Membership:
Robert Turgeon (Chair, Department of Plant Biology, A&S); James Bisogni (Civil & Environmental Engineering, ENGR); Andrea Parrot (Policy Analysis & Management, until Jan. 2012); Paula Cohen (Biomedical Sciences, VET, as of Jan, 2012); Cynthia Leifer (Immunology, VET); Lorraine Maxwell (Design and Environmental Analysis, Human Ecology); Charles McCormick (Division of Nutritional Sciences, CALS); John (Jack) Muckstadt (Operations Research, Engineering); Paul Sawyer (English; A&S); Robert Thorne (Physics; A&S); Bill Fry (Dean of Faculty, ex officio); Fred Gouldin (Associate Dean and Secretary of the Faculty, ex officio); Laura Brown (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, ex officio).

Meetings:

Summary of Topics Considered:

Student Representative on the EPC
The EPC considered the possibility of adding student representatives to the EPC. This suggestion arose in the Student Assembly (SA) out of concern that in the previous year the EPC presented an important resolution to the Faculty Senate - to remove median grades from the web - without student input. Dara Brown, an undergraduate member of the SA, spoke to the EPC on this issue during its meeting on Sept 29, 2011. We discussed how student members would be selected and the possibility that some sensitive issues would be closed to the student member(s) during EPC meetings. A resolution was drafted and presented to the Faculty Senate on March 14, 2012. The resolution was available on the Faculty Senate website. The major points of the resolution were that two students, of which at least one shall be an undergraduate, will selected annually by the Staffing Committee of the SA to sit on the EPC, that reselection of a student for a second term shall be permitted, and that the student members of the Committee many, on occasion, be excluded from certain discussions and from voting on certain issues at the discretion of the Committee chair.

The Faculty Senate passed the resolution on March 14, 2012. The student assembly was notified of the decision and they will begin the process of selecting student(s) to sit on the Committee.

Sesquicentennial Celebration
Beginning with the Nov. 4, 2011 meeting, the EPC considered a request from the planning committee organizing Cornell’s sesquicentennial celebration to cancel classes the morning of April 27, 2015 between 8:00 AM and 1:10 PM. The sesquicentennial celebration will include weekend events with an academic and cultural festival that culminates on the Monday with a convocation, including a procession of visiting
representatives from colleges around the world and a number of prominent speakers. Given the importance of the ceremony and the opportunities for student participation in many events, the planning committee felt that classes should be cancelled on Monday morning.

The request was considered by the EPC during the Dec. 16, 2011 and Feb. 13, 2012 meetings and was agreed upon unanimously. A resolution was drafted and the Faculty Senate approved the resolution on March 14, 2012. The resolution is available on the Faculty Senate website.

**Revision of the Code of Academic Integrity (AI), Resolution 1**

As result of a specific charge against a student, a number of AI chairs and the Dean of the Faculty expressed the opinion that more clarity is needed in specifying the scope of AI violations.

The specific case that prompted the discussion and proposal is as follows: A charge was made to the Dean of Faculty by an instructor at Boston University that a student in A&S had violated the Cornell Code of Academic Integrity by “providing unauthorized assistance on examinations, papers, or any other work” to a student in his class at BU. The instructor presented evidence that the Cornell student produced a research paper written to the specifications of the course assignment, using primary sources that the other student had discussed with the instructor multiple times over the course of the semester. The completed paper was sent from the Cornell student’s e-mail account approximately two hours before the other student submitted it to the instructor under her own name. The BU student was charged under her university’s academic integrity code, admitting that she had not written the paper, and was convicted.

The AI Chair of the college felt that the evidence was persuasive enough to warrant looking into. In a preliminary inquiry conducted by the A&S, the Cornell student argued that, although he was not admitting the truth of any of these charges, the Cornell Code of Academic Integrity does not apply, because such an action did not help another Cornell student to cheat. The A&S AI hearing board Chair interpreted the Code to cover this alleged activity, and the college notified the student that he was being charged with a violation of the code, as, according to Section 1.F “The authority to determine whether a specific action shall be treated as a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity lies with the Academic Integrity Hearing Board.” University Counsel confirmed that the Code is ambiguous on the issue of jurisdiction in this case, and suggested that the Educational Policy Committee clarify the intent of the Code on this point.

