



DARTMOUTH

2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT

ALUMNI LIAISON COMMITTEE
TO
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Introduction

Dartmouth College's Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) is responsible for communicating alumni sentiment to and engaging in a two-way dialogue with the Board of Trustees and College administration. The Alumni Council created the ALC several years ago to improve communications between Dartmouth alumni and College leadership, and 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.

In this, the ALC's third annual report (2009-2010), we document interaction between the ALC and College leadership, communications between the Alumni Council and alumni, and the myriad of activities undertaken by the ALC, Alumni Council, and Association of Alumni (AoA). (Please see the attached "Dartmouth Alumni Leadership Flow Charts" for a description of the various bodies and their responsibilities.) The ALC is comprised of leadership from the Alumni Council, the AoA Executive Committee, and at-large members of the alumni body.

As detailed herein, the Alumni Council has evolved into an extremely active body that, through the ALC, has given the alumni a voice to the Board of Trustees and College administration. Alumni Council representatives sent 250 emails to their constituents during this past year informing them of various issues affecting the College and soliciting questions and comments. In response, the Alumni Council received more than 1,000 emails (and the occasional letter) from alumni. Alumni leadership met regularly throughout the year with members of the Board of Trustees and College administration to discuss alumni sentiment and issues affecting Dartmouth.

This past year, 2009-2010, saw many opportunities and challenges. Alumni have become extremely excited about Dartmouth's new president, Jim Yong Kim, and overwhelmingly elected two new members, nominated by the Alumni Council, for the alumni-nominated vacancies on the Board of Trustees. The ALC assisted the College in proactively and transparently discussing challenges caused by the global financial crisis, tackled concerns about athletics, and addressed student life issues. The AoA analyzed ways to improve trustee elections through the Election Reform Study Committee (ERSC). The Alumni Council ad hoc Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations (CSG) issued its final report. The committee was created in response to alumni sentiment and student presentations made during previous Alumni Council sessions.

The feeling comes through loud and clear from reading the 1,000 alumni emails and speaking with thousands of other alumni around the globe that while some may, on occasion, question decisions made by the College, most alumni understand that their views are heard and respected by the Board of Trustees and administration and that we are all working together to maintain Dartmouth's standing as the best college in the world. In short, the mood of alumni is very positive and optimistic about Dartmouth's future, and increased communication has been crucial to creating this view.

The Board of Trustees and College administration have repeatedly told us that they highly value the information they receive from the ALC, and on occasion have called special sessions to meet with us to discuss particular issues facing the College.

This report will be distributed to the Board of Trustees and discussed at a meeting between the ALC and members of the Board of Trustees following the board's September meeting. It will also be posted on the Alumni Council website, available to all alumni. We welcome comments from alumni, which they can communicate to their Alumni Council

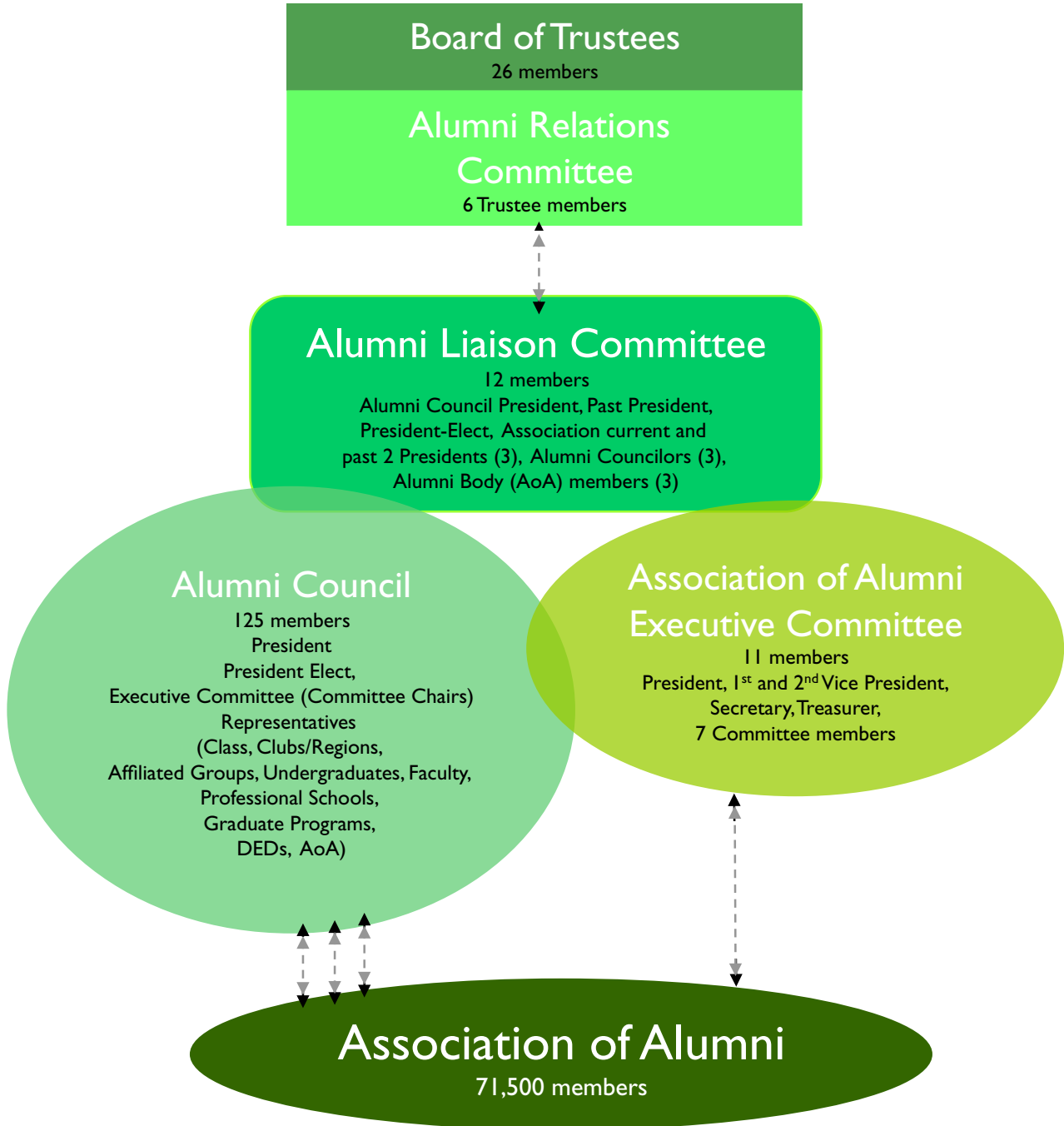
representatives, or by sending an email directly to: ALC@alum.dartmouth.edu.

