paper seems to be pushing things in the wrong direction.

- The White Paper focus on restructuring is reminiscent of moving deck chairs on the *Titanic*. Any cost savings will be minimal in relation to our existing budgetary gaps. What is really needed is to devote our energies to creative development of new revenue generation possibilities. Instead of triggering resistance and impairing morale, such an approach could generate true excitement and a new sense of energy.

7. Discussion of White Paper in General

The meeting turned to a more general discussion of the White Paper, during which the following observations were offered:

- One source of legislative resistance to funding state-related universities appears to be tied to their exemptions from state laws regarding disclosure. Nondisclosure of salaries is a particular source of irritation. If disclosure rules were changed, the university might meet less resistance to its requests for financial support.
- To the extent the White Paper is motivated by funding issues, it is difficult to assess because of the lack of transparency at the University regarding the contents of its budget. It is impossible to draw connections between budgetary strains and what is being proposed.
- Presumably, the Board of Trustees has access to detailed budget information that we cannot access. Our lack of information makes it difficult to respond to the White Paper in any way that has a chance of being heard.
- We should not assume that the White Paper is driven by budget constraints. Rather, we should take it at its word that academic excellence and student experience matter as well.
- It is unclear who is the prime mover behind the White Paper – the University administration or the Board of Trustees. It may be that the Board is really pushing this discussion.
- Reorganization is likely to have an impact on the reaccreditation of academic programs, yet the White Paper does not consider this issue.
- The reorganization issue has been under discussion in the FSSC since last summer. The FSSC has repeatedly asked for criteria and has stressed that the case for reorganization should be made in terms of academic progress, not just money. The FSSC has also maintained that any monetary savings are unlikely to be substantial. The FSSC was repeatedly assured that the push toward reorganization is motivated by a desire for academic excellence, not just monetary savings. Yet there has been no effort to demonstrate any academic advantages to the proposals. This has produced suspicion that the real driving force behind the proposals is not being disclosed.
- The timing of this proposal seems very odd given the vacuum of academic leadership at present. It seems as though whoever will be leading the University next year ought to have a voice in the process. The fact that the decision is being pushed now makes it feel as though the decision has already been taken, despite assurances to the contrary from the Provost.
- The Board of Trustees is likely to be more influenced by students and alumni than by faculty. The most directly affected schools should mobilize their students and alumni to weigh in on the reorganization proposals.

•In light of actual and pending cuts in state appropriation, devoting so much attention to reorganization seems to be a huge mistake. The administration either has plans for budget cuts in the works or it doesn't. If it doesn't that is a sad commentary on our leadership. If it does, it should be sharing the particulars with the faculty. If it resists doing so, the Faculty Senate should be making a strong statement about it. We should also support making explicit budget information public.

8. Proposals for Senate Action

At this point in the meeting, President LaFollette asked whether any Senate members wished to offer any motions or resolutions. There was discussion about whether the Senate should press for greater attention to revenue generation opportunities, perhaps through the creation of a Senate task force to develop ideas. It was ultimately agreed that the full Senate could defer to the FSSC for further action on exploring revenue generation opportunities.

Discussion turned to whether the Senate should make a formal statement regarding the White Paper proposals on reorganization. After considerable discussion, the following resolution was moved and seconded:

Resolved: The Faculty Senate of Temple University cannot support the proposals involving the restructuring of existing schools or colleges, or the creation of new schools or colleges, which appear in the Provost's recently presented White Paper, without a cost- benefit analysis and an analysis of the effects of any proposed restructuring on Temple's mission, our students, our faculty, our reputation, and the impact on the University in general.

After further discussion and a call of the question, the resolution was approved unanimously.

9. Old and New Business

Since this was a special Faculty Senate meeting, there was no consideration of old or new business.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Rahdert
Secretary