**REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE WORKING GROUPS**

**JANUARY 2007**

**INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Over the past couple of years, President James Wright has worked to improve the services provided by the administration to students and faculty and to increase communication across the institution. In the summer of 2005, President Wright described a set of priorities for the administration:

- Support the work of faculty and students
- Recruit and retain talented and diverse officers and staff and encourage and support their advancement
- Steward the resources of the institution in a prudent and responsible manner
- Communicate effectively across the institution
- Encourage innovation within a culture of interdependence, transparency, responsibility, and accountability

As part of an ongoing effort to meet these goals, he invited McKinsey and Company, a global management consulting company, to undertake a comprehensive review of administrative services at the College. McKinsey reported back in the spring of 2006 and concluded that, "while Dartmouth has many strengths within its administrative team, it has an opportunity to upgrade its organization to better support faculty and students."

Following the report by McKinsey, President James Wright appointed established two working groups. The president asked the first working group to look at Dartmouth's administrative culture and communications structure and to develop a set of recommendations on how we might enhance the work of the administration in supporting faculty and students and how we could make improvements in the general oversight and stewardship of the College's infrastructure and resources. The president charged the Hiring and Retention Working Group with (a) reviewing processes related to staff hiring and retention at all levels, and (b) making specific recommendations to address these findings. He asked both groups to consider ways of empowering managers to take on more responsibility within a framework established by institutional priorities and goals.

At the same time the president asked Executive Vice President Adam Keller to work with his staff to develop a more transparent and integrated institutional and divisional annual planning and budget process. EVP Keller worked with executive officers from around campus and drew on the expertise of several areas with well-developed annual planning models.

This document contains the three reports that resulted from these working groups and an additional report coauthored by the members of the Culture and Communications Group and the Hiring and Retention Group on Professional Development:

1. Culture and Communications

2. Hiring and Retention

3. Annual Planning and Budgeting

4. Professional Development

**REPORT FROM THE WORKING GROUP
ON
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS AND CULTURE**

The working group on communications and culture met almost weekly through the summer and beginning of the fall term. In addition to our own deliberations, the group met with President Wright, senior officers, fiscal officers, and some department heads including the directors of computing and public affairs. In addition, the committee held five public meetings that attracted more than 150 people and received a large number of emails with suggestions on how we might meet our charge.

The committee reviewed the results of the staff survey offered to all employees in the spring of 2006. The survey had a 56 percent response rate and while 89 percent of those responding stated that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their jobs at Dartmouth and 93 percent responded that they would recommend Dartmouth as a good place to work, the survey also found some frustrations with the operations of the administration. In particular, the survey found that many employees would like to see more opportunities for advancement, greater transparency around decision-making, and more willingness to embrace change.

The committee heard similar concerns at the open meetings that it held. The following statement was typical of the many comments and emails that we received:

> It's my sense that people at all levels are looking for congruence between things they hear about and things they actually experience. They are also looking for consistency from one area of campus to another as well as between levels within any organization. It's also my sense that supervisors, managers, and administrators are looking around them for clues about how to conduct their affairs. But what any two persons see (or bring with them, or research on their own) may be quite different, and these differences may present something of a "mosaic of management" at Dartmouth. Sometimes difference has advantage; often it can be confusing or counterproductive.

Recurrent themes from these meetings included:

- The need to identify mission and institutional values
- A desire for more information about priorities and decisions
- Greater and more frequent communication
- The need to foster a culture of respect and civility
- More opportunities for professional development, growth, and advancement
- The need to embrace change more readily

Because of the increasing demands and pace of work, the ways in which we communicate with each other, and the increased specialization of our responsibilities across campus, there is a general sense that the campus has become increasingly divided into "silos" with individual offices, departments, and divisions feeling less connected to the mission, values, and priorities of the College. The meetings reinforced the message we received from the president: that while many things were working well, the administration

needed to find ways to encourage greater cooperation and integration across the institution toward our shared responsibility of supporting the academic mission of Dartmouth.

When pushed to describe the ideal administrative culture, committee members described a community of learners that:

- Fosters a spirit of innovation, open debate, and institutional responsibility;
- Communicates clearly priorities, decisions, and organizational structure;
- Is accessible; and that
- Values all members of the community.

