



Dartmouth

2015-16

ANNUAL REPORT

ALUMNI LIAISON COMMITTEE

TO

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Introduction

The 12-member Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) of the Dartmouth Alumni Council is pleased to submit this annual report to the Board of Trustees, the ninth such report since the ALC was founded in 2007. This year marks the 102nd anniversary of the Alumni Council, founded by Ernest Martin Hopkins “to be the clearinghouse for alumni sentiment and interchange of alumni ideas.” While the Council has grown from 25 members in 1913 to 126 today, the core mission of the Alumni Council has remained unchanged: “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.”

The ALC serves to coordinate and enhance the work of the Alumni Council, and brings the leadership of the council and the Association of Alumni (AoA) together with members of the alumni body in one forum. The core mission of the ALC is to collect and synthesize alumni sentiment for College audiences, including the Board of Trustees. The Alumni Council and ALC have remained steadfast in our commitment to continually improve the ways that we engage and communicate with alumni. We believe that over the past year we have built on the solid foundation laid by previous incarnations of the ALC to engage with the alumni body more broadly and deeply than ever before. The Executive Summary of this report highlights many of these changes and speaks to the progress made on the communications front by the Alumni Council and the ALC this year. The ALC received 1,225 emails from alumni this year, a 9 percent decrease from last year. However, as further described in our report, the ALC enhanced its interactions with alumni through other forums, specifically via two Moosilauke Forum surveys, on Facebook, and on Twitter – further evidence, as described elsewhere in the report, that some segments of the alumni population prefer communicating with Dartmouth on platforms other than email. The volume of alumni email as aggregated by topic category is outlined on page 8 of this report and the substance of those communications is summarized on page 12, as well as in more comprehensive detail in Appendix A.

We hope the Board of Trustees, College leadership, and all alumni will find this report informative in describing major elements of alumni sentiment during the past year. We thank all those whose tireless work on behalf of our alma mater has made this possible. In particular, we would like to thank Martha Beattie '76, Lynne Gaudet '81 and Meg Ramsden '87 of the College's Office of Alumni Relations for their many contributions in support of the Alumni Council, the ALC, and this report. This report will be posted on the Alumni Council's website, where alumni are encouraged to review it, and a link will be sent out to all alumni. All comments and questions are welcome and should be addressed to the ALC at ALC@dartmouth.edu.

Respectfully submitted,

The 2015-16 Alumni Liaison Committee

Lou Spelios '95, chair and past president of the Alumni Council
Jennifer Avellino '89, president of the Alumni Council
Russell Wolff '89, '94Tu, president-elect of the Alumni Council
Blair Bernard '97, alumni councilor
Pete Bleyler '61, second vice president of the Association of Alumni
Mark Caron '85, member of the Association of Alumni
C. Alec Casey '88, first vice president of the Association of Alumni
Susan Finegan '85, president of the Association of Alumni
Michelle Fortier '94, '95Th, member of the Association of Alumni
Gray Horan '82, alumni councilor
Jacques Steinberg '88, alumni councilor
N. Troy Stewart '07, '13Tu, member of the Association of Alumni

Executive Summary

In 2015-16, the Alumni Council and the Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) continued to improve two-way communication with Dartmouth alumni. The Council continued to use email effectively – indeed it remains the most popular medium for alumni communication – but the Council also continued to branch out onto social media and a variety of other digital platforms. While Alumni Council emails have a very high (44 percent) open rate, we believe our future success in engaging alumni will be based on a diverse set of communication tools, as we seek to make it possible to engage with each alumnus on whatever platform he or she prefers.

Over the past year we received 1,225 emails on a variety of topics, a 66 percent increase since 2011-2012. We also continued to engage alumni using the Moosilauke Forum survey. In the past year, we deployed the forum twice, focusing on the topics of social media usage and alumni volunteer activities. The forum continues to provide the council and the College an effective way to seek feedback on key topics and at the same time allow us to target specific topics of interest.

The Alumni Council communicated with alumni more than 5,500 times in the past year, through communication tools such as emails (including those sent to and from councilors by their constituents, or sent directly to the ALC by alumni), the Moosilauke Forum survey, Twitter, Instagram and video. Alumni councilors and the ALC worked throughout the year to provide alumni with answers to their questions, and to ensure the college was made aware of alumni perspectives and concerns.

