DARTMOUTH

2008-2009
ANNUAL REPORT
ALUMNI LIAISON COMMITTEE
TO
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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Introduction

One year ago, the Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) produced its first annual report of activities of the Alumni Council, documenting communications between the council and its constituents — the alumni body as a whole—as well as reviewing interactions between the council and its ALC and the Board of Trustees, in particular the Alumni Relations Committee (ARC) of the board. The intention of the report was to improve communication between Dartmouth alumni and the leadership of the College, as well as to increase understanding of the role of the Alumni Council in the life of Dartmouth College. That role, as described in the mission statement of the council, is:

To sustain a fully informed, representative, and engaged exchange of information and sentiment between alumni and their College, and to enhance and inspire alumni involvement that furthers the mission of the College.

Now, one year later, the Alumni Council continues to transition into its larger, more representative form described by constitutional changes passed during the 2007–2008 term. In addition, the ALC, similarly established by those constitutional reforms, has continued in its evolution as the communication hub between the council, the Association of Alumni and the Board of Trustees.

In that role, the ALC has received hundreds of emails (and even the occasional letter), including many simple acknowledgments of communication from representatives, as well as a very meaningful collection of responses with thoughtful and sometimes challenging questions, bits of criticism, and sporadic condemnation. While some alumni remain skeptical about the effective role of alumni in Dartmouth’s governance, most value the role that alumni can play, and their correspondence is constructive and generally well informed or it demonstrates a desire to be better informed. With this report, we would like to share the sentiments of alumni received during the past year, as well as to provide information of council actions and activities.

As we did with our previous report, we will provide information in the following manner:

- Executive Summary
- Summary of Alumni Council Activities
- Summary of ALC/Trustee Interaction
- Overview of ALC Communications by Category
- Actions & Results
- Recommendations/Expectations

We have also added a summary of “Actions and Results” prior to “Recommendations/Expectations.”

The report will be distributed to the ARC (and to the entire Board of Trustees) to be discussed in a conference call between the ALC and the ARC following the September meeting of the board. The report will also be posted on the Alumni Council web site, available to all alumni.
The first report was well received by the board, and that initial effort has provided a framework from which we have expanded and refined our efforts for the 2008–2009 year. We welcome feedback regarding information provided in this report, as well as thoughts and concerns regarding the format of the report itself, which can be directed to the ALC mailbox: ALC@alum.dartmouth.edu.

Respectfully submitted,

**The 2008-09 Alumni Liaison Committee**

Richard Silverman, MD, ’81, Chair
Janine Fate Avner ’80
Thomas Callahan ’84
John (J.B.) Daukas ’84
Todd Hemphill ’78
William Hutchinson ’76
John Mathias ’69
John B. Osborn ’88
Douglas Tyson ’81
James Wooster III ’59, ’60Tu, ’60Th
Executive Summary

In 2009, the Alumni Council capitalized on its revised structure and culture to communicate with alumni about many significant events affecting Dartmouth. Such events included the selection of Dr. Jim Yong Kim as the College’s 17th president, reflections on the accomplishments of President Jim Wright, and budgetary challenges resulting from the ongoing recession. The council largely completed constitutional changes by (1) promulgating best practices for the election/selection of Alumni Council representatives, and (2) assisting the Association of Alumni Executive Committee in drafting and explaining improvements to the alumni trustee election/nomination process that were adopted by an 80-percent to 20-percent margin in an alumni-wide vote.

Summary of Alumni Council Activities

The council:

- Has inculcated a culture of communication between alumni councilors and the alumni they represent. The council sent out 213 emails and reports about important events concerning Dartmouth during 2009 (a more than a 100-percent increase over the 99 reports sent last year), and received more than 600 responsive messages from alumni;
- Met with President Jim Yong Kim during its May 2009 meeting;
- Held conference calls with President Wright and Dartmouth’s chief financial officer concerning budget cuts necessitated by the recession, declines in the endowment, and actions the College has taken to weather the storm;
- Created a Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations to help fraternities and sororities;
- Helped the Association of Alumni draft and pass an amendment to the association constitution reforming and simplifying the alumni trustee nomination/election process by, among other improvements, providing that voting will now follow a one-person/one-vote process requiring the winner to obtain a majority of the votes cast, while preserving unchanged the petition process;
- Responded to alumni concerns about Dartmouth football by conducting a conference call and in-person meetings with the Alumni Council’s Student Affairs Committee, Head Coach Buddy Teevens, and Athletic Director Josie Harper;
- Approved best practices recommendations for the election/selection of Alumni Council representatives by various alumni groups, including classes, regional clubs, affiliated groups, graduate schools, and others;
- Held its two biannual weekend meetings in December 2008 and May 2009, at which it learned about the current state of the College and discussed issues of interest to alumni; and
- Produced an alumni leadership organizational flowchart which is posted online at www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/resources (See Pages 6A and 6B).

ALC/Trustee Interaction

The ALC:

- Met with President Wright and other members of the Board of Trustees during each of the December and May council meetings;
- Met with the Board of Trustees Alumni Relations Committee (ARC) in September 2008 in Hanover;
- Participated in a conference call with the Board of Trustees Alumni Relations Committee in the spring of 2009;
- Reviewed and responded to hundreds of emails and communications from alumni; and
- Addressed throughout the year alumni suggestions/questions/concerns with the College’s administration through the Vice President of Alumni Relations and others.
Councilor/Constituency Communications

The ALC continued its practice of tracking Alumni Council/alumni communications.

2009 saw:
- Ongoing and consistent reports sent by councilors to their constituents relating to council meetings;
- Receipt of more than 600 additional contacts received from alumni offering comments, criticisms, musings, and other thoughts on a variety of topics;
- Follow-up by councilors and/or members of the ALC to alumni communications; and
- A breakdown of those communications into nine categories as follows:

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
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<td>Composite Sends</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidential Search</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>310</td>
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A majority of councilors sent one or more communications to their constituents, and the council president sent messages to any class whose representative failed to communicate concerning the activities of the council and other alumni-related activities. The council president issued another three separate communications to groups of alumni or the alumni body as a whole.

In total, the council initiated 213 communications to alumni, which resulted in more than 600 responses. As you would expect the perspectives raised by alumni on the issues above were rich and varied, making a synthesis difficult. Therefore we provide a comprehensive summary of the alumni input later in this report. While the alumni perspectives on a given issue may have varied, the ALC was able to direct the relevant alumni feedback to the right decision makers in the college.