While this might be the ideal, the committee members also recognized that different areas of the College could meet this ideal in different ways. Thus, the committee does not advocate a rigid adherence to one approach. Individual managers and vice presidents need the flexibility to establish the appropriate culture for their areas. But this flexibility does not eliminate the need to work within an institutional culture that encourages collaboration, open communication, and transparency of decision-making.

The need for a shared sense of institutional responsibility by employees and managers, more effective communication, and enhanced professional development opportunities for staff at all levels are consistent themes through all our recommendations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee has divided the recommendation section of the report into the following subsections:
> Mission and Priorities
> Communications
> Institutional Responsibility and Accountability
> Decision-Making and Organization

## MISSION AND PRIORITIES

Many employees are either unaware of Dartmouth's mission or are unclear how it relates to their work. We heard from many employees a desire for a shorter, crisper mission statement and a more clearly defined set of core values. Well-articulated statements of mission and core values can help foster the kind of culture that enables an institution to fulfill its goals. For many administrators, such statements are also critical in underlining the important support function that employees play at an academic institution. Quite simply, employees are more likely to work effectively if they understand the mission of the institution, the core values that support that mission, and the ways in which their work fits into that mission.

Many departments on campus have their own mission statements, and managers in some of these areas work to encourage their employees to understand how their department fits into the overall mission of the College. Other departments and areas pay little overt attention to the mission or to helping their employees understand the value of their work to the institution. This is especially prevalent the further a department or area is from the direct work of supporting the students and faculty.

In addition, many employees did not know what the annual priorities or even longer-term strategic goals of the institution are. Obvious priorities like the current construction of new buildings are readily apparent, but other critical priorities like financial aid, providing more accessible services to students, and supporting cross-institutional cooperation are little known or understood. Many employees do not understand the organization of the institution, the decision-making process, or the strategic planning process.

### *Recommendations:*

- **Mission:** The President and Trustees should develop a shorter, crisper mission statement that can be more readily embraced by the whole community.

- **Core Values:** The President should, in addition to a set of institutional core values, also articulate a set of values for the administration that includes a commitment to better communication; that allows room for individual and divisional differences; and that respects individual employees.

- **Communication:** The President and Provost should remind the community regularly of institutional priorities and strategic goals, and each administrative division or department should review its own mission and core values to ensure that they relate to and are in concert with the institutional statements.

- **Priorities:** The senior leadership should provide greater clarity and communication around annual institutional priorities within a predictable annual process for dissemination, which includes a description of the process whereby priorities are determined. There should be a clear link between the annual priority setting and budget processes.

Although these recommendations are aimed more at the senior leadership of the institution, they would enable managers, and indeed employees across the institution, to do their own work more effectively. Once accomplished, managers would have the responsibility to communicate the mission and priorities within their own areas and to ensure that employees understand how they are related to their own work.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The importance of communication pervades all aspects of this report and is a key part of the foundation on which most of its recommendations rest. From the College's mission statement, to new standards of accountability, to professional development, and to the principles of decision-making, effective communication is a central element in the College's effort to "better support faculty and students."

In his book, *The Power of Corporate Communication*, Tuck School of Business Professor Paul Argenti notes that, "Enlightened managers know that the more relevant and timely the information they provide to employees, the more likely the employees are to be

highly motivated to do a better job, to advance in their positions, and to further the goals of the organization itself."

Internal communication to staff and administrators needs to be a higher priority for the College.  Two-way communication between the leadership of the institution and employees will be central to improving administrative communications and breaking down administrative silos. Staff want and need easily accessible and more information as they seek to understand and implement priorities, decisions, and policies. We need to encourage a culture where information is shared appropriately.

