

REPORT FROM THE DEAN OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY – 2015-2016

Submitted by Charles Van Loan, current Dean of Faculty

Overview

The death of President Garrett and the illness of Dean of Faculty Joe Burns made 2015-16 a difficult academic year for our office. Joe's contributions as Dean were immense:

As Dean, Joe maintained respectful and collaborative relationships with faculty, administrators, trustees, staff, and students. He responded graciously and quickly to concerns brought to him by faculty including numerous matters relating to appeals, academic conduct, and tenure. Joe served proudly and conscientiously on the search committee that selected Elizabeth Garrett. He elevated the level of discussion about faculty renewal and regularly staged Faculty Forums on key campus issues. Under Joe's leadership the University Faculty Committee worked to improve shared governance and the degree of transparency exercised by the administration. The key to his success as Dean stemmed from the fact that everybody loved working with Joe.

For over half of the year, Associate Dean of Faculty Michael Fontaine served as acting Dean of Faculty:

Mike served with great distinction as the Acting Dean of Faculty during the spring semester in 2016. Drawing upon his experience as the Associate Dean of Faculty (2011-2015) he represented his colleagues with both grace and humor during a semester that was filled with tragedy and controversy. Sensitive to the isolation that is sometimes felt by new faculty, Mike pioneered the "Faculty Speed Meeting" program. This program stages several festive events during the year that enable faculty to meet colleagues from around the university.

For the faculty, the year will mostly be remembered in three ways. First, there was the celebration of the university through the inauguration of President Elizabeth Garrett, only to be followed closely by the tragedy of her terminal illness. Provost Michael Kotlikoff's superhuman efforts taking us through the winter until the return of Interim President Hunter Rawlings in the spring are part of that story and a reminder to everybody about the meaning of dedication. Second, the rocky launch of the College of Business elevated the issue of shared governance to an unhealthy level. With higher education under attack and so much to do here at Cornell, it was disheartening to watch the faculty, the administration, and the trustees engage in legalistic arguments over who-can-do-what under the bylaws. Third, sexual assault and harassment on college campuses has long been an issue, but we are only now just coming to grips with the depth of the problem. This past year at Cornell has seen a marked increase in the engagement of the faculty with this issue. There is recognition that faculty must work with both staff and students if we are to properly address this critical problem.

On the very bright side there remains the greatness of the faculty in both research and teaching. Below I give a brief listing of some of the awards and accomplishments that the faculty have earned during this past year. It is a breathtaking view, but we must never forget that it is the combined contribution of all 1600 faculty that defines the wonder of Cornell.

Selected Faculty Achievements and Honors

Four Cornell Faculty were elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences:

- Andrew G. Clark, Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of Population Genetics, a Nancy and Peter Meinig Family Investigator, and Professor in the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics
- Sandra E. Greene, Stephen '59 and Madeline '60 Anbinder Professor of African History in the Department of History.
- David Hajjar, Dean Emeritus of the Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences and Professor of Biochemistry and Pathology.
- Carl Nathan the R.A. Rees Pritchett Professor of Microbiology and chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Weill Cornell Medicine.

Two Cornell Faculty were elected to the National Academy of Sciences:

- James Giovannoni, Adjunct Professor of Plant Biology and Patrick Stover, Professor and Director of the Division of Nutritional Sciences.
- Maria Cristina Garcia, Howard A. Newman Professor in American Studies.

Professor Bruce Levitt (Performing Media & Arts) was the inaugural recipient to Cornell's Engaged Scholar Prize.

Assistant Professor Katja Nowack (Physics) received the Department of Energy early career award.

Minglin Ma (Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering) received a Hartwell Individual Biomedical Research Award.

Noliwe Rooks (Associate Professor of Africana Studies) and Bryan Duff (Senior Lecturer in Education) were named Kaplan Faculty Fellows.

Professor Anurag Agrawal (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) was named the Robert H. MacArthur Award winner from the Ecological Society of America.