Respectfully submitted

The 2009-10 Alumni Liaison Committee

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John Mathias '69
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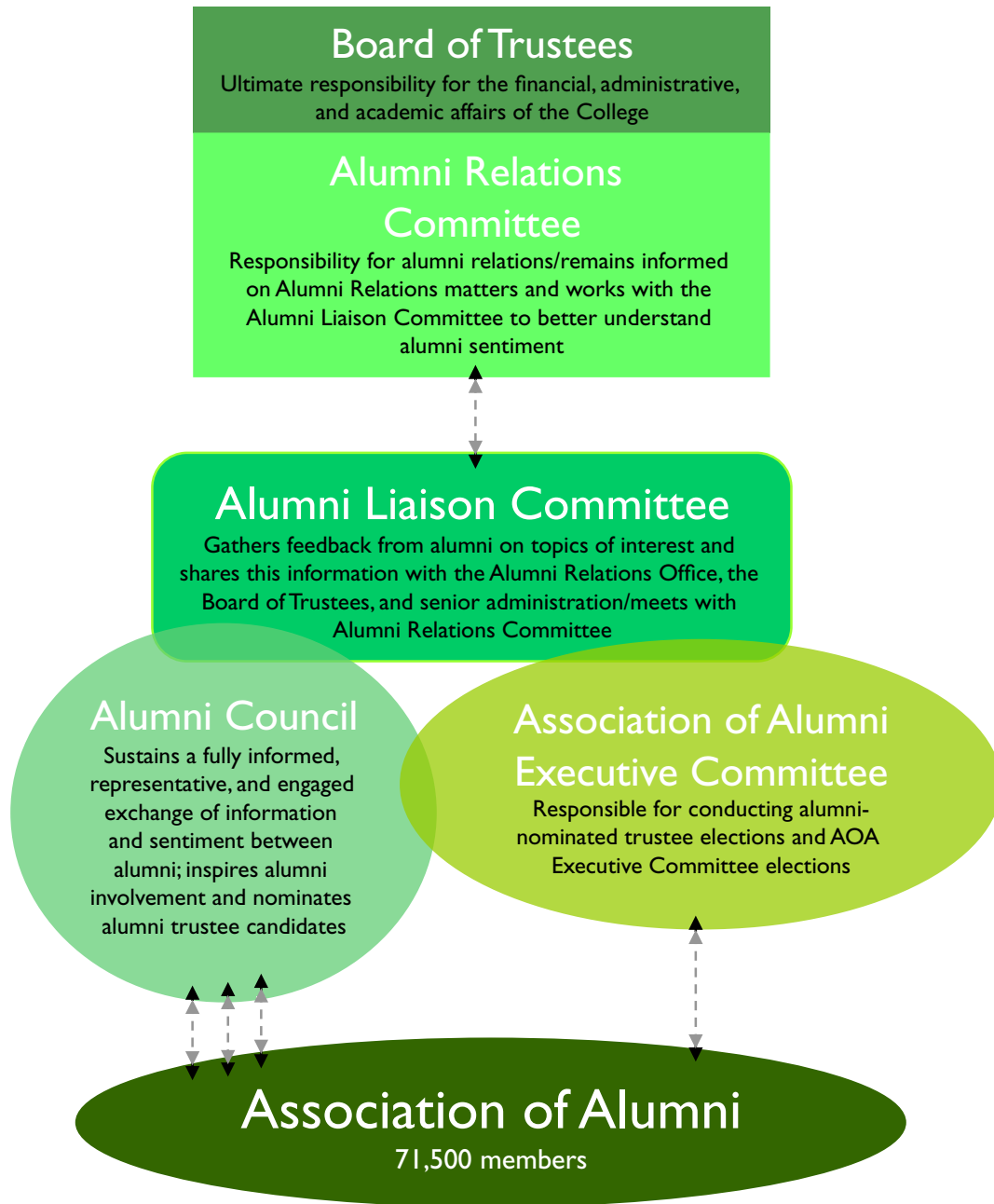
Dartmouth Alumni Leadership Flow Chart



Dartmouth Alumni Leadership

Flow Chart

Functions



Executive Summary

The year 2009-2010 was pivotal for the Dartmouth Alumni Council. As a backdrop, our country had entered a deep recession seriously affecting the College's endowment and financials, with a new college president at its helm facing this and other challenges. The council, accordingly, focused primarily on four major events that shaped and defined the year's activities: (1) President Jim Yong Kim's first year in office and the challenges he and the College faced; (2) the global financial crisis and the new administration's decisive actions to balance the College budget; (3) the alumni trustee elections and resulting overwhelming approval of the Alumni Council nominees for the two alumni-nominated vacancies on the Board of Trustees; and (4) the heightened need for alumni service to the College. On balance, as these events were taking place, Dartmouth was rated No. 1 in undergraduate teaching among national universities (*U.S. News & World Report*), which provided perspective that Dartmouth is doing well and will continue to be one of the finest academic institutions in the world.

The Alumni Council:

- Successfully held biannual meetings of its full membership in December 2009 (199th session) and May 2010 (historic 200th session) in Hanover, where councilors were updated of the current state of the College, met new administrators, and discussed issues of interest to alumni;
- Conferred with President Kim at both the December and May meetings over changes to College finances and administration designed to balance the College's budget. At the 200th session President Kim gave a special report about the history of the Alumni Council and its impact on the College;
- Increased communications with constituents and alumni over the previous year, not only through councilors' increased communications, but also by focused committees such as the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee sending updates to alumni, the council president's messages (7), and the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* (3);
- Completed vetting and nominated alumni trustee candidates Morton Kondracke '60 and John Replogle '88, who went on to win by 85 percent and 71 percent of the vote, respectively, in the alumni trustee elections, with 32 percent of 70,000 alumni voting, the highest percentage in alumni trustee election history;
- Distributed a questionnaire of the Association of Alumni (AoA) Executive Committee (through its ad hoc Election Reform Study Committee) to alumni requesting feedback on the issue of alumni trustee election reform, which garnered more than 400 responses from alumni, guiding the AoA toward a decision to shorten the election period from six to four weeks, and illuminating no consensus by alumni on the issue of election finance reform;
- Issued and posted on the alumni relations website the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations detailing the status of Greek organizations and urgently calling for alumni support (http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/media/Alumni_Council/csgo2010report.pdf);
- Raised alumni awareness of the increasing need for more alumni interviewers worldwide through a joint effort between the Committee on Enrollment and Admission and the Office of Admissions;
- Significantly improved the website for alumni networking and career placement through a joint effort between the Young Alumni Committee and the Office of Alumni Relations (<http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/alumnicareers>);
- Divided the standing Student Affairs Committee into two committees — the Student Affairs Committee and the Athletics Committee — for enhanced effectiveness;
- Encouraged and supported committees meeting outside the two council sessions by teleconference and with College staff; for example, the Executive Committee met 10 times by teleconference and the Nominating Committee met 14 times (six in person and eight by teleconference) during the year;
- Honored nine more distinguished alumni with the prestigious Dartmouth Alumni Award and two with the