*Recommendations:*

- **Create Overt Acts of Communication:**
  - Establish more frequent means for personal, "high touch" interaction with the President and senior officers as well as with colleagues across divisions and departments.
  - Use a "communications tree" starting with the President and moving through the senior officers, to divisional and departmental managers, and to staff through which communications can be relayed in person through the entire organization, and back up to leadership, with management accountable for the flow of communication.
  - Establish an annual "State of the College" address by the President, targeted to administrators and staff.
  - Schedule regular open meetings with the President or other senior officers, where employees can hear directly from the President and have an opportunity to ask questions. Begin casual drop-ins by senior officers to offices and departments and other informal meetings with senior managers.
  - Establish informal discussion groups or lunch opportunities where colleagues can meet and discuss issues of common interest.
  - Create opportunities for leadership to listen.

- **Adopt better, more frequent communication of institutional goals, priorities, and decisions:**
  - Describe the mission and core values of the College in Presidential speeches, letters, and other communications.
  - Find opportunities to explain how decisions and the decision-making process relate to institutional goals and priorities.
  - Encourage time to discuss and reinforce how the College's mission relates to the work we do.

- **Create new or enhance existing technological mechanisms for frequent, employee-based communications:**
  - Distribute the new employee handbook and a policy manual as soon as possible and create an electronic database of all College administrative policies.
  - Create a Web-based archive of President's Administrative Forum (PAF) announcements.
  - Reorganize the PAF to work as both a feedback mechanism and as a more effective communications vehicle for managers.

- o Establish "daily briefing" section of the Dartmouth home page devoted to employees only (in the "Resources for Faculty and Staff" section) that features administrative information, announcements, and news – internal and external – of interest or import to employees.
  - o Post brief monthly updates from divisions or departments, in the daily briefing section, outlining current issues and projects in those divisions or departments.
  - o Develop an "ask any question" information site, similar to the University of Cincinnati's tool at http://www.feedback.uc.edu/ for soliciting employee feedback and for trafficking, analyzing and responding to that feedback.
  - o Analyze, on an ongoing basis, the effectiveness of all internal communications vehicles like *Vox*, as well as some of our external vehicles that are also read internally (*Dartmouth Life*, "Speaking of Dartmouth," Web sites, community letters, email), making adjustments as necessary.
- **Require communications planning as a part of annual divisional and departmental strategic planning:**
  - o Provide basic principles of communications planning.
  - o Incorporate the development of communications skills into mandatory management training.
  - o Develop templates for creating the communications plan: who is involved, who is impacted, and how to communicate decisions having an impact on other departments.
  - o Make communication through divisions and departments a key accountability of management positions.
  - o Establish mentoring relationships for new managers.

### INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Each division, department, unit, and individual employee within the administration needs to take responsibility for meeting the institutional goal of better serving the faculty and students. This requires employees to take an institutional approach to their work and to understand the impact of their actions in the broadest terms, and it requires managers to communicate priorities and to provide feedback to their employees. As an institution, the College must encourage more systematic performance evaluation from departments and individuals and must hold managers responsible for their decisions. Institutional leadership also needs to recognize that a culture that encourages innovation and risk taking will also result in some mistakes.

A culture that recognizes institutional responsibility at the divisional, department, unit, and individual level, encourages attention to priorities and goals as well as clear and regular communication about them. A culture that values accountability does the following:

- Requires performance reviews and planning at the divisional, departmental, and individual level to achieve results consistent with the College's mission;
- Invests resources and focuses efforts to improve quality, achieve shared goals and objectives, enhance efficiency and effectiveness, and build trust and confidence;

- Provides training and professional development opportunities to ensure that every employee has the tools to succeed;
- Assesses performance against goals and plans.

The committee heard from many employees (through public meetings, emails, and the staff survey), that they would like to see greater accountability at every level, more transparency around goal setting, regular performance reviews, and a compensation program more clearly based on merit. Implementing changes around these principles should be framed in a manner that promotes and recognizes accomplishments rather than invoking fear and apprehension. The framework for any assessment program should stem from widely held institutional values such as commitment to excellence, integrity, innovation, and community.

*Recommendations:*

- **Responsibility for Performance:** Officers and managers should clearly establish their expectations around performance in meeting institutional goals, and how they expect to measure achievement. Managers and staff across the institution should challenge themselves, their colleagues, and their leaders to focus on institutional impact and responsibility, including the consistent and regular use of assessment tools to ensure that they are soliciting feedback and providing appropriate feedback to employees and that they are meeting institutional goals.