The tally above may differ slightly from the summary totals reflected in the summary of category breakdown, as some emails covered several topics.

Recommendations and Expectations

The council and the ALC will strive in the next year to:
- Continue to regularly communicate with the alumni body concerning the state of the College and issues of interest to alumni;
- Present alumni sentiment to the Board of Trustees and the College administration in a timely manner;
- Meet regularly with the Board of Trustees; and
- Expand the interaction between the ALC and the Office of Alumni Relations.
Dartmouth Alumni Leadership Membership Flow Chart

Board of Trustees
- Alumni Relations Committee
  - 6 Trustees

Alumni Liaison Committee
- 4 members
  - alumni Council President
  - President-Elect
  - Association current and past Presidents
  - Alumni Council Chair
  - Alumni Body (10-20 Members)

Alumni Council
- 6 members
  - President
  - President-Elect
  - Executive Committee (Chairs, Chairs)
  - Representatives
    - Class, Clubs/Regions
    - Affiliated Groups, Undergraduates
    - Faculty, Professional Schools
    - Graduate Programs
    - Athletics

Association of Alumni
- 100 members

Executive Committee
- 5 members
  - President
  - President-Elect
  - Vice President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Committee Members
Dartmouth Alumni Leadership
Flow Chart
Functions

Board of Trustees
Oversee representation for the financial, administrative, and academic affairs of the College.

Alumni Relations Committee
Responsibility for alumni relationships informed on Alumni Relations presents and works with the Alumni Liaison Committee to better understand alumni concerns.

Alumni Liaison Committee
Gathers feedback from alumni on campus of concerns and shares that information with the Alumni Relations Committee, the Board of Trustees, and other administrative committees with Alumni Relations Committees.

Alumni Council
Serves as fully informed representation and engaged exchange of effective and essential information between alumni and campus administration, monitors alumni interests, and coordinates alumni events.

Association of Alumni Executive Committee
Responsible for conducting alumni nominated campus elections and NON Executive Committee elections.

Association of Alumni
45,000 members
Summary of Alumni Council Activities

Biannual Meetings

The Alumni Council, as it has for years, held two weekend meetings of its entire membership in Hanover. The 197th meeting of the council took place from December 4 to 6, 2008, and the 198th meeting of the council took place from May 14 to 16, 2009. The agendas for each meeting are attached in the Appendices A and B. The summary reports for each meeting generated by the council’s Communications Committee and the full meeting minutes are also attached as Appendices C and D. The resolutions adopted throughout the year are attached as Appendices E to G. Finally, a list of councilors is attached as Appendix H.

Implementation of New Constitution

Having adopted a new constitution in late 2007 after several years’ work, the council implemented its new structure by adding more representatives for classes, affiliated groups, and others; restructuring several existing committees; and invigorating the newly created ALC.

Trustee Election Reform

The council helped the Association of Alumni Executive Committee draft and communicate to alumni a constitutional amendment improving and simplifying the alumni trustee election/nomination process. The reforms reduce the number of candidates nominated by the Alumni Council from three to one or two, per open seat (at the council’s discretion); eliminate approval voting in favor of the more familiar one-person/one-vote process; require winning candidates to receive a majority of the votes cast; and leave unchanged the petition process through which alumni may be nominated. The reforms passed by an 80-percent to 20-percent margin in an alumni-wide vote in the spring of 2009.

Trustee Governance

The ALC discussed with members of the Board of Trustees the prospect of adding additional alumni-nominated trustees to the board at some point in the future.

President Kim

Incoming President Jim Yong Kim addressed the council during its May 2009 meeting, in Hanover, shortly after his selection as president of Dartmouth was announced by the Board of Trustees. President Kim gave an electrifying speech, and took questions and comments from the council.

Financial Challenges

At the council’s request, during the council’s December 2008 meeting the College’s Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, Adam Keller, discussed steps Dartmouth is taking to address financial challenges caused by the recession. The council also participated in a conference call with Executive Vice President Keller and President Wright on February 13, 2009, to discuss financial issues, including necessary budget cuts. Discussion of financial challenges pervaded the council’s meetings and activities this past year.
Election/Selection of Councilors

After a year of study, the council adopted recommendations for the election/selection of council representatives by alumni groups e.g., classes, regional clubs, affiliated groups, and graduate schools. The council recommends a transparent, open process for election/selection of representatives, while recognizing the differing needs and preferences of various types of alumni groups.

Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations (CSG)

With President Wright’s support, the Alumni Council created an ad hoc committee to support fraternities, sororities, and coed organizations — the Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations (CSG). The CSG is composed of councilors; the Dean of the College and several other deans directly involved with Greek letter organizations; alumni and faculty house advisors; and students. Its mission is to assist Greek letter organizations in improving physical plant, alumni/house interaction, and faculty/house interaction and ensuring the long-range health and viability of the Greek system at Dartmouth.

Dartmouth Football

In response to alumni concern, members of the council’s Student Affairs Committee participated in a conference call with Head Football Coach Buddy Teevens and Athletic Director Josie Harper concerning Dartmouth football. Coach Teevens discussed his plans for improving the team’s performance in coming years and his approach to keeping Dartmouth’s football players engaged with the Dartmouth community academically, socially, and through service – as well as athletically.

Communication

The council continued its evolution into a body that is extremely active in communicating with alumni and in turn conveying alumni sentiment to the Board of Trustees and College administration. In 2008 - 2009, the majority of councilors regularly communicated with their constituents before and after each biannual meeting and as events necessitated during the year. In those rare instances where a class representative failed to communicate, the council president emailed the affected alumni group directly.