The EPC considered this case at its meetings and drew up a resolution that was presented to the Faculty Senate on April 11, 2012. The resolution is available on the Faculty Senate website. The point of the resolution was to add text to the Code of Academic Integrity “Principle” in the following manner (underlined).

**Principle**

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an
The academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources, as well as in relationships and interactions connected to the educational process at other academic institutions. While both students and faculty of Cornell assume the responsibility of maintaining and furthering these values, this document is concerned specifically with the conduct of students. A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

Also, in the section on “Examples of Violations” it was proposed to add example 7: Providing unauthorized assistance on examinations, papers, or any other academic work to students at other academic institutions.

The resolution drew criticisms from the Faculty Senate on the following grounds:

A) the word “unauthorized” in the example is ambiguous because it is not clear who could, or could not, authorize assistance.

B) there are gray areas such as the situations where students work as authors at writing mills and, although some may find these mills offensive, students could find themselves in violation of the Academic Code for work they nonetheless thought was permissible. Suggestions were made for rewording the resolution. A vote was taken that resulted in the resolution being tabled.

Revision of the Code of Academic Integrity (AI), Resolution 2

At a meeting of chairs of the Academic Integrity hearing boards and the Dean of the Faculty an inconsistency was noted in University Policy 1.2 (http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/academic/misconduct.cfm) and the Code of Academic Integrity (http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html), the former relating to acts that violate the integrity of scholarly and scientific research and communication and the latter relating to acts of classroom and examination misbehavior.

This matter was brought to the EPC meeting on Feb. 13, 2012. The consensus of the EPC was that the inconsistency could be resolved in the Code of Academic Conduct by eliminating the term “academic conduct” and calling it “classroom misconduct and other behavior disruptive to the educational process.” Additional language was also added concerning using unauthorized electronic technology during an examination. A resolution was drafted and presented to the Faculty Senate on April 11, 2012 and passed by a large majority vote. The resolution is available on the Faculty Senate website.
Academic calendar
The EPC considered the recommendations of the planning committee that was charged with revising the academic calendar. The recommendations were read by the EPC committee members and discussed at the March 28, 2012 meeting. Several members had concerns but it was recognized that there were many competing objectives in the calendar revision and no solution would be able to satisfy them all. In any case the planning committee had previously considered most of the EPC concerns. The EPC Chair communicated the concerns of the EPC to Prof. Doyle, the Chair of the planning committee, but no formal recommendations were made. The Faculty Senate approved the proposed changes to the academic calendar.

Median Grades
As part of a continuing discussion of grade inflation and related matters, the EPC discussed both the inclusion of median grades on transcripts and the removal of the list of median grades from the Web. Views were expressed that the inclusion of grades on transcripts might make it more difficult for graduating Cornell students to compete with students from other universities in which median grades for courses are not reported. A conflicting opinion held that the inclusion of median grades makes it easier for potential employers and admission committees to interpret grades and might serve as a brake on grade inflation. It was generally agreed that there has not been enough time for the effects of including grades on transcripts to be evaluated and therefore no recommendations were made by the EPC.

Improved faculty access to grades
Prof. Thorne proposed that the faculty have improved access to a wealth of information needed to better identify students in distress, keep up with student progress, and evaluate courses and programs in terms of gender and minority distributions. He suggested several solutions based on a more sophisticated record keeping system that could be mined for information by the faculty in real time. While the other members of the EPC found the recommendations appealing in many ways, they felt they would require considerably more study and a substantial investment by the University. No formal resolution was made.

This report was prepared and submitted by Robert Turgeon, June 15, 2012