- **Training on Accountability:** Human resources and divisions need to provide their managers with the appropriate training needed to undertake the necessary planning and assessments. With an overall understanding of what it means to be accountable in the workplace, a focus on goals and objectives for meeting them will be more effective.

- **Performance Planning and Reviews:** Dartmouth must strive for one hundred percent participation in the process of goal setting and performance evaluation for individuals and divisions and departments. An important aspect of performance reviews is the ongoing discussion between supervisors and employees in establishing clear position expectations, tools and training to succeed, and opportunities for growth. There should be an ongoing conversation and assessment during the year as well as an annual written evaluation.

- **Compensation Program:** There should be a clearly articulated institution-wide merit-based compensation program for all non-faculty employees. This means there should be a consistent designation of a base raise for satisfactory performance and any additional raise to be determined by merit. Also, as the overall cost of benefits (health insurance, social security contributions, etc.) for employees continues to increase, an annual statement to each employee of Dartmouth's contribution would be useful.

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING**

Dartmouth's increasing complexity over the past couple of decades has had a noticeable impact on the administrative and organizational structures of the institution. The McKinsey Report and our own series of open forums highlighted a series of issues regarding organizational structure and decision-making. Specifically, many employees do not understand who makes decisions, what the decision-making structure is, or how decisions are communicated. Nor is it always clear how programmatic planning at the divisional, departmental, and individual office level ties into the priorities identified by the President and Trustees.

Some employees expressed frustration and confusion about the committee structure. Others suggested that senior management did not always recognize the talents, expertise, and ideas of employees. Finally, we noted that the Dartmouth culture is more often than not an "oral" culture because policies and procedures are not always written down or collected together in a single repository or publication.

The College's current organizational structure consists of a series of standing committees, working groups, and ad-hoc committees. To make progress on two of the priorities articulated by President Wright, specifically enhancing communication across the institution, and encouraging innovation within a culture of interdependence, transparency, responsibility, and accountability, we have outlined a series of recommendations to enhance the current administrative committee structure so as to work towards the President's priorities.

*Recommendations:*

- **Transparency**: Implement greater transparency with respect to the organizational chart, the composition of committees, and the reporting relationships between committees and individual offices and departments.

- **Communication**: Facilitate and improve communication among committees, administrative offices, and the senior planning group. The College should explore ways to strengthen the use of groups such as the President's Administrative Forum, as vehicles to bring diverse groups of managers together with senior leadership. In particular, the organizational structure should be one of the key ways in which the College's mission, priorities, and values are discussed and disseminated to all staff.

- **Realignment**: We should look to realign current administrative committees along key areas and functions such as personnel, facilities and technology, financial planning and development, and programs.

- **Purpose**: Better articulate the charge for each committee so that each has a clearer understanding of its purpose (decision-making body, implementing group, informing or advisory group).

- **Representation**: Adjust memberships of committees to ensure representation from key areas, particularly with respect to the given

charge of each committee. Look for skills, talents, and expertise across all levels of the institution.

- **Accountability**: Increase the accountability of committee chairs to ensure that appropriate inputs for decision-making have been solicited and that all decisions are communicated clearly and efficiently to those areas most impacted by the decisions and more generally throughout the organization.

## DECISION-MAKING

While the McKinsey Report highlighted Dartmouth's positive and collegial culture, the report also pointed to some of the challenges we face in decision-making. Specifically, they observed a lack of open debate surrounding issues, a lack of clarity around who makes the decisions, and a lack of transparency surrounding the decision making process. In addition, the consensus-driven approach to decision making employed at Dartmouth often provides senior leadership with a single position reached by compromise rather than providing several well-reasoned options to consider. Ultimately the consensus-driven approach leads to delays, changes in decisions as a result of additional analysis, and can cause runarounds.

The principles of good decision-making can generally be applied to all decisions made at Dartmouth, whether made by individuals or groups. These principles are intended to be flexible and should be used in a manner that is commensurate with the complexity and scope of the specific circumstance. For example, if a decision will have far-reaching, cross-divisional implications, it is our recommendation that those charged with making the decision strive for greater inclusivity and broader communication than would be necessary if the decision affects only an individual department or program. It is our hope that Dartmouth will not create unnecessary layers of bureaucracy through which all decisions need to pass, but instead encourage managers, supervisors, and other decision-makers to be mindful of these principles.