Farewell to President Wright

The council bid farewell to President Jim Wright at its May 2009 meeting, and adopted a resolution recognizing President Wright’s numerous accomplishments and thanking him and his wife, Susan, for their many years of service to Dartmouth. Many of the former Alumni Council presidents who had served during Jim Wright’s presidency attended this event to honor him.
Summary of ALC/Trustee Interaction

Over the past year, the ALC and the Board of Trustees have continued to work together to improve the relationship among the various bodies involved in alumni governance at the College. An organizational conference call with John Donahoe ’82, chair of the ARC, took place on August 26, 2008, in anticipation of our first formal meeting with the ARC on Friday, September 12, 2008. The meeting agenda is attached (Agenda, Appendix I). This meeting was preceded by a breakfast meeting with members of the Governance Committee of the board in order to review some concerns that were specific to them. The primary purpose of these meetings was to discuss the first ALC Annual Report and to share alumni sentiment with the board, as well as to get feedback on the report. This meeting was felt to be very constructive, and a plan for future meetings was established to include the annual meeting of the board each September for an in-person meeting,* as well as a midwinter conference call with the ARC. The first of those calls took place on March 16, 2009 (Agenda, Appendix J).

In addition to these meetings, the ALC met on Saturday mornings of the Alumni Council weekends with President Wright, as well as board members who were in town for the meeting. These included Al Mulley ’70, Ed Haldeman ’70 and Jose Fernandez ’77 on December 6, 2008 (Agenda, Appendix K), and trustees Haldeman and Fernandez on May 16, 2009 (Agenda, Appendix L).

The board has remained highly receptive and open to working closely with the ALC, thereby enhancing the flow of communication in both directions. This has served to provide for a better-informed alumni body and, in turn, a board more in tune with broader alumni sentiment.

* In the upcoming year, the September meeting will be by phone, due to events related to the inauguration of President Kim, and there will be an in-person meeting later in the academic year in lieu of the winter conference call.
Communications to ALC by Category

Academic Affairs

The council received five emails concerning academic issues at Dartmouth. One suggested that Dartmouth reinitiate its “Great Issues” course. Another worried that faculty members are out of touch with the real world. Three others were spawned by the current recession: one suggested the College increase the faculty workload; another asked that Dartmouth protect its foreign study and volunteer programs from elimination due to budget cuts; and a third asked how Dartmouth is stressing business ethics in its graduate and undergraduate programs.

Here are several examples:

Re: budget cuts: “...I have read that budget cuts may affect the Dartmouth experience in the near future, due in part to the performance of the College’s endowment. I don’t think that I’m unique in hoping that Dartmouth protects its foreign study and volunteer programs at all costs.... They attract countless prospective students, promote global awareness back on campus, and permanently change the lives and career paths of undergraduates....”

“I teach at a small college where my course load is five courses each of three trimesters. Has anyone considered asking faculty to teach one to three more courses per year?”

“I cannot give much advice on student life since I haven’t been back to Hanover since my 50th reunion. I will go again next spring for my 55th. From my viewpoint, the students have never had it so good.”

“The one thing all graduates of my era regret is that Dartmouth has not taught ‘Great Issues’ for two generations. No one knows today what they are missing, whether students or faculty. In Great Issues we had different speakers practically every week. Leaders from every walk of life and all spots on the globe, including leaders of Third World countries who didn’t like us. Union leaders, industry leaders, government and political leaders, including Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party perennial candidate for president. We had to read at least three papers a day and learn for ourselves how each slanted the news. The Communist Daily Worker, a newspaper of the time, was on our required reading list. The course was required for the senior year and exposed us to the real world like nothing else. Everyone who took it agreed it was the best course they ever had.”

Administration

The Alumni Council received 27 emails under the “Administration” heading. Common themes included:

- The economy, the financial condition, credit rating, and endowment of Dartmouth;
- Transparency and communication by the Board of Trustees/administration; and
- Board of Trustees/administration lack of initiative in dealing with alumni dissatisfaction.

Several questions were raised, and the ALC and Alumni Council worked to provide answers or guidance. Many of the questions and action items addressed by the ALC are mentioned in a later section of the report.
The following provides representative email examples:

Re: the credit rating downgrades:
“…Did anyone raise questions about the credit rating agency downgrades? Why it happened and what are the consequences and remedies?”

Re: the credit rating lowering:
“…It was clearly understood by the bankers, administration, and trustees that the AAA rating was sacrosanct and would be protected at all costs?[,] apparently, that has now changed?? and not for the better!?? I encourage you and our other alumni representatives to demand answers on how this happened…”

Re: systematic gift program:
“Why isn’t the plan better publicized and marketed?”

Re: no “transparency” with regard to:
“a) the details about the assets that comprise the endowment fund; and b) what changes, if any, have been made within the past year or so with respect to both the (i) composition of and (ii) the management of the endowment fund.”

“…Where the large increases in cost have occurred over the past 10 or 20 years. And, of course, since salaries have to be the biggest item, it would be interesting to know the breakdown between administration, faculty, and other.”

“I would be interested in the Alumni Council’s perspective on the following:
1. Tuition increases greater than the inflation rate
2. Percentage of the endowment used for financial support for students
3. Policy of who is paid for faculty off-campus consulting work (does faculty member keep the income or is it turned over to Dartmouth)
4. Policy of available courses for student. At current tuition costs a student should be able to sign up for any course at least once a year
5. Policy of how many courses a faculty member must teach per term/year. It would seem they need to teach more courses so that a student can get the courses they need on a timely basis (items numbered above for clarity).”

Suggestions/comments included:

“…If Dartmouth is going to be 8 percent international, it should have a mentor system of greeting the student and sticking with him for the first year….”

“…I find frequent Dartmouth squabbles like between the College and alumni disconcerting, as well as what seems like a focus more on the graduate schools than the undergraduates.”

“If a committee is ever formed on how to handle communicating with undergrads, please save a seat for me.”
Admissions

Thirty-seven emails were received and addressed on the admissions topic. The themes were: legacies not being given enough merit in the admit process, “minorities” being given too much merit in the admit process, lack of transparency in the admit process, feeling that alumni interviews are “worthless,” and more deference being given to independent/private school students.

Here are several representative emails (keep in mind that responses were provided to most every question or misperception):

“I note that the incoming class is 39 percent ‘of color.’ Was the Dartmouth applicant pool the same 39 percent ratio or is Dartmouth actively pursuing racial preferences? If so, is this legal? The people ‘of color’ in the USA is 20 percent and the number of people ‘of color’ applying to college is generally less.”

“What percentage of applicants come from parochial schools, and how does this compare to the percentage of students accepted from parochial schools?”

“Please be protective of financial aid…. And protective of the College’s continuing interest in (such) first-generation college students.”

“With the increases in applications we have a wonderful opportunity to get the mix of students we want.”