Maria Cristina Garcia, Howard A. Newman Professor in American Studies was the recipient of the 2016 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship.

There were three Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellows:

- Charles “Chip” Aquadro (Molecular Biology and Genetics)
- Laura Harrington (Entomology)
- Sean Nicholson (Policy Analysis and Management)

Will Dichtel (Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry) whose innovations may allow for ample electricity and for detecting trace amounts of explosives, received a 2015 MacArthur Foundation Fellow award.

[John Abowd \(ILR\)](#) joins the U.S. Census Bureau for three years as Associate Director for research and methodology.

Elaine Runting Sh (Associate Professor of Computer Science) won a 2015 Packard Fellowship in Science and Engineering for her work that blends cryptography, programming languages, and secure hardware and software systems.

Bruce Calnek, DVM '55, the Steffen Professor Emeritus of Veterinary Medicine and Karel Schat, Ph.D. '78, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology) received the 2015 Ezra Technology Innovator Award for the development of the Marek's disease vaccine.

Peter Lepage (Physics) has won the 2016 J.J. Sakurai Prize for Theoretical Particle Physics. He received it “for inventive applications of quantum field theory to particle physics, particularly in establishing the theory of hadronic exclusive processes, developing nonrelativistic effective field theories, and determining standard model parameters with lattice gauge theory.”

Three young Cornell researchers won National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director’s New Innovator Awards. They are Assistant Professors Melissa Warden (CALS), Jesse Goldberg (Arts and Sciences) and Matthew Paszek (Engineering). Part of the NIH’s High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program, the awards provide support for five years for innovative, high-impact projects.

The Democracy and Inequality Panel (part of the Elizabeth Garrett inauguration) featured Professors Robert S. Frank (JGSM), Suzanne Mettler (Government), Nick Salvatore (ILR), Gerald Torres (Law), and Eswar Prasaad (Dyson).

A Faculty Forum on Financial Aid Policies – Unimaginable Outcomes was held in October 2015. Panelists were

- Paul Streeter, Vice President for Budget & Planning
- Barbara Knuth, Senior Vice Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid
- Suzanne Mettler, Government and Author of “Degrees of Inequality: How Higher Education Politics Sabotaged the American Dream”,
- Ronald Ehrenberg, ILR and Economics, Author of “Tuition Rising: Why Higher Education Costs So Much”
- Barton Winokur, Trustee, Dechert LLP

In December, more than 125 faculty and staff participated in the symposium “A New Wave of Leaders” hosted by Engaged Cornell. The event was organized around three thematic areas – “Uniting Around Community Engagement to Foster Leadership Development,” “Mentoring as an Essential Ingredient for Leadership Development” and “Opportunities and Challenges at Cornell University.”

The Public Voices Fellows Program was started to heighten the profile of Cornell research. Twenty fellows placed op-ed articles in newspapers and online publications and offered their expertise in radio and television interviews on a wide range of topics.

Susan Christopherson (Chair and Professor of City and Regional Planning) won the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Honors award from the Association of American Geographers. The award was given to Christopherson in recognition of her "contributions to economic geography in terms of research and public engagement."

Four members of the Cornell veterinary college community received 2015-16 Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence from State University of New York. They are

- Wayne A. Davenport (Director of Facilities Capital Projects), who received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Professional Service
- Dr. John W. Hermanson (Zoology), who received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Dr. Margaret McEntee (Oncology), who received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Faculty Service
- Dr. John C. Schimenti (Genetics) who received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Scholarship

Eun-Ah Kim (Physics), Dong Lai (Astronomy), and Maxim Perelstein(Physics) received the 2016 award from the Simons foundation to support scientific research related to mathematics and physical sciences, life sciences and autism, as well as education and outreach efforts.