*Recommendations:*

- **Clarity of purpose:** Decision-makers, both individuals and committees, should understand the question they are being asked to address. Individuals and committees should understand whether they are actually the decision maker or advisory to a decision-maker.

- **Inclusivity:** Decisions should be made with particular consideration of who should have input into and/or otherwise be involved in the decision-making process. Individuals or groups who perhaps should be represented at the table include: senior members of the division or department that is undertaking the initiative; individuals with particular expertise in the subject; key customers of the initiative; and implementers of the decision. It is often preferable to include at the table someone who is not directly impacted by the decision but who is an independent thinker with broad understanding of the environment or who is a trusted advisor to the decision maker. Inclusivity can take the form of actual representation on an advisory or decision-making committee or can be achieved via the solicitation of input through a

variety of means, including paper or web-based surveys or questionnaires, forums, or open meetings.

- **A range of ideas and solutions:** Decision-makers should solicit a range of alternatives and encourage healthy and respectful debate and discussion about alternatives. Advisors to a decision-making group or committee should provide a reasonable number of alternative courses of action, including the pros and cons of each. The need for complete consensus is not necessarily the goal of those committees or groups asked to provide input to a decision-maker.

- **Decisions should reflect and/or relate to values of the institution**: Decision makers should specifically be able to point to the relationship and impact a decision has on the mission and priorities of Dartmouth and should apply the core values as a guide in the decision making process.

- **Communicating decisions:** Decision-makers should be clear to advisors or advisory committees about the criteria that will be applied to arrive at a decision. Members of a decision-making committee should be clear among each other about the ground rules for communications during a decision making process. Decision-makers should communicate the criteria, process and result of a decision-making process using a communication plan and methods that will reach the appropriate audience on a timely basis.

- **Clarity of minutes and records:** Decision-makers should document the decision making process and retain this information in a manner that can be accessed appropriately. Included in these records should be information about alternatives that were considered and how the committee arrived at the ultimate decision.

- **Trust in the process:** Those who are part of the decision-making process and those who are impacted by the decision should have respect for the process and those who contributed to it. Clear and concise records of the decision-making process will be particularly helpful to those who presented alternative solutions. If new information becomes available after a decision is made, then decision-makers should evaluate the new information and consider whether it affects the decision.

- **Accountability:** Decision-makers should be clear about what they and their advisors are accountable for during the decision making process. Implementers of a decision likewise should understand what they are accountable for. Decision-makers who apply the principles of good decision-making should not be afraid to make mistakes, but should also learn from prior experiences how best to apply these principles.

## Conclusion

Some of the recommendations outlined above will be easy to accomplish, others will take more time and work. Still others will require the investment of additional resources. We hope that managers and directors will discuss the report with their employees and we hope that it will enhance Dartmouth's capacity to become an even more innovative and inclusive place to work.

We would like to end with two final recommendations.

- The first is to disseminate this report to all employees. As part of our work, the committee established a website that includes a suggestion box for ideas on how the administration could improve still further. Many of the recommendations outlined above depend upon better communication by all employees and a broader sense of institutional responsibility. We hope that a discussion of our recommendation will help encourage such a culture.

- Secondly, the administration should consider either continuing this committee for some period of time or establishing another committee to assess the implementation of the recommendations from the McKinsey working groups.

Finally, the members of the committee wanted to express their appreciation to the many people who met with the committee or sent in suggestions and who shared their experiences of working at Dartmouth. We learned a lot from these conversations, and we enjoyed debating and discussing ways in which we could encourage greater innovation, effective communication and operations. And we look forward to realizing the goals established by President Wright for the administration.