“Thirty-four percent are valedictorians…. This is not a good sign. How about 34 percent were captains of sports teams or significant student organizations? Valedictorians focus their entire lives on becoming the valedictorian and generally game the system to the max. Do the alumni have any input on who we take? And who are these ‘outside readers to assess applications’ who helped assess applicants?”

Alumni Governance

1. The Proposed Constitutional Amendment

An overwhelming majority of the emails reviewed were supportive of the proposed constitutional amendment (54 emails, more than twice the number of negative emails received).

In sum, there were 91 emails regarding the proposed constitutional amendment, of which:

- 54 were supportive
- 25 were not supportive
- 12 were neutral

Typical quotes:

“My response is in support of the proposed amendment. The three points are simple democracy. Let’s codify them.”
"In short, I don’t think it solves any problems. It’s a shameless knee-jerk reaction to the board’s requirement that we come up with a different voting process, and one that looks something like that which is now on the table for a vote. I will vote against it."

2. Opinions Regarding College, Alumni Council, and Association of Alumni Governance

A total of 35 emails were reviewed and addressed that expressed concern about College, Alumni Council, and Association of Alumni governance:

Some were hostile in tone
Most expressed a lack of confidence in the board and alumni leadership resulting from contentions regarding “packing” and petition candidates
Most concerned the “parity” issue
Two voiced strident complaints about what they perceived to be “ageism and sexism” in the alumni counselor’s report to them

A total of nine emails expressed generally favorable opinions about College, Alumni Council, and Association of Alumni governance.

Typical quotes:

Generally favorable quotes included:

1. “Thank you so much for your hard work this past year, especially in turning back a series of challenges that, had they succeeded, would have seriously diminished Dartmouth’s reputation for excellence and its independence. It was gratifying to see so many alumni come out of the woodwork and vote in favor of enabling our beloved College to keep moving forward. I believe overcoming these challenges now was as important for Dartmouth as the Webster defense was in its day.”

2. “Thank you for the report, ESPECIALLY, ESPECIALLY, MOST ESPECIALLY your comment on the lawsuit in the name of a bogus alumni association. Since that was done I don’t trust anything sent to me by an alumni association, including the legitimate one. Why? Because I don’t remember the names correctly. So PLEASE, always say something in your emails that will re-establish your legitimacy for dolts like me who can’t get it straight and who will forever be mistrustful of apparently legitimate communications from conspiracy buffs.”

3. “Thanks for the message and the update. We congratulate you all on the excellent job you did this past year in preserving and protecting our College from hostile outside forces. I particularly applaud your efforts to keep any form of control out of the hands of the State of New Hampshire. Those of us who know Dartmouth’s history well remember how much trouble their involvement caused in the past. I’m older now, but am breathing a real sigh of relief that Dartmouth once again stands on a firm and independent foundation that will carry it forward in the decades and even centuries to come.”

4. “Hard for me to fathom the motivation of certain alums who subjected the College to such destructive and negative campaigns. The outcome has renewed my faith in the Dartmouth community – and our ability to keep the school focused on its traditions of learning and inclusion rather than divisiveness.”

5. “I spend a good deal of time in and around the Dartmouth campus and I can assure you that the students are far more talented and diverse than when we, or perhaps you, attended a number of years ago. I share your appreciation for the excellent job that Jim Wright has done as president for the last 11 years. I also share your pleasure in the appointment of Dr. Jim Kim as the next president of Dartmouth. The overwhelming feeling on campus about this appointment is one of excitement for the future of the College. Just as is the case for our country, the best days for Dartmouth are still ahead.”
A sample of emails that expressed concern included the following:

1. “I refuse to participate in Dartmouth’s sham alumni governance, and will not legitimize or encourage your Mugabe-style elections with a vote.”
2. “The day that Dartmouth stopped counting my votes when it didn’t suit them is the day I stopped voting, and also the day I decided never to give another penny to the place.”
3. “Thanks for the email, but the College and the Alumni Council really do not respect the views of those who feel the process for electing trustees worked well for many years and did not have to be changed.”
4. “Please remove my name from your and all ‘alumni representative’ mailing lists. Until parity is restored, I have no interest in the goings on at the Alumni Council or, indeed the College.”
5. “I have been following the political goings on for well over a year now and am so outraged, I can’t see straight. The lawsuit had the trustees and the administration on the ropes. The alumni want the right to weigh-in on governance issues with veto power if necessary. The recent acquiescence pissed away the most precious right the Dartmouth alumni had over and above the alumni of any major college in the USA. You obtained nothing in return for this. I want parity back. In fact, I want the right to elect all Trustees not just eight of 24. I never missed donating money to the College since I graduated. Get parity back! I have started missing donating my money to the College now and my bank account is fatter for it.”

3. Miscellaneous Other

A total of 17 emails related to other governance issues, including:

Several concerns about the departure of Trustee Zywicki
questions regarding voter turnouts
complaints about online voting difficulties
opinion that Tuck alumni representative to the Alumni Council not be Dartmouth undergrad alumni
questions regarding TrueBallot (the alumni elections vendor)
a suggestion that there be no more than a total of nine trustees
a proposal that there be less rather than more alumni involvement in college governance
a misunderstanding concerning Alumni Council representation for classes more than 55 years out
a concern about whether the ALC would accurately report alumni sentiment (emails) to the board
tips on how to be a good alumni councilor
an expression of general good wishes
an expression of opposition to the new lawsuit
a question about the availability of directors and officers insurance for the new lawsuit
a poetic request to be left alone

Athletics

To date, the ALC and Alumni Council have reviewed, forwarded, and responded to 37 emails related to “Athletics.”

1. Football

More than two-thirds of these emails specifically relate to the football team and the losing record this season. Most all of the emails express frustration, embarrassment, and a desire to stimulate “discussion” and a “review” to “fix the problem.”
Several emails describe perceptions of the football performance and the losses incurred this past season:

“What happened to Dartmouth football?”
“Isn’t it time to resurrect some of the legacy greatness (from a previous era – you remember when) of our football program?”
“The periods from 1998 through 2001, and 2004 through 2008, are by far the worst in Dartmouth history.”

There is a feeling that the losing record is having a negative impact on student and alumni “morale,” on “giving” and “alumni support” in general.

Two emails relate to the 1883 and 1884 seasons, the previous “worst season on record.”