- Dartmouth Young Alumni Distinguished Service Award;
- Biannually updated the “Good Reads” website offering faculty book recommendations for alumni (this has been extremely popular receiving thousands of hits);
- Celebrated the 100th anniversary with the Dartmouth Outing Club — with councilors dancing the “Salty Dog Rag” after a dinner hosted by DOC students;
- Hosted, with the Office of Alumni Relations, the alumni leadership from Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, during which the council president and ALC chair exchanged ideas;
- Fulfilled the mandate of the constitutional amendments approved a few years ago by increasing the council membership to 125 representative councilors.

Summary of Alumni Council Activities

Biannual meetings: 199th and Historic 200th Council Sessions

The Alumni Council planned for and held its customary biannual meetings of its entire membership in Hanover. The 199th meeting of the council took place from December 3 to 5, 2009, with councilors meeting President Kim, hearing of the financial challenges facing the College, celebrating the Dartmouth Outing Club’s centennial, and introducing, for the first time in person, the council-nominated candidates for the alumni trustee election. The historic 200th meeting took place from May 20 to 22, 2010, during which President Kim gave a history of the council, highlighting its decisions and impact on the College. Councilors also heard from and asked questions of senior College staff, attended classes with students, and met with students on various campus issues. Both sessions are vital for council committee meetings and planning. The agendas for each meeting are attached as 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 ,D, E and F. The resolutions adopted throughout the year are attached as Appendices G and H. A list of 2009-2010 alumni councilors and represented constituencies is attached as Appendix I.

The Inauguration and First Year of President Jim Yong Kim

The inauguration and first year of President Kim was a highlight of the year. His presentations to the council were well received and overall impressions have been very high regarding his decisive actions taken to improve College finances, realign the administration, and restructure programs. President Kim met and conferred with the 199th council, underscoring efforts of transparency and informative exchange between the administration, council, and alumni. He is highly communicative with the alumni at large, and this added positively to the already increased communications by the council.

Communications

Communications between the Alumni Council and alumni worldwide increased significantly over last year. The councilors wrote and issued 250 comprehensive reports to their constituents about the state of the College and council events. The alumni responded to their representative councilor(s), the council president, or to the ALC with more than 1,000 invaluable comments or questions. This exchange of information and alumni sentiment, summarized herein, has been crucial in advancing alumni relations with the College. The council president increased messages to alumni worldwide (7), also raising alumni awareness. The council gave committee work, such as that of the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee, high priority in its communications, thus enhancing transparency and alumni inclusion. Communications also increased among the councilors with the implementation by the Communications Committee of an Alumni Council Facebook page, which informs councilors of College activities up to the minute.

Alumni Trustee Elections

Council-nominated candidates Morton Kondracke '60 and John Replogle '88 were elected by alumni to be nominated for the two vacant alumni-nominated seats on the Board of Trustees. With 32 percent of alumni voting (the highest percentage in alumni trustee election history), the two candidates won with 85 percent and 71 percent of the vote, respectively. For the first time in seven years, the council-nominated candidates were chosen by alumni, signaling a continuing trend in alumni sentiment shifting toward a united and forward-moving partnership between the College and alumni. Election reforms allowing for head-to-head majority wins for each seat, increased communications regarding the Nominating Committee's thorough vetting process and details about the candidates, in addition to the candidates' organized campaigns, all contributed to the increased voter turnout and the council candidates' overwhelming approval. The AoA Executive Committee "Unity Slate" also won overwhelmingly, again reflecting an alumni body opposing lawsuits against the College and advancing collaborative attitudes.

Election Reform Study

The Alumni Council assisted the AoA Executive Committee by distributing a questionnaire (drafted by its ad hoc Election Reform Study Committee) to alumni requesting feedback on the issue of alumni trustee election reform (Appendix J), garnering more than 400 responses from alumni, and guiding the AoA Executive Committee toward its decision to shorten the election period from six to four weeks. However, the findings by the AoA Executive Committee also concluded that no consensus had been reached by the responses to the questionnaire on the issue of election finance reform (see Appendix K). This remains a high concern given that the alumni trustee/AoA Executive Committee campaigns have become extremely costly.

Committee Work Encouraging Alumni Service

Council committees identified pressing needs of the College where alumni service would be extremely beneficial, and are encouraging alumni service in those areas.

The Ad Hoc Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations issued its final report in May, posted the report online at http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/council/media/Alumni_Council/csgo2010report.pdf, and has urgently called on alumni to constructively support these organizations. As the College and President Kim work with students on the alcohol policy and recommendations issued by the Student and Presidential Alcohol Harm Reduction Committee (SPAHRC), the report encourages alumni to provide an advisory role and support physical plant renovations and improvements.

The Committee on Enrollment and Admissions, partnering with the Office of Admissions, is actively raising awareness of the need for greater alumni participation in admissions interviewing, particularly since all interviews are now held off campus as more students than ever apply to Dartmouth.

The council's Young Alumni Committee, in efforts to involve more alumni in networking and career placement in this unsteady economic environment, worked with Deb Klenotic and Mimi Simpson in the Office of Alumni Relations to significantly improve a website to that end (<http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/alumnicareers>).

Alumni Awards

Eleven more distinguished alumni were vetted by the council's Alumni Awards Committee and Young Alumni Distinguished Service Award Committee. Putnam Blodgett '53, Tu'61; John Ballard '55, Th'56; Dudley Smith '60; Robert Barr '73; Matt Dwyer '75; Martha Johnson Beattie '76; Merle Adelman '80; Mark Alperin '80; and Rick

Silverman '81 were honored with the prestigious Dartmouth Alumni Award. Also, Jennifer Tudder Walus '97 and Belinda Chiu '98 received the Young Alumni Distinguished Service Award.