Highlights of the communication received include:

Surveys:

In August 2015, the Moosilauke Forum survey, focusing on social media usage, was completed by 1,290 alumni randomly selected to be on the Forum. We learned that for alumni on Facebook, their engagement with Dartmouth-affiliated Facebook content is strongest when it is about people they know, things that they can do, or their special connections to Dartmouth. They also like "feeling good" about Dartmouth – seeing pictures of campus, or hearing about Dartmouth accomplishments. Facebook can help them stay connected to College news and events. We heard from alumni that shorter, concise emails are the best way for the Council to distribute its updates. Finally, the nostalgia that seeing pictures on Instagram evokes results in strong emotional connections to Dartmouth.

The March 2016 survey, focused on alumni volunteer activities, was completed by 1,072 alumni randomly selected to be on the Forum. We wanted to learn more about alumni passions and interests in volunteering to help shape the Dartmouth Alumni Day of Service as well as other programs. Among alumni who have participated in community service, more than half volunteered for education/youth services organizations. Respondents under the age of 30 were most enthusiastic about the Alumni Day of Service. Of those who found the idea appealing, most said the main draw is meeting Dartmouth alumni in their community. We learned that there is an opportunity to increase awareness of the Alumni Day of Service as an event that offers an intersection of impact (give back to the community) and social (interact with other Dartmouth alumni). We need to do a better job building awareness of this event through multiple channels, especially class communications, and learned the importance of communicating the logistics of the volunteer opportunity.

Emails:

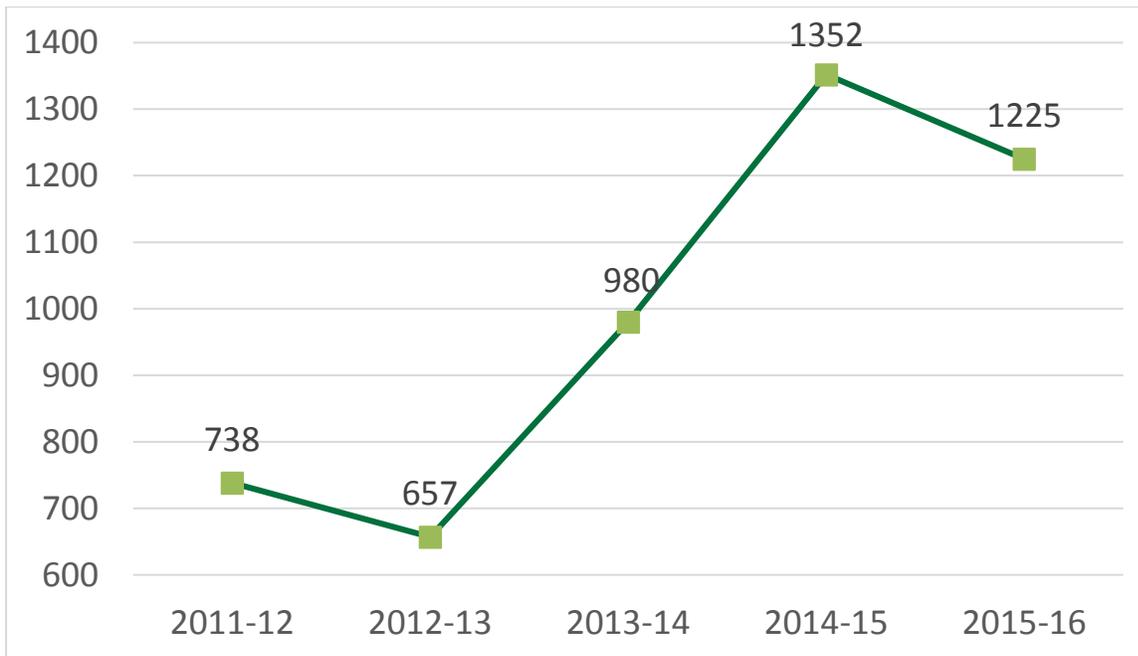
- **Academics:** Concerns/questions about the new graduate school; Dartmouth's academic rankings; concerns about free speech on campus; faculty diversity. (93)
- **Administration:** Expansion of the Thayer School; concern over the Hood Museum design; tuition, cost control, and efficiency at Dartmouth; fossil fuel divestment and sustainability/climate change initiatives; faculty diversity. (163)
- **Admissions:** Concern about transparency and role of diversity in the admissions process; importance of alumni interviewing; questions about need-blind admissions. (103 emails)
- **Athletics:** Questions around cost of football program, cost of and/investment in new facilities including new indoor facility and Nordic skiing; recruiting practices; swimming facilities. (18)
- **Governance:** Emails regarding uncontested elections in alumni leadership. (11)
- **Student Life:** Concern about actions against Greek organizations (Alpha Delta de-recognition) and communication to alumni; alcohol policy (hard alcohol ban); Moving Dartmouth Forward and questions about residential housing system (184 emails). A subset of this category are questions and concerns about campus protests (e.g. Black Lives Matter); subsequent investigation and possible disciplinary action; importance of timely communication to alumni surrounding issues. (209 emails)