**Working Group on Administrative Culture and Communications:**

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Nelson Armstrong, Director of Alumni Relations;
     Assistant to the President for Special Projects
Ellen L. Arnold, Associate General Counsel
Sheila A. Culbert, Senior Assistant to the President (chair)
Jo Ann ("Josie") Harper, Director of Athletics & Recreation
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Stuart C. Lord, Virginia Rice Kelsey '61s Dean of the Tucker Foundation;
     Associate Provost
Amy T. Stockman, Director of Foundation Relations
Michael F. Wagner, Controller
Maria Laskaris, Director of Admissions
Martin W. Redman, Dean of Residential Life
Frank A. Roberts, Director of Operations, Facilities Operations & Management

In the Executive Summary of the McKinsey report prepared in April 2006, McKinsey found that:

> The annual budgeting process for administrative services is not explicitly tied to institutional priorities and there is no formal planning process that creates the necessary linkage.[1]

President Wright, recognizing an opportunity for Dartmouth, asked the Provost and Executive Vice President to develop a new annual budget process that more effectively ties budgets to institutional and administrative priorities. This process will shift more responsibility to department managers, who will carry out the agreed-upon initiatives with increased discretion.[2]

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Although the McKinsey team shared their view of best practices for an annual planning and budget process, they recognized that we would have to identify our own methods for implementing such a process at Dartmouth.

A divisional and department-based annual planning process that is linked to resource allocation and forms the basis for operating budgets should have certain characteristics in order to be successful. It should:

- Reflect the mission, vision and core values of Dartmouth;
- Directly reflect the strategic plan of the College, which is a faculty effort led by the Provost;
- Be consistent with the priorities set by the President;
- Stimulate discussion and allow for input within and across divisions and programs;
- Align resources and management attention to priorities;
- Allow for regular assessment of progress against mutually agreed upon goals;
- Be transparent, communicated broadly, and increase the clarity of the plans and priorities of the College;

It is important to be clear in differentiating the annual planning process from the budget process. While both are critical, closely linked components of a resource allocation strategy, planning addresses priorities and programs, while the budget helps to understand the costs of programs and support the leadership tradeoffs between programs across campus.

A successful planning process focuses both on new resources as well as reallocating existing resources to support high priority programs. In fact, this will be the primary means of support for new initiatives. To affect this kind of reallocation, it is important

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[1] IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES: THE MCKINSEY REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, p.3 http://www.dartmouth.edu/~presoff/report/summary.html

[2] Letter from President Wright responding to the McKinsey and Company report, April 26, 2006, <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~presoff/report/wright.html>

for divisions and departments to identify programs that are at the bottom of the priority list as well as those at the top. The planning process assures that there is institutional knowledge, discussion, and coordination of both growing initiatives and those that can be downsized or discontinued.

With preliminary work prepared by the Executive Vice President's office, the process for annual planning at Dartmouth was tested with selected senior staff, Deans and Vice Presidents.

Strategic and tactical planning already exists in many departments and programs at Dartmouth, and the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration has particular expertise in the methodology of developing strategic plans. A small ad-hoc work group of staff across campus was formed, consisting of staff that have been engaged in planning in their own departments and divisions. They provided input into the further development of the annual planning process, and a set of materials that would be useful in consolidating and assuring consistency of planning efforts across campus.

We outlined a set of steps that would be conducted annually as major elements of the planning process and that would link to the budget process.

**STEPS FOR ANNUAL PLANNING**

1. President communicates priorities and goals for next 1-3 years campus-wide. (July)
2. Divisions and departments prepare written planning summaries (September, October).
3. Divisions and selected departments make oral presentations to the Dartmouth College Budget Committee. (October, November)
4. Based on feedback, divisions and selected departments present summaries of planning sessions to the Faculty Committee on Priorities and Student Budget Committee with opportunity to provide feedback. (November, December, January)
5. Public dissemination of planning summaries takes place. (January)
6. President, Provost and EVP incorporate translate priorities into annual budget plans. (February, March, April)
7. Progress against plans is incorporated into feedback and next year's goals and priorities. (June, July)

### *Year One Implementation*

Since no formal annual planning process is currently in place at Dartmouth, we recognized that the elements of a comprehensive program should be phased in over a period of time. For example, data gathering and analysis and the assignment of metrics might not be completed in the first year of implementation. Furthermore, timing does not allow for a thorough "bottoms-up" process within divisions that would facilitate full engagement of staff and leadership within departments. Therefore, in the first year of planning, we will adopt a streamlined planning process that will focus on the following:

- Divisional mission and vision
- Division and department goals and priorities over 1-3 years
- Relationship of goals to institutional priorities

- Low priority initiatives and opportunity for resource reallocation within divisions

## *Ongoing Implementation*

After introducing the critical elements in Year One, we will want to assure that we add other elements to make the process more robust and effective. These elements include:

- Review of relevant internal and external data
- Review of progress of priorities proposed in the past
- Tactics for implementing changes to program priorities
- Timetables including milestones to set expectations
- Measures of success to be used to review progress against goals
- Cross-institutional initiatives and impact beyond division or program
- Desired institutional impacts

The planning process should help to address specific issues that might lead to the transition from one set of priorities in a division to another. These issues can be expressed as a series of questions.

- Consistent with the institutional mission and priorities and divisional and departmental responsibilities, what are lower priority initiatives?
- What areas are under review?
- What will you do differently?
- Where are there opportunities for reorganization?

These are helpful questions to assure that all divisions and departments are considering how we can allocate resources most effectively.

### PLANNING MATERIALS

The ad-hoc work group helped develop a set of materials that guide those areas around the campus that have not been as engaged in a planning process. They also recognized the need for training across campus as we increase expectations in the planning process and ask for a more thorough "bottoms up" approach. Exhibit One includes guidelines that might be useful in multiple stages of the planning process during the first year. More robust training and documentation will be developed as the planning process evolves.
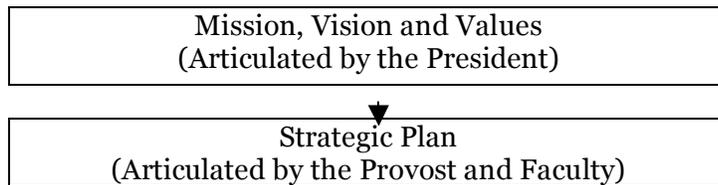
The package includes an introduction to annual planning in the context of overall College planning (in very brief overview form); a typical planning calendar; an example of how a division or department might engage staff within its area to participate in the planning process; and a format that the plan should take. The format is drawn from work done on campus and a review of public documents that other institutions display on their web sites. The work group felt that departments that have been dong planning could translate their efforts into the format proposed.
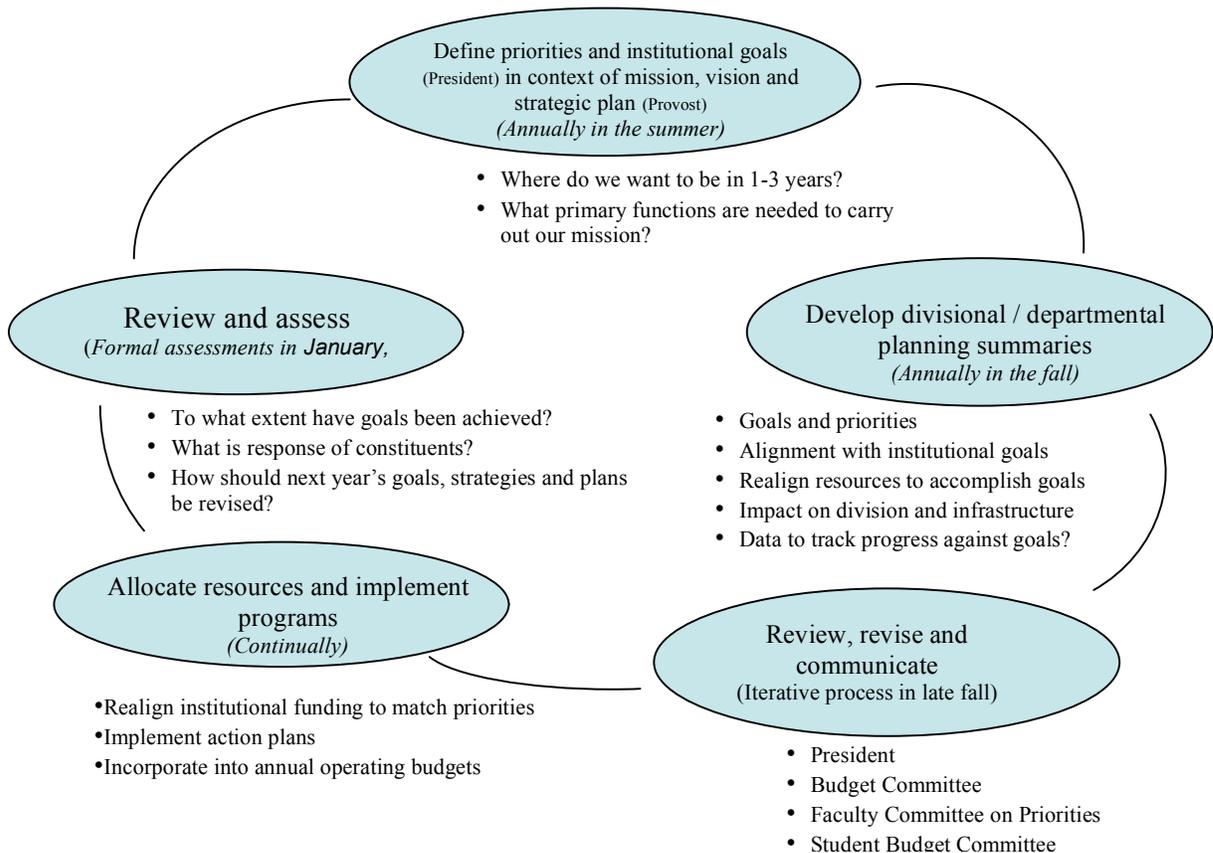
**EVOLUTION OF ANNUAL PLANNING**