Implementation of Constitution

The council continued the implementation of the constitution as amended in 2007. On July 1, 2009, the number of councilors increased to 116, mostly representing clubs, classes, affiliated groups, graduate programs, and other constituencies. The number of at-large councilors (which do not have defined constituencies) decreased to six. By July 1, 2010, the council reached cruising altitude with 125 representative councilors, fulfilling the mandate of the constitutional amendments. The standing Student Affairs Committee was divided into two standing committees, namely Student Affairs and Athletics, in answer to councilors' need to spend more effective and focused time on these topics. When the question was introduced to the council on whether to increase 55-plus class representatives (which on July 1, 2010, became the mandated three, up from one under the prior constitution), the council decided to wait three years to revisit this question, allowing the council time to settle into the mandated number of representatives before adding membership.

Conclusion

Peer-to-peer communications between the councilors and their constituents, timely information coming from the College to the council and alumni, and in person meetings and dialogue between the councilors and Board of Trustees/College administration all have contributed significantly to the advancement of alumni relations in the past few years. The council looks forward to continuing the trend of increasing communications among alumni groups and the College.

Summary of ALC/Trustee Interaction

Interaction with Trustees:

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, and to address issues of importance to the College. On October 6, 2009, the ALC engaged in a conference call with then chairman of the Board of Trustees, Ed Haldeman '70, and chair of the Alumni Relations Committee of the Board of Trustees, John Donahoe '82, to discuss the 2008-2009 ALC Annual Report. On December 5, 2009, the ALC conducted a breakfast meeting with President Jim Kim and Trustee Sherri Oberg '82 '86Tu in Hanover in connection with the Alumni Council's December meeting. President Kim and Trustee Oberg also addressed the Alumni Council during the December meeting. On December 22, 2009, the ALC conferred with Ed Haldeman and chair of the Board of Trustee's Governance Committee, Christine Bucklin '84. On February 6, 2010, the ALC met with members of the Board of Trustee's Alumni Relations Committee (Brad Evans '64, Sherri Oberg, Ed Haldeman, and John Donahoe) in Hanover. On April 29, 2010, the ALC participated in a conference call with Ed Haldeman and John Donahoe. Finally, on May 22, 2010, the ALC met with Trustees Al Mulley '70 and Sherri Oberg in Hanover in connection with the Alumni Council's May meeting. Trustees Mulley and Oberg also addressed the Alumni Council in connection with the council's May meeting. The agendas for those meetings have been included as Appendices L, M and N.

In addition to the six formal meetings identified above, members of the ALC had numerous additional communications with members of the Board of Trustees throughout the year.

Conclusion:

Both the Board of Trustees and administration have 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 and administration more in tune with broader alumni sentiment.

Communications to ALC by Category

Academics

There were a total of eight emails received by alumni councilors pertaining to academic issues at Dartmouth. Most were positive in nature or offered helpful suggestions, while only two were critical of issues at the College.

Alumni had various ideas about supplementing academic programs at Dartmouth. One email questioned how the College could “strengthen ties or build coalitions” with entities that educate Native American youth, and went on to wonder “what can be done to increase the presence and enhance the experience of Native Americans at Dartmouth?” This alumnus also questioned whether the foreign language requirement at Dartmouth could be fulfilled through mastery of an indigenous language, such as Navaho or Lakota. Another alumnus complimented the “Good Reads” webpage and offered several suggestions for improving on this concept. Dartmouth faculty could organize their suggestions around a common theme. Faculty could provide their reading lists for various courses offered at the College, so that interested alumni could participate in self-directed continuing education. Finally, this alumnus suggested that Dartmouth administrators and faculty investigate various continuing education programs being offered by other institutions and consider implementing similar programs at Dartmouth.

One graduate school alumnus was interested in developing additional ways in which the graduate alumni could assist in educating Dartmouth’s graduate students about various career opportunities after graduate school. Another alumnus wondered how alumni programs could complement President Kim’s public health education initiatives for undergraduates. He agreed with the importance of encouraging young people to pursue a career in the fields of public health and education.

There continue to be very positive comments about the reinstatement of the “Great Issues” course at Dartmouth, and one email inquired about the status of ROTC at Dartmouth.

With respect to the more critical emails, one voiced concern about the current state of health career advising at Dartmouth. Another alumnus suggested that Dartmouth continue to focus on education and not be preoccupied with political correctness and diversity issues.

Action Items

Among its activities, the ALC reviews all emails and other written communications sent by alumni to the Alumni Council, president of the Alumni Council, and ALC mailbox. The ALC identifies “action items.” Action items are items about which the ALC contacts the College administration to pass on suggestions or gather information in order to answer alumni questions. The chair of the ALC confers periodically with the vice president of alumni relations and director of alumni leadership, who, in turn, communicate with the appropriate College administrator, department chair, or other College official.

Among the topics addressed by action items this year were the following: budget cuts and endowment, credit rating, staff cuts, language courses offered to students, faculty/student ratio, admissions, admissions interviewing, athletics, college and university national rankings, ROTC, graduate school alumni subscriptions for the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, alumni directory, Dartmouth Center for Health Care Delivery Science, financial aid, the Lone Pine stump, career services for alumni, corporate recruiting on campus, student internships, Dartmouth website, Tuck School

tuition, size of undergraduate and graduate student bodies, ALC annual report, reunions, alumni mentoring, and Native American programs.

Administration

There were a total of six e-mails received on the subject of administration. The majority of the emails were mainly very positive about President Kim's selection and about the general operations of the College. A couple of emails raised questions about the size of the administrative bureaucracy and the decline in the value of the endowment. Another decried the sums spent on the governance lawsuits and on the recent alumni trustee elections.

Here are excerpts (not complete verbatim quotes) from emails received:

- I am curious about the “bloated bureaucracy” charges being leveled against the College. How do we stack up versus Cornell or Brown?
- Can you get an estimate of how much it has cost the College to fight off the right-wing attack?
- Thank you for your hard work and informative emails. Wow, what a three years! Although the economic downturn has been shocking, the bubble did allow the College to build many new (and much needed) buildings and raise \$1.3 billion. Along with attracting President Kim and making the financial cuts, Dartmouth will emerge stronger and better than ever.
- Why is it that Dartmouth and its Ivy peers all suffered so grievously during the recent financial crisis? The alumni have a stake in these questions as they see the endowment evaporate and fundraising continues. How and by whom is the endowment managed?
- Many thanks for the report. I enjoyed it and found it very encouraging. Also, I continue to be very excited about President Kim. Keep the good news coming.