In addition the Council received more than 280 general response contacts, many of which thanked councilors for their service and/or communication updates.

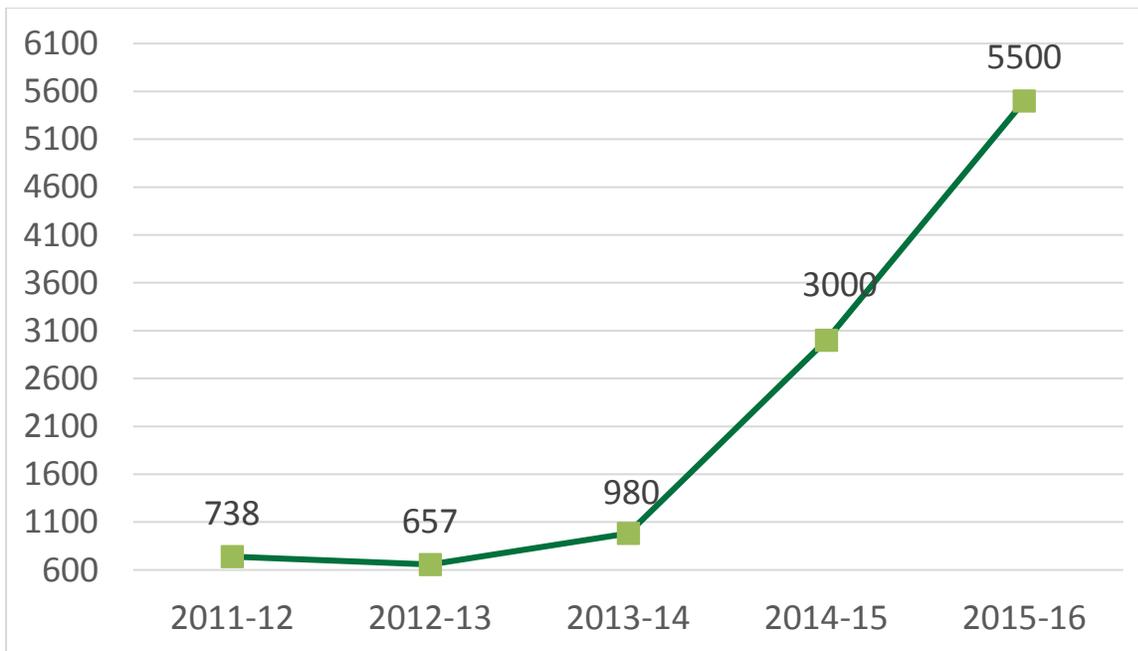
The details of many of the topics raised follow in this report.

We want to acknowledge the 41 alumni councilors who completed their terms, and thank them for their service and efforts on behalf of the College. Alumni Council President Russell Wolff and the Executive Committee are energized to welcome the Council back to Hanover in October, including 41 new alumni councilors.

Emails received from Alumni



Emails and Other Communications received from Alumni



Summary of Alumni Council and Alumni Liaison Committee Activities

During the academic year of 2015-2016, the Alumni Council met for the 102nd year, gathering together in Hanover for its 211th session from October 22-24, 2015 and for its 212th sessions from May 12-14, 2016.

October 2015 Meeting

Councilors had numerous opportunities to interact with students, faculty, President Hanlon '77 and other administrators and with members of the Board of Trustees; to attend classes; to immerse themselves in the work of their committees; and to absorb a broad range of information about what is happening at Dartmouth today. We looked inward to financing the cost of a Dartmouth education in the fall and outward to Dartmouth's interactions with the world in the spring. Both meetings were extremely informative and gave us ample knowledge and vision about the College's future.