The perceived blame falls in several areas, according to those who wrote to the ALC or their Alumni Councilors. Two emails blame a shortfall on recruitment and a perceived lack of funding and lack of recruiting expertise. Two emails blame the Admissions Department for “failing to admit quality football players” from high schools, and an “inability” to source exceptional athlete scholars. One email suggested that “the policy of admissions is to not accept good athletes at Dartmouth.”

Two emails blame the losing season on the athletic director, and a failure of “leadership.” Three place blame squarely on the coaching staff, and one email goes into great detail analyzing the lifetime record of the head coach at Dartmouth.

Of the emails that focus negatively on the AD and the coach, they call for a reorganization and recalibration of the athletic department.

However, it should be noted, and expressly highlighted, that the tenor of most emails is very positive toward Coach Teevens.

At least seven emails offer encouragement and support. Among these emails, alumni cite Teeven’s “Dartmouth spirit,” “passion,” and “desire” to change (this was particularly relevant to alumni who had personally listened to or spoken with Coach Teevens to “better understand” the pressures facing the program and how he intends to establish a winning record).

Here is one sample email: “Buddy is the right coach; he needs more help in recruitment.” Another email states, “I second your vote for him (Buddy Teevens) as a builder of young men and a coach in whom we can all be very proud.”

Seemingly, much of the negative commentary was driven by a lack of understanding of Coach Teevens’ vision for the program and his perspective on the season and barriers to success. Therefore, as an action step undertaken by the Alumni Council and ALC, a conference call was scheduled between the Alumni Council’s Student Affairs Committee with Coach Teevens; Josie Harper, Director of Athletics; and Bob Ceplikas, Deputy Director of Athletics. The purpose of the call was to allow more councilors to hear from Coach Teevens directly, and then to communicate the content to all councilors and, ultimately, their constituencies. The feedback from this approach was generally appreciated. One positive email received applauded the “clarity” around the issues and acknowledged the “transparency” provided by Coach Teevens.
2. Other Athletics

One email expressed a desire for the College to open more space so “all athletes and student athletes” can use facilities as regularly and unrestricted as “jocks.” Here, the Alumni councilor responded by explaining how Floren Field House had made more space available, especially for exercise equipment.

One email cited concern about recent budget cuts behind athletic programs, stating, “It is discouraging the athletic budget was cut as these extracurricular activities are quite important to the social fabric of the College and a rewarding college experience for the athletics.”

Finally, two emails suggest that focus on athletics undermines the College’s stature in the academic arena. These emails suggest that balance be tipped in favor of academics over athletics (these alumni feel athletics currently overshadow academics).

Composite

A total of 77 email messages were received and addressed corresponding to the “General/Composite” category, most of which were combined into one councilor’s report. Of those, 46 were more or less a “thank you” for the report. Fifteen were in response to Elliot Weinstein (’56’s) direct solicitation of opinion about the moose as a mascot. The remainder generally addressed issues such as trustee parity, Trustee Todd Zywicki’s departure from the Board of Trustees, football and athletics in general, college finances, academics, and social inequality. Of all the emails received on these topics, 47 were received before the May 2009 Alumni Council meeting and 30 were received after the meeting. Below is a discussion of some of the topics and a summary of some of the actions the trustees/administration/Alumni Council have undertaken to respond to these issues.

1. Moose Mascot

As discussed at the ALC meeting in May, this was a topic that Elliot Weinstein raised on his own with his constituents. It elicited some annoyance, some good jokes, and some bad jokes. Although the majority opposed the idea, 13 alumni from the Class of 1956 may not be the best statistical sample. At any rate, this seemed to be a topic that ultimately should be in the hands of the current students, and we don’t believe that it’s something the Alumni Council should take on as a body.

2. Trustee Parity/Elections

The opinions expressed on those topics were similar to those we have heard during the past two years. One alumnus raised the issue of preferential voting for trustees; i.e., ranking one’s preference of the available candidates. It appears that no one was aware that this issue was discussed by the Alumni Governance Task Force (AGTF) and the Alumni Council and ultimately rejected.

Presidential Search

Twenty emails were received regarding impressions of President-elect Kim and a few surrounding issues:

Common themes included:

- Excitement regarding the reports by councilors regarding President-Elect Kim and further questions regarding the new president
- Words of suggestion and questioning for the new president
Comments/suggestions included:

Re: President Wright:
“Our class started a [scholar]ship fund in his name with an initial contribution of $150,000 as a way of both recognizing and supporting his efforts regarding wounded veterans. Successor will need big shoes....”

“Please convey to those in power that it would be good for the trustees [sic] make sure that any incoming president adopts the Mission of the College that was developed with great effort and then reinforces how it is implemented throughout the College’s administration and faculty....”

In answer to the constituent’s question of how the councilor can state that “Dr. Kim ‘gets’ Dartmouth,” the councilor states, “...I think he ‘gets Dartmouth’ as a collection of interdependent colors and threads and sounds and textures that coalesce into a whole far stronger and more valuable than any ordinary arithmetic summation of its parts would suggest. In a sense, the arguments among different groups about the meaning and essence of Dartmouth become moot with his approach that Dartmouth is all of these things.... I hope that makes sense.”

Student Affairs

A total of 48 emails were received related to Student Affairs. Given the category, this was a “mixed bag” of thoughts relative to life at Dartmouth, and there may be some overlap of themes with the “Other” section. Overwhelmingly, there was a skew toward discussion surrounding the alcohol policy.

Emails tended to favor the administration’s policy placing more responsibility in the hands of students. The following comments reflect the range of sentiment on this topic.

This email offered a supportive point of view:

“Dean Crady’s position on alcohol use sounds so good. It is very much what several of us students were suggesting in the mid ’70s ... I’m thrilled that common sense is finally trying to prevail (although why it took a PHD dissertation to figure it out is beyond me).”

Another email related to President Wright’s support for the Amethyst Initiative, a public statement that the problem of irresponsible drinking by young people continues despite the minimum legal drinking age of 21, and there is a culture of dangerous binge drinking on many campuses. For reference, the Amethyst Initiative supports informed and unimpeded debate on the 21 year-old drinking age. Amethyst Initiative presidents and chancellors call upon elected officials to weigh all the consequences of current alcohol policies and to invite new ideas on how best to prepare young adults to make responsible decisions about alcohol use.