Admissions

Twenty-nine emails were received and addressed on the admissions topic. The themes are consistent with previous emails, i.e., more deference given to independent/private school applicants, alumni interviews are a “waste of effort,” “minorities” being given preferential treatment, legacies not being given enough merit in the admit process, and “total disbelief” in how difficult it is to gain entrance to Dartmouth. The Admissions Office staff assisted with informative responses to these emails regarding several iterations on certain themes, namely legacies, minorities, and the difficulty getting into Dartmouth.

The majority of the emails were not supportive of what they believed the admissions process to be. There were many emails concerning alumni interviewing “burnout” and frustration over students who had been recommended by interviewers, but were then not admitted to Dartmouth. As one alumnus stated, “The note on alumni interviews really caught my attention, as several interviewers here in ... have gotten pretty discouraged as real standout candidates — kids who would clearly improve any class by being a part — have been rejected over the past few years.”

The Alumni Council had communicated the need for additional alumni interviewers, due to the large increase in applications for admission to Dartmouth, and many alumni contacted their councilors to volunteer.

Some alumni interviewers may become more disheartened in coming years if the current trend of Dartmouth's increasing popularity continues. Dartmouth seeks approximately 1,000 students in each of its classes. During the past years the number of applicants has risen by an additional 2,000 to 3,000 high school seniors per year. (The number of applicants for the class of 2014 was more than 18,000.) That means that the number of rejected

applicants — many of whom are outstanding candidates — is likely to climb as Dartmouth cannot accept everyone; and the number of rejected applicants interviewed by alumni is going to increase.

Athletics

A total of 37 emails were received related to athletics. Approximately 10 of these were “chained” or continued dialogue off an original email.

A majority of the emails either complained about the football program or mentioned it in the context of broader comments about the athletic programs at the College.

Emails ranged from fatigue to dismay with Dartmouth athletics. One representative email stated, “I grieve for Dartmouth football. I don’t think it does credit to the College to have such a sad record.” Another email mentioned the importance of a successful football program for “preserving Dartmouth tradition.” Still another email questioned, “Why can’t this school field a football team that’s not the perennial laughing stock of the league?” It should be noted that while some of the emails were negative toward the head coach, more emails supported him and the entire staff, and many voiced optimism about the future.

Across the 25 or so emails that focused exclusively on football, various reasons for the team’s woes were offered up, and remedies were suggested. One placed blame on admissions (“the problem has been ... admissions policies of the College ... administration has de-emphasized football in the admissions process.”). Others placed blame on the Athletic Department and the fact that “things have been in flux for too long.”

More broadly, several emails criticized the Athletic Department’s perceived lack of leadership in supporting a winning culture, in approaches to recruiting and support for coaching personnel. Another email described a “lost opportunity” for athletics to reinforce a more positive brand equity for the College.

A few of the emails cited a need to focus more broadly on Dartmouth athletics beyond the football program, and one email stated, “Dartmouth has a number of teams which have done very well in recent years, including baseball, women’s basketball, and others. Yet in our communications, we often neglect all these successes and focus on the sometimes weak football team. Let’s treat successes in other sports with the celebration they deserve.”

However, other emails took issue with the lack of winning across these other sports. One email stated: “Sports-wise, we are a basket case relative to the strength of the Ivy League If 13 of 34 teams at Dartmouth finished in the top half of Ivy rankings, that means almost two-thirds of our teams finished in the bottom half It seems we have squandered \$85 million on new facilities ... (while) the athletics budget has doubled in the last decade While words coming from the College are sounding better, much needs to be done.”

One email questioned whether there was “a real commitment to excel” with athletics. Another expressed a desire for more focus on improving performance, but described the challenges of “changing a culture of mediocrity, which takes time.” Still another email stated the College has “had enough time” and changes must be made to personnel and approaches toward recruiting, admitting, and advancing a culture of winning.

Sport by sport, while football received the majority of attention, other sports were mentioned, including men’s hockey (“... turned the program around and provided stability ... win or lose they can play with anyone in the country”), men’s basketball (“... you all know about the basketball fiasco”), and lacrosse (“... the lacrosse team just got destroyed by North Carolina”).

There were three emails that mentioned the alleged “name calling” incident related to last year’s Harvard-Dartmouth squash match. One questioned whether Dartmouth was doing enough to counter “an atmosphere that can produce behavior such as that which occurred at the squash match with Harvard.” Another email referred to the incident and questioned whether it received the appropriate exposure in the College’s press and alumni publications.

In reference to the College’s forum on spectator standards, which was held following this incident, there seemed to be generally positive remarks about the need for “appropriate behavior” in cheering and watching athletic competitions. However, another alumnus commented that the “empty football stadium satisfies the politically correct crowd.”

One email mentioned the need for enhanced balance between athletics and academics. The email stated: “We know that academics and athletics are not mutually exclusive ... my best academic terms were when I was competing athletically.”

One recent email commented on football as being a “high-impact” sport, comparing it to a “modern version of gladiators.” A comment was made about concussions, perhaps given the increased scrutiny and press of head-related trauma in the National Football League. One email offered a solution to avoid “bump and grind” sports in favor of greater support for soccer, a “more agile” sport resulting in presumably fewer head injuries.

One last email mourned the loss of the Indian as Dartmouth’s athletic mascot, and described “Big Green” as meaningless.

Overall, many comments expressed appreciation for the increased communication related to athletics, including frequent open dialogue (e.g., “dinner discussion groups on the topic of sports” that one alumni councilor wrote about in the May meeting notes).

Composite

Eighteen emails were received which fell into the composite category, representing responses from alumni who commented, both positively and negatively, on a wide variety of issues in one or a thread of emails. These comments ranged from general “thank you’s” and appreciation to councilors for sending reports of Alumni Council meetings and for action taken (“... thank you again for looking into the Navy ROTC issue at Dartmouth”), to feedback on meeting President Kim (“He’s most impressive in so many ways,” and “[I] am reconsidering starting to give again”), to the Greek system (“systematically promoted alcoholism, misogyny, and homophobia, and yet there the new president is, asserting his support for it.”). One graduate school alumna commented negatively on her experience: “I found the community extremely hostile both to women [in science] ... and to graduate students and even to non-native New Englanders.” One undergraduate alumna, on the other hand, commented positively on the Composition Center and the great teaching and writing experience it gave her, and requested that the College remain committed to the center.