The 126 alumni councilors represent their constituents in the broader alumni body and found many opportunities to interact with them both in wider messages and with individual communications. Councilors continued to send messages to their constituents ahead of each trip to Hanover, seeking questions and feedback. A summary of each council session was delivered to alumni in the same manner following our meetings.

Lengthy summaries of our meetings are valuable, but we also strove to reach alumni through other communications tools. For the first time, we produced a video of the spring council session highlighting the speakers and once again interacted with alumni through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. These efforts are detailed further on page 9.

During the October meeting, President Hanlon spoke about the academic cluster initiative and the imperative to recruit excellent faculty to Dartmouth, describing the plan to hire groups of faculty across disciplines to take on the world's great issues. He also addressed the Council's theme of the financial model of higher education, acknowledging that the present model of higher education is unsustainable, but that Dartmouth must operate in a very competitive environment and still be mindful of costs in order to shine. Dartmouth, he said, is distinguished by its commitment to broad knowledge, its focus on the liberal arts, its sense of place, and its adventuresome spirit.

Additional presentations included:

- Chief Investment Officer Pam Peedin '89 '98Tu, Executive Vice President Rick Mills and Chief Financial Officer Mike Wagner, presented "Dartmouth by the Numbers," a discussion of the College's operating costs, assets and endowment and how the College's mission drives spending and management in those areas.
- Cecilia Gaposchkin, associate professor of history, addressed the Council on the function and importance of a liberal arts education.
- Councilors had a chance to preview the plans of a re-imagined art museum in a presentation on "The Hood Museum Expansion: A Case Study in Capital Project Development at Dartmouth," which featured Juliette Bianco '94, interim director of the Hood Museum of Art, and Lisa Hogarty, vice president of campus services, and was moderated by Bob Lasher '88, senior vice president for advancement.

- Dean of the College Rebecca Biron and Vice Provost for Student Affairs Inge-Lise Ameer presented “Residential Education in Action: Dartmouth’s House Communities,” looking ahead to the transformation of residential life at Dartmouth.
- Provost Carolyn Dever presented on the 50-year lifecycle of a faculty member.
- Chair of the Board of Trustees Bill Helman '80, along with trustees Emily Bakemeier '82, Bill Burgess '81, and Ben Wilson '73 provided an update from the Board of Trustees and took numerous questions.
- Chief Operating Officer for Advancement Ann Root Keith presented “The Impact of Philanthropy on Dartmouth’s Budget.”

Councilors visited the new Center for Professional Development and participated in a roundtable discussion with students titled “Career Conversations with Students and Alumni,” sponsored by the Professional Development Committee. Councilors engaged in the work of their committees during their time in Hanover and also participated in breakout sessions on the house communities, considering three questions: What advice would you give our house professors for promoting the integration of academic and residential life? What kinds of programs and activities do you think would be the most productive and appealing to current and prospective students? Should alumni have a connection with the house communities and, if so, what roles might they play in supporting them over the longer term?

The Alumni Awards Gala celebrated the two alumni receiving the Young Alumni Distinguished Service Award: Michael J. Vidmar '03 and S. Caroline Kerr '05, and the three alumni who were presented with the Dartmouth Alumni Award: Ellie Mahoney Loughlin '89, Ellis B. Rowe '74, and Patricia E. Berry '81.

The ALC met twice during the October meeting, including for breakfast on Saturday with trustees Bill Helman '80, Emily Bakemeier '82, Bill Burgess '81, and Ben Wilson '73. The group discussed the Moosilauke Forum social media survey and potential new ways for the Council and the ALC to communicate with alumni through social media. Also discussed was a variety of alumni feedback received by the ALC during the previous few months, from the living learning and house communities to the Moving Dartmouth Forward initiative to financial aid for international applicants.

May 2016 Meeting

The May meeting of the Alumni Council, focusing on a global Dartmouth, offered councilors the opportunity to attend one of three student panel discussion groups: Dartmouth Humanitarian Engineering, Dartmouth Students Impacting the World, and Maximizing Experiential Learning through the Dartmouth Plan.