Another favorable email voiced the following point of view:

“Reducing the age of drinking will go a long way toward solving the drinking problem. Students can be taught to drink responsibly, but breaking the law has encouraged the binge drinking more than stopped it.”

One email differed with the College’s stance:

“I appreciate your update sent to all of us. For the record, Crady is absolutely wrong about the age 21 law leading to more binge drinking. There is absolutely no scientific evidence that this is the case. In
point of fact, the age 21 law has been shown in dozens of studies to reduce alcohol-impaired driving fatalities significantly. In my view, one of the most unfortunate actions Jim Wright took was to sign on with other college presidents to the so-called Amethyst Initiative, calling for a reduced minimum legal drinking age. On the other hand, I’m pleased to see that he endorses “environmental management....”

Several emails offered points of view related to the budget cuts. One email questioned why financial aid was increasing while the College was cutting programs and projects and laying off employees. Another email urged, “Please be protective of financial aid.” One email questioned whether, in an environment of expansion, Dartmouth could preserve its “small college” culture. One email stated that the College should place more emphasis on making students aware of Western morals and political and artistic heritage.

Two emails focused on the neglect and physical condition, or lack thereof, of the fraternities. The following email offers a passionate view of the physical condition of fraternities and the message it sends to parents, students, and prospectives. It also calls out a perceived “blind eye” from the College:

“I took my son to visit Dartmouth a year ago last fall and we went in both frats and sororities. I found we now have 45 years of accumulated damage and dirt. Adding firewalls and some bare necessity safety systems at the mandate of the College did nothing to improve the overall living conditions.

“At least the College is getting around to remodeling the dorms. After visiting (another institution), I saw first-hand how nicely old dorms could be modernized, and how much of a positive impression it made on the prospective students on the campus tour. Dartmouth lags far behind much of its competition, and it seems incongruous to see the school spend time and money on so many new buildings when the existing living facilities are so poorly maintained.

“I am pro the Greek system, don’t get me wrong, but given the prominence of the system in Dartmouth social life the condition of the houses is more than an embarrassment.

“It honestly is a good thing all the doors are locked, key coded, and that prospective parents don’t easily get to see inside. If they did they would hesitate to let their children attend Dartmouth. Even my son, who rarely picks up his room, and ended up going to Stanford, was put off by the conditions.

“Policy matters exacerbate the problem. The ‘common source’ rule of the College and required registration of kegs is a failed policy, because now the kids all buy Keystone Light beer and the floors and surroundings are littered with not only plastic cups but empty aluminum cans. Has anyone on the board or administration ever taken the time to seriously consider a pragmatic approach to the trade-offs in social policy, liability, and differing value systems as what is the ‘appropriate’ Dartmouth social experience?

“Turning a blind eye on the problem or hoping that the administration can control or ignore or financially force the Greek system into oblivion, did not work for any of the past administrations. The fruits of those policies have just exacerbated the decay, which also sends a message that people don’t care – so why should the students themselves?

“I am probably in the minority of the alumni brothers and sisters, but I don’t see how any impartial observer could countenance the unseemly reflection of neglect that it gives to our illustrious alma mater.”
One email called for the end of fraternities and sororities at Dartmouth, while another email praised the social and cultural diversity at Dartmouth, including social clubs and fraternities.

There was an interesting email that served up an idea for a “Student Liaison Committee,” that would serve in a similar capacity to the ALC, but directed at facilitating more communication between students and the ALC.

One email called for a more “fair and balanced” approach to offering the same standard of sorority housing as fraternities. One email pointed to a perceived lack of graduate student housing. This email described how one former housing option was demolished before new housing could become available.

In an effort to respond to inquiries about ROTC and current veteran students on campus, several actions were taken, including providing a summary of ROTC and other military training options available to undergraduates. Additionally, a panel of current undergraduate veterans, moderated by NROTC alumnus Ralph Manuel ’58, presented information and addressed questions at the spring 2009 meeting of the council.

This session was extremely well received, and prompted eight emails from alums, all expressing appreciation for the panel and/or Dartmouth’s support of ROTC.

The following email is representative of the types of responses received:

“What should be relevant to the issue of whether Dartmouth should – or should not – be participating in ROTC is ... that the military, and our country, is better off for having a blend of officers from the liberal arts mixed in with the “trade school” officers.

“I am a 1953 Dartmouth Naval ROTC graduate. I did my years of active duty and retired 20 years later with benefits. Having been in the military culture for those years my observation is that our country is better off for having the officer corps well sprinkled with leaders who had their training in a liberal arts setting. The academy graduates are essential to a well-run military organization, but they need to be “leavened” by others who here and there say, ‘Whoa, how about this [non-gung-ho] aspect?"

“My point is that Dartmouth will contribute more to this world’s well-being by sending some of its graduates into leadership positions in our country’s military.

“If Dartmouth does not do that, our College is not fulfilling the better world-citizen role we espouse.”

Finally, as referenced in the “Composite” category, there was much discussion about a moose as the college mascot. Responses were against that, for a variety of reasons, with 10 of the 13 responses against the moose. We agreed this issue should be decided by current students.

Other

1. Thank You’s:

There were approximately 144 messages that generally thanked the person who sent the communication and, in most cases, wished them well. Some were more effusive than others, but the majority were relatively terse
(Thanks, keep up the good work, etc.). The comments ranged from one word (“Thanks”) to several paragraphs that amounted to the same thing (proving, perhaps, that alumni know how to write and are enamored with email). Many alumni appreciated the council’s renewed commitment to communicate clearly and concisely what is happening at the College (a.k.a. “getting real”). Some examples:

“Thanks very much. The info is much appreciated.”
“Thanks for sending this. I was especially interested in the story about the veterans at Dartmouth and glad to hear they are doing well.”
“Thanks for the update – we usually don’t get summaries like this. Very informative!”
“Thank you for the excellent and detailed report from Hanover. It is by far the best I have ever read. Thanks for your service to Dartmouth.”
“I admire you for taking the time to do this. It’s more meaningful to us than you may realize. We alums are not indifferent, but we may be indifferently informed. Don’t be afraid to tell us your own views, along with those of others.”
“I appreciate the reports you’ve been sending about Alumni Council activities. They’ve given me the good feeling of being in touch with Dartmouth, despite the distance in space and time.”