Regarding the College financial challenges, an alumnus asked, after watching President Kim’s webcast on the state of Dartmouth finances, where the endowment had been spent (on faculty or new buildings?), and was also surprised that President Kim is so worried about other institutions recruiting our faculty: “Given what I know about Harvard and Yale’s endowment, they are probably more worried about how to pay their existing faculty than paying big bucks to steal faculty from Dartmouth.” A few alumni commented on apparent excessive administrative staff.

Observations made about the alumni trustee elections include:

- “The amount of time and money that is being expended to ‘elect’ trustees at Dartmouth is unconscionable There is simply just too much rancor. Someone needs to reach out and bring the disenfranchised back

- in ... there is a need for that 'someone' to step out on a limb and bring people like me back into the 'fold.' ”
- Regarding the shortening of the campaign period of elections from six weeks to four weeks: “This seems clearly directed to make it more difficult for petition candidates. I haven’t consistently supported petition candidates and have been unhappy with the resulting division between alumni and the bad press Dartmouth has received ...”
 - “I remain confused about write in candidates and politics/issues surrounding certain elections. This may be because I do not spend the time to read and figure out the issues, but any further clarification on what is going on in this area would continue to be helpful.”

In response to one councilor’s solicitation of suggestions from young alumni for the job seeking/career website:

- “... I actually just signed up for the job board yesterday, and was disappointed by the interface. You can search for jobs by city, but not geographic area (not even state!) — which I found wholly unhelpful At least if you could search a city/zip code and then 10/25/50/100 mile radii or something to that effect. Also, if there were a way to have an interface between the job board and the alumni career advisory network, i.e., find a job posting with a company, then can hit a button to see all alumni who work at that company who have offered to be career advisors.”
- “I wish that the College would look to some of the great alumni mentoring work done at other colleges. I love Dartmouth, but I’ve been a bit disheartened by the contrasts between mentoring at Harvard and Dartmouth I think that Dartmouth should create more free online groups of professionals and like-minded individuals (such as the Alumni for Social Change). These groups could easily be created on Facebook and would allow for increased, informal networking.”

Overall, the alumni expressed their appreciation for the peer-to-peer contact from councilors and their thorough reports. Even the one alumna who was not in favor of anything the College was doing thanked the councilor for his reply.

Election Reform Study Committee

The AoA Executive Committee in the fall of 2009 formed the Election Reform Study Committee (ERSC) to examine the question of potential campaign finance reform in elections of alumni-nominated trustees and AoA Executive Committee members. On August 12, 2009, Janine Avner '80, president of the Alumni Council, sent an email to all Dartmouth alumni informing them of the ERSC and asking for feedback on three questions asked in a survey composed by the ERSC (Appendix J).

A total of 424 responses were received, and based on the extensive input from alumni responses about possible finance reform in Dartmouth elections, the ERSC reached the following conclusions and recommendations, which were reported to the AoA Executive Committee on October 28, 2009:

“Although the clear majority of those responding recognize that the amount of money involved in alumni trustee and AoA Executive Committee campaigning in recent elections raises serious issues worthy of attention, the Dartmouth alumni community is significantly divided over whether anything can or should be done about it through the medium of changed election rules or guidelines. Many alumni favor implementing rules either forbidding campaigning entirely or capping the amount of money allowed to be spent by any candidate. Others feel that it should be entirely up to the candidates and their supporters to determine whether to spend their own money campaigning. Still others feel that, although campaign spending is a problem, there is no practical solution to it.

Although a controlling consensus among politically active alumni to create and enforce election finance reform rules and guidelines “with teeth” appears to be unachievable at this moment in time, the ERSC feels it is important to articulate the following general guiding principles concerning any reformed election process:

- (A) Alumni should be given sufficient information about each candidate and his/her positions to enable informed voting decisions.
- (B) To the fullest reasonable extent, candidates should be able to communicate their qualifications and positions freely without editorial review.
- (C) Elections should not be influenced by the amount of money spent campaigning, and no candidate should have to raise or spend any substantial amount of money campaigning to have a realistic chance of winning.
- (D) No candidate should ever be disadvantaged by any restrictive election guidelines or rules promulgated by the AoA Executive Committee.

Unless a controlling consensus among politically active alumni can be achieved in time for the upcoming election cycle, for the time being only two administrative changes to existing election procedures are recommended:

1. The election period should be shortened from six weeks to four weeks; and
2. In the initial ballot mailing to all alumni and on a College-sponsored website, consideration should be given to allowing more expansive personal statements from trustee candidates within reasonable limits.”
(Appendix K)

General Response

There were a total of 253 emails received by alumni councilors in the general category. Two hundred and thirty-three of them were notes of thanks for councilor reporting, appreciation for their council representatives’ service to the College, or congratulations to Council President Janine Avner or other elected officers.

The general responses were overwhelmingly positive. Taken as a whole, they evidence a very high level of alumni satisfaction with the current state of Dartmouth. These messages indicate that alumni are very happy with the level of communication they are receiving from the Alumni Council, and that the recent emphasis of the council on communication is appreciated.

These notes ranged from very brief “thanks for the report, keep up the good work” type of communications to more specific expressions of appreciation. One alumnus who became increasingly discouraged about 15 years ago with the College said he was “grateful to have received a credible report from a contemporary who has no agenda other than the interest of the College.” Several alumni praised the brevity and conciseness of their council representatives’ summations, while others expressed appreciation for the completeness of her representatives’ reporting. One note praised the previous issue of this Alumni Liaison Committee Report.

Among the 253 emails, 13 expressed concerns or questions, such as: communications from the College need to be shorter; news from the College is too “rah-rah”; who is my council representative?; why aren’t we using Facebook more?; and how do we start a regional club? One representative’s communication came in for criticism over poor punctuation and choice of wording. Wherever possible, questions were answered and concerns directed to appropriate parties.

Overall, those alumni who took a moment to send a general note to the Council or to their representative — whether appreciative or critical — were thoughtful and engaged in the life of the College.

Governance

Alumni sent 98 emails concerning “alumni governance.” Of these, approximately 30 thanked the Alumni Council for its efforts and expressed positive views about the College. Approximately 250 similar emails of this sort are collected in the General Response category of this report. In this section, therefore, we address primarily criticisms/suggestions, and not the majority of positive responses.