We also posed the question “What Keeps You Awake at Night?” to faculty at a session focused on international security. Michael Mastanduno, dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, moderated the panel, which featured Daniel Benjamin, director of the Dickey Center for International Understanding; Jeffrey Friedman, assistant professor of government; and Jennifer Lind, associate professor of government.

President Hanlon told the Council that Dartmouth’s success will be measured by its global impact and that the faculty cluster hiring initiative is underway, in which groups of faculty are hired to study the world’s pressing issues. President Hanlon also introduced Dr. Lisa V. Adams MED'90, associate dean for global health and director of the Center for Health Equity, who spoke to councilors about the center’s efforts.

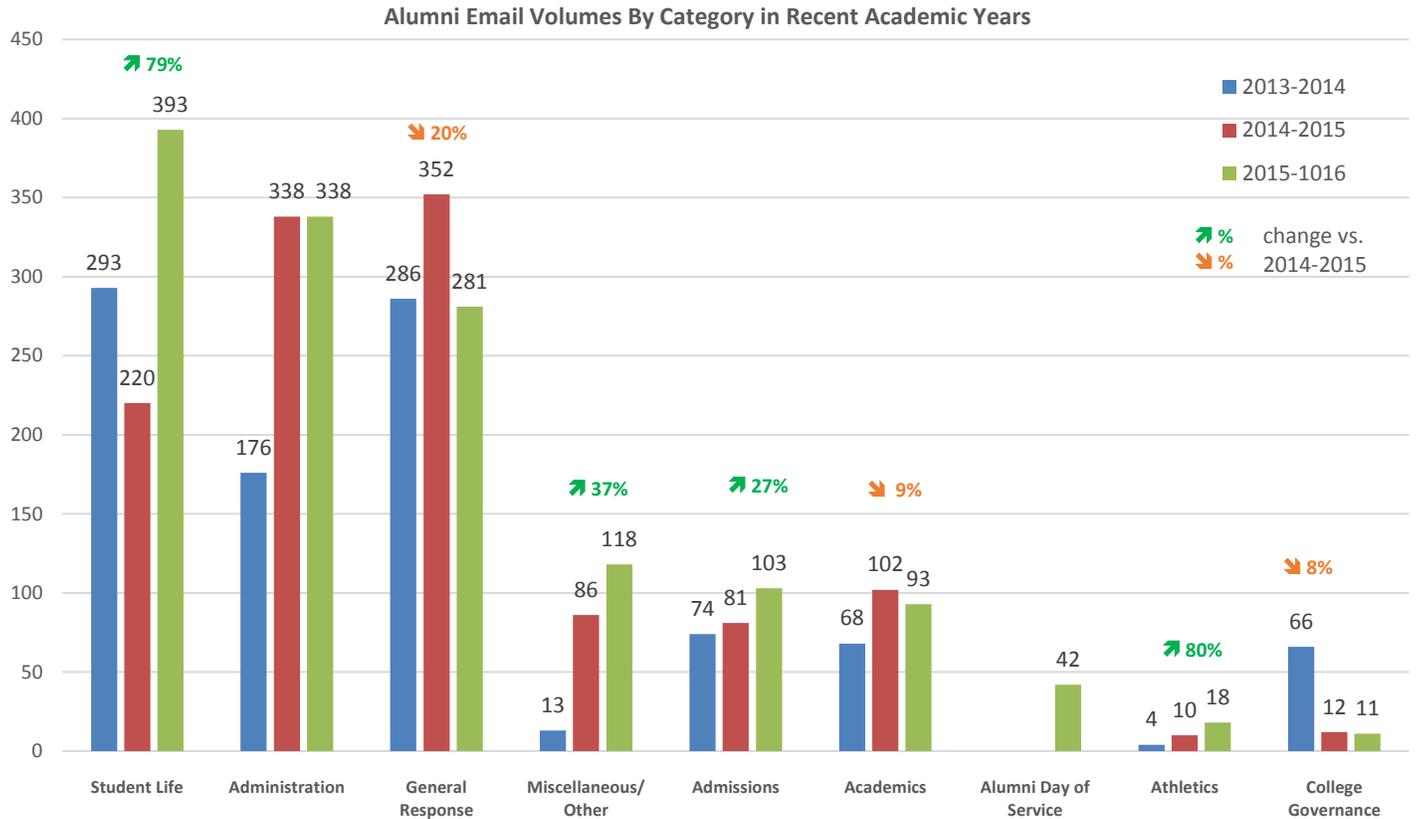
Additional presentations included:

- Dean of the College Rebecca Biron provided an update on student affairs, discussing the house communities launching this fall and the broader efforts surrounding diversity and inclusion.
- Chair of the Board of Trustees Bill Helman '80 and Trustee John Replogle '88 shared an update from the Board of Trustees and engaged in several rounds of lively questions from councilors.
- CNN anchor Jake Tapper '91 headlined the evening dinner program Friday night and delivered an unvarnished look at the ongoing presidential campaign and thanked Dartmouth for helping to inspire his interest in covering presidential politics.
- Helene Rassias-Miles A'08, executive director of the Rassias Center, offered a tribute to her late father John Rassias '49a, '76a, Dartmouth's William R. Kenan Professor of French and Italian Emeritus. The Council also announced the establishment of the "Professor John Rassias Faculty Recognition Award," which will be presented to a faculty member who has demonstrated strong engagement with Dartmouth alumni in support of lifelong learning.
- Ann Root Keith, COO for Advancement, and Sylvia Racca, executive director of the Dartmouth College Fund and special fundraising initiatives, presented "Dartmouth Development: Seeking Your Insights," engaging with councilors using their cell phones for an interactive poll.
- An admissions update about the class of 2020 and alumni involvement in interviewing was provided by Meg Lysy '99, director of the Admissions Ambassador Program; Paul Sunde, director of Admissions and interim dean of Admissions and Financial Aid; and Will Corbett '10, senior assistant director of Admissions.

The ALC met twice over the course of the May Council session, including on Saturday morning with President Hanlon and trustee John Replogle '88. The group discussed the tenure process, diversity goals, and the need to familiarize alumni with some of the new glossary of terms on campus such as academic cluster and house community.

Finally, the ALC met with the Advancement Committee of the Board of Trustees two additional times over the past year: first, in September via conference call, and again in person in March in Hanover. The fall conference call focused on the presentation of the 2014-2015 ALC annual report. At the March meeting, trustee Caroline Kerr '05 discussed the Inclusive Excellence working groups, and Vice President for Communications Justin Anderson, prompted a discussion of how alumni councilors could have greater access to information to share with their constituents. Trustee John Replogle solicited additional alumni feedback from each member of the ALC, concluding an excellent meeting and a productive discussion.

Overview of Correspondence with Alumni Council and ALC



Representative Email “Hot Topics” in Each Category 2015-16

Category	2015-16 Email “Hot Topics”
Student Life	Questions/concerns about Black Lives Matter Protest; Greek life; concerns about sexual assault; reaction to Moving Dartmouth Forward initiative and introduction of housing communities
Administration	Concern over growing cost structure of college and rising cost of tuition; design and expansion of buildings; divestment from fossil fuels and sustainability
General Response	Personal greetings; appreciation for council communications/service
Miscellaneous/Other	Response to prompts about intellectual experiences and off-campus academic program
Admissions	Need for transparency regarding financial aid and admissions processes; perception of role of diversity in admissions process
Academics	Concerns about graduate school’s effect on undergraduate experience; balanced approach to liberal arts education; drop in academic rankings; free speech issues
Alumni Day of Service	Positive reaction to concept, logistical questions

Top Alumni Communication Themes Submitted to the ALC: 2015-16

Student Life

With College administration continuing to focus on improving student life – including how and where students live, and how they treat each other – alumni continued to have much to say on the subject.

- **Black Lives Matter Protest**
The ALC received 209 submissions pertaining to a Black Lives Matter protest that took place inside Baker-Berry Library. Some expressed disappointment not only at the language some students directed at others, but also at what some alumni perceived as a failure by the administration to mete out appropriate discipline. Alumni also debated the definition of free speech.
- **Greek Life**
Of the 184 emails from alumni that related to student life, Greek life was the leading topic – with 54 alumni writing to express disapproval of the administration’s punishment of AD and SAE, or to convey support of the Greek system in general.
- **Sexual Assault**
Another two dozen pieces of correspondence concerned sexual assault on campus – with some alumni expressing support for the administration’s plans in the area, while seeking evidence of the effectiveness of those efforts, and others voicing concern for the privacy and due process rights of those accused of sexual assault.