Appendix. Summary of Faculty Senate Meetings

September

Strategic Priorities, Finances, Advisory Panels (President Elizabeth Garrett and Provost Michael Kotlikoff)

October

Sexual Assault: National and State Regulations and the AAU Survey (Alan Mittman, Marne Einarson)

Status report on the Romantic Sexual Relations with Students Policy (Professor Elizabeth Regan, Chair of Committee on Academic Freedom & Professional Status of Faculty)

November

Sexual Assault: Proposed Revisions to Policy 6.4 and Adjudication Procedures (John Siliciano, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Carol Grumbach, Director, Academically Engaged Learning and Special Assistant to Sr. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs)

Report on the Resolution on Romantic and Sexual Relations with Students and Current Policy (Professor Elizabeth Regan)

December

Approval of AAP Professor of Practice Title.

Approval of JGSM Dual Degree program.

Provost Initiative and Compliance with Article 13 (Professor Richard Bensel)

Undergraduate International Student Admissions (Dean Barbara Knuth)

Undergraduate Undocumented Student Admission and Financial Aid (Dean Barbara Knuth)

February

Approval of A&S Professor of Practice Title.

CUPD Investigation Update.

Divestment Response and New Guidelines.

Update on Provost's Working and Governance Committees (Provost Kotlikoff)

Trustees meeting and creation of the new Cornell College of Business.

Thank you Resolution for Joseph Burns

March

Acting President and Provost Michael Kotlikoff Presentation Q&A

Debate among Dean of Faculty candidates: Risa Lieberwitz, Nerissa Russell, Paul Soloway, Charles Van Loan, Elaine Wethington

April

Planned Review of Social Sciences (Vice Provost Judith Appleton)

Graduate Student Unionization (Vice Provost Barb Knuth, Acting President and Provost Michael Kotlikoff, Alana Staiti, Graduate Student Unionization Group)

Cornell College of Business (Chris Barrett, Deputy Dean and Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Business)

CUPD Final Ad Hoc Report (Muna Ndulo, Chair)

May

College of Business Update (Chris Barrett, Deputy Dean and Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Business).

Credit-Hour Policy (Marin Clarkberg).

West Campus House System Review (Barbara Knuth)

Housing Master Plan Update (Vice President Ryan Lombardi)

Cornell in China (Vice Provost Laura Spitz)

Report from the Dean of the University Faculty, Charlie Van Loan





2015-16



Joe Burns



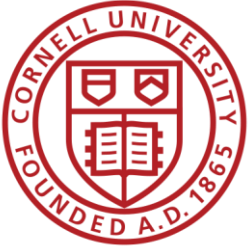
Mike Fontaine



2016-17

Among the many challenges that face the faculty, here are three:

1. Rethink and improve the curriculum and the definition of liberal education
2. Rethink and improve the transition-to-emeritus process
3. Rethink and improve the academic calendar



Rethink and Improve the Curriculum and the Definition Of Liberal Education

Where does entrepreneurship fit in?

This is really about about Cornell Tech and the College of Business.

How do we inspire students to take courses far away from their major?

This is really about breadth of education as a response to careerism.



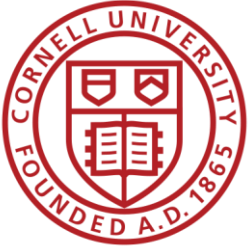
Rethink and Improve the the Transition to Emeritus Process

Assistant → Associate → Full → Emeritus

This is really about creating a symmetric four-rank system with fully appreciated contributions all along the way.

How do we make the emeritus rank a drawing card?

This is really about faculty renewal and faculty diversity because of faculty demographics.

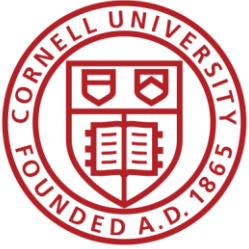


Rethink and Improve the Academic Calendar

The spring semester is flawed:

- (1) It ends too late and that restricts summer opportunities for students.
- (2) The breaks are ill-positioned and that has mental health ramifications.

Not everyone agrees. Solving the “calendar problem” is really about building an appreciation for the greater good. It is a teaching moment!



2016-17

Thanks!

Follow our activities on the new Dean of Faculty website:

<http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/>