Through 35 emails, a number of alumni complained about the loss of “parity” on the Board of Trustees. Several alumni viewed this as “board packing,” and stated that they would not contribute money to Dartmouth until it was reversed. Some alumni wrote multiple times concerning the parity issue, and each of their emails is included as one of the 35 received on this topic. While critical of the Board’s reorganization decisions, several alumni expressed pleasure about the amount of due diligence that goes into nominating trustee candidates by the Alumni Council Nominating Committee. Another alumnus agreed that it is difficult to convince the Board of Trustees that alumni should elect more trustees when currently only one-third or less of alumni vote in trustee elections. Below are several examples of emails received on the “parity” issue:

- I still have not recovered from seeing the school that I love engage in such unfair and mean-spirited conduct in packing the Board of Trustees a few years ago. After more than 40 consecutive years of contributions I terminated those contributions.
- I am still in turmoil over the events of the last two years. I have no doubt that Kondracke and Replogle are worthy and deserving candidates. However, I refuse to participate in a sham voting process. It would be like the Democrats seizing power and changing the Constitution so they will perpetually control 2/3rds of congress.
- This is a wonderfully concise report. I am very pleasantly surprised by the amount of due diligence done by this committee, reducing the field of 400 candidates to six semi finalists and two recommendations. Like you, I have often voted for petition candidates. Like you, I would love to see parity between alumni and charter trustees.
- Until the ill-conceived response to losing a few elections is reversed, any chance I could be removed from this list? All of this is irrelevant to me now. That request aside, your dedication to the college is admirable. Happy Holidays.
- The trustees changed the rules in the middle of the game when they could not get what they wanted under the existing rules.
- How are negotiations with the trustees going to add more alumni-elected trustees?

Several alumni complained about the second lawsuit filed by alumni challenging the Board’s decision, one noting that it was filed by the “Forces of Evil.” Others complained that outsiders were interfering with Dartmouth and that there were efforts underway for a takeover of the College by certain ideologically motivated outsiders.

Many alumni expressed concern about the need for and influence of money in trustee elections. They would like to see a system in which it is unnecessary to expend large amounts of money in order to be elected, and fear that the need for money will serve as a bar to good trustee candidates. This topic is discussed in greater detail in the Election Reform Study Committee section of the report.

Alumni also sent emails concerning a litany of miscellaneous topics, including the following:

- There were two emails concerning the Board’s decision not to renew trustee Todd Zywicki to a second term. One was in favor of the Board’s decision, and one was against it.
- Several emails suggested the Alumni Council conduct regular, scientific surveys of alumni.

- One alumnus requested information on the percentage of alumni who voted in the last five trustee elections.
- One alumnus expressed unhappiness with the shortening of the campaign period for trustees from six to four weeks.
- One alumnus said the Trustees should have provided better oversight when the administration “handed out above-average benefits to workers” and took too much out of the endowment
- Several alumni requested access to class email lists in order to campaign or express political views relating to the College.
- One alumnus complained that the College does not truly “communicate” with alumni.
- Another alumnus noted that the Alumni Council is improving in the way it serves alumni.

Other

The other category received 43 emails that addressed approximately 30 different topics. What is noteworthy here is the variety of concerns, the fact that each is voiced by so few alumni (often only one), the prevailing tone of civility in all of the communications, and the general willingness alumni express to help solve the concerns they mention.

The most discussed topic was ROTC at Dartmouth — five e-mails, all very much in support of a strong ROTC presence on campus. One '65 seemed to speak for many when he said that perhaps Jim Kim will “take a fresh look at ROTC and see that it offers a pot of money plus gives Dartmouth a chance to compete with other top-notch institutions This seems like a win-win for everyone” Other communications included:

- The College should support Native American studies students to learn more about Native-American professional organizations relevant to their career interests. (1)
- The College is putting “spin” on the financial situation in an effort to cover up gross financial mismanagement by the previous administration. (1)
- The College needs to support alumni who are out of work or in financial distress: “I’m tired of e-mails from Dartmouth indicating how much they need my help. How about sending out an email indicating how they can help me!” (1)
- Dartmouth is, in fact, a university. The College and alumni organizations should stop treating grad students as an afterthought. (1)
- Cheap rents for hotel or dorm rooms for returning alums would be helpful and would strengthen ties. (1)
- Students should network their health providers with Dick’s House and share medical records, thereby implementing a stronger electronic health records system. (1)
- Concern over continuing references to race or color in College statistics and in reports relating to our new president: “As a Dartmouth community, can we challenge ourselves to eliminate all race- and ethnicity-based organizations, references, and considerations from everything Dartmouth does? Would we not be a better community — and an example for the world — by doing so?” (2)
- Interest in and support for former President Jim Wright’s work with veterans. (2)
- A detailed suggestion regarding improving alumni website interactivity and IT infrastructure. (1)
- Concern that limited transportation options to the Upper Valley are inhibiting corporate recruiting of Dartmouth students. (1)
- Concern over student loan collection practices that are allegedly putting severe stress on younger alums and sometimes unfairly ruining their credit rating. (1)
- Dislike, distrust, and dismay at the college ranking systems of several publications, especially Forbes. (3)
- Upset over the recent project to update the alumni directory. (1)
- The DAM should have a simple listing of obits, with links to their online version for more detailed information. (1)

- Positive comments about Dartmouth's efforts to aid Haiti; even more action (especially sending more information to alumni on how to help) would be good. (2)
- Desire for more postgrad career services (2) and an interest in offering alums jobs through Career Services (1).

The remainder were a hodgepodge of items such as "take me off the mailing list," thanks to alumni councilors for sending good updates and generally doing a good job, a concern that students are getting an incorrect picture of the superiority of organic foods, and a suggestion to keep a three-class clustering format for reunions even after the 25th reunion.

Student Affairs

There were a total of ten emails received by alumni councilors pertaining to student life at Dartmouth – seven of them focusing on the Greek organizations on campus. All were from male alums. Of this Greek group, four were critical, one simply raised a question, and two were complimentary.

Several of the critical comments were about the poor physical condition of the fraternities.

One said:

"How about doing something about the awful physical condition of the fraternities today? I took my son to visit Dartmouth (on a college trip) a year ago and we went into both fraternities and sororities. We found they now have 45 years of accumulated damage and dirt. The condition of the houses is more than an embarrassment... Has anyone on the board or administration ever taken the time to visit these houses...and see the tradeoffs in social policy, liability, and differing value systems as to what is the 'appropriate' Dartmouth social experience?"

Another said:

"What about the AD basement anyway? At our rainy Saturday tailgate over Homecoming, we were invited by one of our AD classmates to tour the basement. That made an indelible impression on many. Not good for Dartmouth."

Another alumnus lamented the drinking problem in fraternities:

"I think it is astounding that there is not a high level discussion of the awful social connection of fraternities and drinking. I have had contact with a student at Dartmouth and an episode (he witnessed) reinforced all my worst feelings."