Admissions Policy

Two central themes coursed through many of the 103 emails received in the category of admissions. One was a desire for greater transparency concerning the process of how admissions decisions are made (and the extent to which alumni interviews, as well as a student’s legacy status, play a role.) The other line of interest was around affirmative action in admissions – with some alumni concerned that applicants from backgrounds historically underrepresented on Dartmouth and other campuses were being given too much weight in the admissions process, or perhaps not enough.

Cost of a Dartmouth Education

Of the 85 emails grouped under the heading of “Administration/Operations,” the overwhelming number concerned costs (including the annual cost of a Dartmouth education to full-paying students), cost control, and efficiency. Some alumni questioned the wisdom of rebuilding the Ravine Lodge and expanding the Hood Museum when measured against other priorities, while others expressed more general concern for the financial viability of the institution – and a desire to understand its cost structure.

Sustainability/Fossil Fuel Divestment

As was the case in the previous academic year, environmentally-conscious alumni once again reached out to urge the College to purge the endowment of investments in companies that profit from fossil fuels.

College or University?

The centuries-old question of whether Dartmouth is at risk of becoming more of a university than a college prompted a number of alumni to write to the Council this year. A number pointed to the creation of the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies as, perhaps, a veiled step in the direction of university status.

Intellectual Life and Study Abroad

For the second time in as many years, the Council asked alumni to respond to two specific prompts – each pegged to the themes of its semi-annual gatherings in Hanover. Three dozen alumni responded at length to a question about the extent to which their intellectual experiences at Dartmouth (both inside and outside the classroom) still resonated in their lives. Nearly four dozen let us know how participating in a Dartmouth off-campus program had shaped who they were and how they continued to see the world.

Expansion of Social Media Communications



In an effort to expand the breadth of Alumni Council communications, the ALC and Alumni Council's Young Alumni Committee teamed up to explore ways that councilors and their constituents could use social media to be in touch – before, during and after our meetings in Hanover. While the overwhelming majority of alumni continue to wish to engage with their councilors on email, every year a growing number prefer to do so on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and the Council and ALC are increasingly meeting that demand. We expect this to be a major way to communicate in the future, particularly with younger alumni.

Before and after each meeting, alumni councilors were provided with a communications toolkit (including templates composed by Jack Steinberg '88, chair of the Communications Committee, with suggested posts and stock Dartmouth photographs) for use on multiple social media platforms. Alumni were encouraged to follow along.

TWITTER - Meetings received coverage via live Tweeting using #dartmouthAC by designated councilors. At least 10 additional councilors tweeted independently.

Spring meeting stats: 11 users; 43 posts; 533,724 reach; 601,397 impressions.

Fall meeting stats: 25 users; 296 posts; 30,254 reach; 264,868 impressions.





INSTAGRAM – The Young Alumni Committee posted on Instagram during the meetings. Valerie Zhao '15 served as guest curator for the Dartmouth Alumni Relations Instagram account throughout the Spring Alumni Council Weekend.



The Alumni Council partnered with Dartmouth’s media production group to produce a brief video about the 212th meeting to help educate alumni about the proceedings of the Alumni Council meeting. The video, posted on YouTube, included footage of President Hanlon’s presentation, a student panel presentation, Jake Tapper '91’s keynote address, and Alumni Council president Jennifer Avellino '89’s remarks. The video was also shared on Dartmouth Alumni Relations’ social media platforms. A clip was included in the post-meeting template, and to date has been viewed 1,328 times.



212th Dartmouth Alumni Council Meeting



584 views

Dartmouth Alumni (@dartmouthalumni) · May 20
Thanks @jaketapper '91 for joining the 212th @dartmouthalumni Council!
Highlights of the meeting: [bit.ly/21stDCC](#) #DartmouthAG

212th Dartmouth Alumni Council Meeting
youtube.com

Dartmouth Alumni
Published by Tricia Long McKeon ('11) · May 20 · 🌐

CNN's Jake Tapper '91 delivered the keynote address last weekend at the 212th meeting of the Dartmouth Alumni Council, which focused on Dartmouth students and faculty scholars who are creating a positive impact on the world and solving some of its most complex problems.

212th Dartmouth Alumni Council
01:30

👍 **Get More Likes, Comments and Shares**
Boost this post for \$50 to reach up to 4,600 people.

3,269 people reached [Boost Post](#)

👍👏 38 2 Shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