2. Feelin’ Good About Dartmouth:

There were six messages that were clearly expressing warm and fuzzy feelings about Dartmouth. Some highlights:

“Thank you for your insights and commentary. You make me feel good about our College!”
“Thanks for the update and introduction. I love seeing a more diverse crowd getting involved with the College and embracing different Dartmouth experiences. Anyway, your involvement inspires me to get involved as well. Let me know if/how I can support you.”
“I don’t have a specific comment for the meeting except to note that the VOLT system brought online last week to support the Dartmouth College Fund is spectacular. Also, please convey to President Wright my appreciation for his service to Dartmouth.”

3. I Already Voted:

Responding to various calls to get out and vote in the Association of Alumni election, 68 alumni said that they had already voted, but did not reveal how. Most were concerned that they were receiving a reminder to vote because their vote had not been somehow recorded. This is one issue that the council and the Association of Alumni need to address for future elections.

4. General Election Comments, Negative:

There were four clearly negative responses to councilors’ calls to get out the vote in the Association of Alumni election. They include one alum who felt that the whole thing was rigged (“This is a rigged election, why bother?”), one who was upset at the council’s use of the College’s mailing list (“It appears based on your email that the Alumni Council can use official Dartmouth email lists to pitch its favored policies to alumni. Are alumni who espouse different views granted access to these same lists? If not, why not?”), and three who were upset about being pressured to vote (“Why are you lobbying me on this? Let us decide without your pressure, please”); “Should I get one more of these announcements I may never vote again”; and “You shouldn’t keep reminding people who have already voted.”
5. I Already Voted Yes:

Eight alumni let us know that they had supported the amendment, several expressing concern (once again) that their original vote was not recorded. For example,

“I voted in favor of the amendment some months ago. Hope it passes.”

“I’m puzzled as to why I keep receiving ‘get out the vote’ email, since I voted several weeks ago. Perhaps because I conform to the ‘early.’ Part of the ward heelers’ cry, I should be similarly expected to respond to the ‘often’ part? In any case, I’m with the good guys here.”

“I appreciate the individual message but I have already voted. I know how important the constitutional amendment is to the well-being of the College’s governance and fully support its passage. I mailed my ballot at least a month ago.”

6. I Already Voted No:

Six alumni let us know that they had already voted against the Association of Alumni constitutional amendment. A sampling:

“Thanks for the email. I voted NO on the amendment. I respectfully disagree with the opinion of the Alumni Council on this issue.”

“NO.”

“I actually voted no on the amendment. It is hard for me to understand, but it seems like the result of saying yes to it would be to reduce the power and impact of my one vote. So why would that be good?”

7. I Need Voting Information:

Six alumni needed information on how to vote or a copy of their individual PIN, etc. These requests were passed on to Alumni Relations for action.

8. Miscellaneous:

Approximately 22 messages. A real grab bag of comments and requests, everything from out-of-the-office messages to a poem by Mother Theresa. There was a complaint about what one alum considered bad writing in council communications, someone hoping to network in order to find a job, two who needed regional club information, one who felt that the emphasis on rewarding athletic accomplishments should shift toward acknowledging academic successes, someone who suggested a better way for alumni to donate to the Dartmouth College Fund (i.e., automatic monthly withdrawals from one’s checking account), and a ’46 who hoped that the College would strive to better instill integrity (“I believe the College needs to continue to promote the importance of demonstrated integrity in its graduates. $$$ should not be the only goal of a Dartmouth graduate.”). There was even the overly negative, “You guys really don’t get it...yet.”

9. Too Much Information:

Two alumni sent specific comments/complaints that the frequency and complexity of recent communications is getting out of hand. One email related to the Association of Alumni election reminders, as cited below:

“I appreciate the importance of the vote and I understand the need to ‘get the vote out.’ However, the frequency of these reminders is certainly getting out of hand. I have voted. Please contact the proper persons at the Dartmouth Alumni Council and have them stop this stream of emails.”
10. Remove Requests:

Finally, there were six requests to be removed from the email list and to not receive future communications from the council. More than one was from someone who went to Tuck, and was not a Dartmouth undergrad, and who had no interest in alumni politics.
Actions & Results

Positioned centrally as the relay for input between alumni and the College, the ALC took on a new role for a committee of this sort on the Alumni Council, namely dealing with "Action Items" that were received in correspondence to the council. Alumni raised a variety of issues, sometimes questions needing to be answered, sometimes questions or comments that compelled specific actions. The following list of issues arose among the action items, and several will be described in greater detail:

Composition of Endowment Fund
Regional Alumni Clubs
Dartmouth Film Society
Admissions (Legacy, Value of Alumni Interviews, Diversity)
Blitz Mail/Alumni Email
Student Involvement in Productions at the Hopkins Center
Financial Aid
Dartmouth College Fund Systematic Gift Planning
Communications from Alumni Councilors
College Budget
ROTC
Student Internships
Career Services
Official Logo for the Association of Alumni and the Alumni Council
Mascot
Graduate Student Housing
Faculty

Alumni Leadership Organizational Flow Chart
During the meeting between the ALC and the ARC, some confusion was expressed regarding alumni understanding of the composition and relationships of the various bodies of alumni governance and leadership. Sure enough, feedback was received from an alumnus (following a request for nominations to the ALC) that echoed this confusion, and this led to two flow charts: one demonstrating the composition and relationships and the second showing the function of the various bodies of alumni leadership. Interestingly, this has received particular attention from College staff, who also found the clarification of these entities useful. (Appendix M)

Faculty Booklist: “Good Reads”
Alumni have long been fans of continuing education, and the College supported this effort with lectures by professors at many alumni gatherings. One alumnus asked about the possibility of getting recommended reading from professors as well, and this has led to the creation of the “Good Reads” section on the Alumni Council web site (www.alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/goodreads), which will be expanded as more professors provide lists. Within the first six weeks of the page being posted, it had received 5,065 hits (4,749 unique hits), with viewers spending more than twice as much time on this page as on other Alumni Relations web pages.