And one alumnus, an environmentalist, expressed concern about the waste inherent in buying cans of beer and then pouring them into plastic cups (at the end of his email he actually offered to pay for beer steins for all Sig Ep brothers on campus!).

The alumnus who raised a question simply wanted more information on the current condition of each Greek fraternity, asking his councilor:

"We know many houses are in various stages of disrepair. Can you find out how all our fraternities are rated in this category by the College, and what the consequences are if they are unable to take mandated corrective action?"

The two complimentary emails focused on different aspects of Greek life – the student members and the pro-active measures being taken now by the Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations. One, sent by the current alumni co-Chairman of Beta, said "We've been incredibly pleased with the quality of guys we were able to attract to the house. Always glad to hear third-party confirmation."

The other said:

“I was glad to see the article and the constructive treatment of fraternities and sororities described in the Committee’s work.”

Of the remaining emails, one was very complimentary that the latest generation of Dartmouth graduates pursues all kinds of non-traditional careers all over the world, concluding: “Whoever is responsible for that, keep it going!”

And in the final email on Student Affairs, the alumnus said he had returned to Dartmouth (for Homecoming Weekend) for the first time since graduation in 1976 and was impressed by the students, but somehow observed: “Many of the controversies are decades old and still unresolved.” It is not clear what, specifically, he meant.

Trustee Elections

We received a total of 17 emails regarding the Trustee Election process for 2010. The emails covered a range of topics from general support of the candidates nominated by the Alumni Council to specific comments about the individual candidates, to general discontent about the overall process. However, no matter what opinion about the process or candidates was being expressed, the writers all were very appreciative of their classmates and affiliate Council reps for sending the information to them about the election and other updates from the college.

- 9 emails were supportive of either candidates or the process
- 5 emails were unsupportive of either candidates or the process
- 3 emails were either neutral or provided very general feedback or questions

Candidate Specific Feedback

The range of opinions about specific candidates included positive endorsements such as, “I know both of them personally, and they are great choices. Let’s work to get out the vote when the time comes.”

The comments also included concerns as expressed in the following, “First, I am not sure how [xxxx] was selected as a candidate. It is very discouraging that he was....It would be awful if his name were associated with Dartmouth in any meaningful way.”

Electoral Process

Some responses included questions about the process itself for selecting trustee candidates, for example, “They look like impressive candidates. What particular set of skills prompted you to nominate these two? I recall that the changes that were implemented were done so as to provide a more diverse body of Trustees with specific skill sets that were currently missing on the Board. So what specific skills do these two bring that you need on the Board?”

Other comments regarding the process questioned the overall need for an election by saying: “With two openings and two candidates what is the purpose of an election?????????”

“If there are only the two vetted candidates for Alumni Trustee and we need to fill two slots, who are the electorate to vote for if one of the selected candidates is unacceptable?”

And support existed on the other side of the argument as well regarding the number of proposed candidates, “I applaud the decision to only offer one nominee for each seat on the Board of Trustees.”

Trustee Nomination Recommendations

The email feedback regarding trustee elections also contained recommendations of specific friends and classmates for consideration during the nomination process. These items have been passed along to the Alumni Council nominating committee for future consideration.

In summary, alumni were very forthcoming and candid in sharing their pointed feedback around the trustee election process and welcomed the opportunity to provide specific comments to their council representatives.

Conclusions and Recommendations: ALC

The ALC has reflected on the reasons alumni sentiment toward the College has improved significantly during the last five years, and appears to be extremely positive at present. The keys have been (1) two-way communication between the College and the alumni — in particular the access that alumni (correctly) believe they have to the trustees and administration through the Alumni Council and AoA, and (2) greater transparency. Alumni can disagree vigorously with the College leadership without becoming disgruntled provided they believe their views are heard and respected.

Alumni relations have improved despite significant challenges. During the last five years, controversial issues have included the recent budget crisis necessitated by the national recession and its impact on the endowment, the Board of Trustees' decision to alter the ratio of alumni-nominated versus charter trustees and the ensuing lawsuits, a failing football program, and an ongoing dialogue over the college-versus-university balance.

So why is it that positive alumni sentiment is so strong? We believe the answers are: the fact that alumni are receiving good, timely information/explanations about Dartmouth's decisions (often transmitted through people they know on the Alumni Council) and that alumni believe they have ways to make their opinions heard. In addition, the ALC has received extremely positive feedback pertaining to President Kim's performance during his first year in office.

The Office of Alumni Relations has done an outstanding job of facilitating communication. The Alumni Council has reinvented itself as a body that regularly communicates with the alumni body about real, substantive issues. The Board of Trustees and administration communicate with alumni about important issues as they arise, and regularly meet with alumni leadership on an ongoing basis. In the ALC's view, all these factors have been crucial.

More specifically, below is a list of actions the ALC identified as having been taken in recent years that we feel contributed to the improvement in alumni sentiment regarding the College, the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Council, and the AoA Executive Committee. Many of these actions should continue in the future.

- Alumni and College leadership are both more timely in communicating important facts concerning their decisions and actions into the public media.
- There have been more (and more impactful) communications from the Office of Alumni Relations to alumni.
- More councilors are communicating more frequently with their respective constituents — resulting in more feedback from their constituents. Alumni appreciate clarification of the facts from a peer representative. Alumni feel they are being heard and like to receive responses to their “action item” questions that are addressed by the ALC. It is striking how frequently the author of a truly venomous email changes his/her tone entirely once engaged by his/her alumni councilor and “heard.”
- Timely communications from the Alumni Council president have been effective.
- The positive tone of messaging has been well received.
- Keeping the current communications structure is seen as a high priority.
- Interaction with current students reinforces the current positive direction of the College.
- There is a good working relationship with President Kim and he is very popular among alumni.
- The Hill Winds Society members (undergraduate students, sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations, who foster interaction between students and alumni) are excellent goodwill ambassadors.
- The frequency of meetings with trustees (for the Alumni Council, the ALC, and the AoA Executive Committee) has increased with the invitation to dialog coming from both parties. These conversations are substantive and very much appreciated by alumni.
- Nominating Committee communication and transparency are important, especially now, with more elections on the horizon.
- Alumni access to pertinent reports is important (for example, the online posting of the ALC annual report, the

- final report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations, and election voting statistics).
- Alumni appreciated this past year's outreach from the Election Reform Study Committee and the Nominating and Alumni Trustee Search Committee. They like to be informed and included in the process.

Respectfully submitted,

The 2009-10 Alumni Liaison Committee

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