ROTC
ROTC at Dartmouth has long been a focus for discussion since the program left the campus during the anti-war era of the ’70s. In more recent years, with anti-military sentiment much less, Army ROTC has been restored on
campus through an agreement between the College and Norwich University in Vermont. The program remains small, and many alumni from the era of a strong ROTC program have expressed a lack of understanding of what is available and desire to expand the options to undergraduates. In an effort to respond to alumni concerns, several actions were taken, including providing a summary of ROTC and other military training options available to undergraduates (Appendix N), which was distributed to councilors upon request for dissemination to their constituents. Additionally, a panel of current undergraduate veterans, moderated by NROTC alumnus Ralph Manuel ’58, presented information and addressed questions at the spring 2009 meeting of the council. This session was one of the most popular at the spring meeting.

**Dartmouth Football Program**

By far, the most common email about athletics at Dartmouth questioned the football program. Members of the council who had the opportunity to meet with Head Football Coach Buddy Teevens and some of the players could appreciate the improvement and direction of the program, along with strong student support among the players, but this exposure was limited. Therefore, a conference call was held with the Alumni Council Student Affairs Committee and Coach Buddy Teevens ’79; Josie Harper ’47a, Director of Athletics; and Bob Ceplikas ’78, Deputy Director of Athletics, to allow for more councilors to inform themselves, and a summary of this call was distributed to all councilors (Appendix O). The council also encouraged the Department of Athletics to consider ways to allow more alumni to experience the passion and mission that exists in the football program, possibly through podcasts or on the Dartmouth YouTube channel.

**Management of the Budget and Endowment**

With the economic crisis, many alumni expressed concern over the budget cuts and maneuvers being anticipated by the College, and questions were received relating to aspects of the budget as well as management of the endowment. In order to better inform councilors so that they could respond to constituents about the budget, a conference call with Adam Keller, executive vice president for finance and administration; President Wright; and David Spalding ’76, vice president for Alumni Relations, was held for all councilors to be informed on the specifics of the plans being implemented. With regard to questions about the endowment, alumni were additionally referred to the online report of investments.

**Association of Alumni Constitutional Amendment**

Although there was not much feedback about the election of the Association of Alumni Executive Committee, some alumni had questions about the constitutional amendment when it was proposed. To address these, a FAQ was composed and posted on the Alumni Council web site (Appendix P), which was based on the questions and feedback received by the council.
Recommendations/Expectations

Upon reviewing recent history of the Alumni Council along with the growing experience of the ALC, several issues surface for consideration.

First and foremost is the ongoing goal of improving communication among alumni, the Alumni Council, and the College administration and Board of Trustees. Initially, improvement has meant an increase in volume of correspondence with an attempt to provide an objective summary of Alumni Council activity along with commentary from councilors. While some alumni seem perturbed by the inclusion of individual councilor sentiments, we stand by the belief that such peer-to-peer reporting is essential, and provides the opportunity to generate discussion and feedback from constituents. We would encourage councilors to continue these efforts, and it is our hope that exchanges will remain predominantly civil and constructive.

Over the long term, a simple increase in volume of communication is less ideal, and streamlining will also be important. A mechanism to minimize excessive e-mails is desirable, though this may be difficult since individual alumni are represented by more than one constituency. Because different representatives may convey different information to their constituents, it is our preference that alumni are over-informed as opposed to being under-informed. As technology improves, however, it would be ideal to reduce the number of e-mails that are sent to each alumnus where possible.

Second, in consultation with classes, clubs, and affiliated groups, the council has developed a manual titled “Recommended Procedures for Election/Selection of Representatives by Constituent Groups.” The manual, the product of 18 months of analysis, is intended to serve as a resource to alumni constituencies in their efforts to elect/select representatives to the Alumni Council. While an electoral process for Alumni Council representatives has not been mandated, most constituencies, where election is feasible, are moving in that direction in an effort to support the broader goal of instituting democratic principles in alumni governance.

Third, the ALC will continue to work closely with the Board of Trustees through the ARC. Our goal in these efforts is twofold. First, we want to convey alumni sentiment to the members of the board, so that they can address alumni concerns that coincide with board actions and decisions at the College. It is our hope that such an approach will alleviate some of the alumni rancor and discontent that has been characteristic of the recent past in alumni relations. To that end, the ALC will help to communicate back to alumni to keep them informed of board activity when appropriate. Additionally, we will aid with the investigation of topics of importance to the board through our network of Alumni Council representatives in order to solicit feedback on specific topics.

There have been two election cycles of the Association of Alumni since amendments to the Alumni Council’s constitution were approved, changes that brought the ALC into existence. As a result of those elections, an Association Executive Committee was elected, which dismissed the lawsuit against the College over the parity issue, and work has progressed toward improving the system of alumni trustee nominations. The second election in 2009 resulted in the passage of an amendment to the constitution of the Association of Alumni, which will simplify the electoral process.

These two elections are meaningful, in that they demonstrate that a majority of voting alumni are supportive of the efforts of the College and its administration in advancing its mission to provide the best educational experience possible to its students. They are also meaningful, however, in reinforcing a problem with “democracy at Dartmouth,” namely that fewer than 40 percent of alumni are engaged in voting for those issues for
which alumni input is solicited. The response of the Alumni Council and the ALC has been to increase our communications efforts, and to target alumni more directly through expanded representation on the council in an effort to actively engage an even larger proportion of alumni. Over the next two years, as the council transitions to the more fully representative body established by the recent constitutional reforms, all classes up to 55 years out will have their own representative on the council, as well as expanded representation of various groups and regions. True, some alumni have written us to complain that they are receiving multiple communications, but we believe this is preferable to the old scenario, in which alumni received nothing and had no idea who their representatives were.

In the coming year, alumni trustee nominations will resume under the new electoral guidelines, and it will be important for the Alumni Council and the ALC to remain attentive to the alumni response to these changes. The ALC, in particular, will be positioned at the intersection of the various bodies involved in these nominations: the Nominating Committee, the Association of Alumni Executive Committee, and the alumni as a whole. With this perspective, the committee can take part in the critical analysis of the process to aid in furthering the electoral reform.

The ALC remains a work in progress. As we reflect on the past year, the evolution of management of “action items” has been a significant development in the role of the committee. As we look forward, this committee and, indeed, the Alumni Council must retain the ability to adapt to the changing needs of alumni governance. This may be through additional functions or ad hoc committees, through updates to the web pages, and through institution of other media options such as use of the Dartmouth YouTube channel. At the same time, we should never lose sight of the more traditional needs of those who prefer paper and ink. We should continually reevaluate our effectiveness in achieving the mission of the Alumni Council.