Introduction and development of an effective annual planning and budget process must evolve with time. We are not able to predict exactly the form that the process will take in five years. We must always try to improve the process to increase transparency, improve communication, and help achieve more effective allocation of resources to accomplish priorities and achieve the mission and vision of the College.

The planning process being undertaken at Dartmouth College is a 3-tiered process that starts with the President's reaffirmation of Dartmouth's mission, vision and core values. These are extremely stable over time. The Provost and faculty then articulate strategic plans. While not as consistent as the mission, vision and values, these are normally revised on a 5-8 year cycle. The final component, referred to as "annual planning" in this document, is a process by which divisional goals are defined and prioritized in alignment with the institution's vision. Core to the annual planning process is the premise that budgetary resources will be reallocated and aligned with defined strategic goals. Following is a depiction of the 3-tiered planning process and a more detailed model of the annual planning process.

| Mission, Vision and Values |
|---|
| (Articulated by the President) |

| Strategic Plan |
|---|
| (Articulated by the Provost and Faculty) |

### Annual Planning and Budget Model
### at Dartmouth

**Define priorities and institutional goals** (President) **in context of mission, vision and strategic plan** (Provost) *(Annually in the summer)*

- Where do we want to be in 1-3 years?
- What primary functions are needed to carry out our mission?

**Review and assess** (*Formal assessments in January,*

- To what extent have goals been achieved?
- What is response of constituents?
- How should next year's goals, strategies and plans be revised?

**Develop divisional / departmental planning summaries** *(Annually in the fall)*

- Goals and priorities
- Alignment with institutional goals
- Realign resources to accomplish goals
- Impact on division and infrastructure
- Data to track progress against goals?

**Allocate resources and implement programs** *(Continually)*

- Realign institutional funding to match priorities
- Implement action plans
- Incorporate into annual operating budgets

**Review, revise and communicate** (Iterative process in late fall)

- President
- Budget Committee
- Faculty Committee on Priorities
- Student Budget Committee

17

**CALENDAR FOR THE ANNUAL PLANNING PROCESS**

| MONTH | ACTIVITY |
| --- | --- |
| Sept | President communicates priorities campus-wide |
| Sept, Oct | Divisions and departments prepare written planning summaries |
| Oct, Nov | Divisions and departments make oral presentations to Budget Committee with feedback |
| Nov-Jan | Summary of planning presentations are shared with Faculty Committee on Priorities and Student Budget Committee with feedback solicited. |
| Jan | Public dissemination of planning summaries takes place |
| Feb - Apr | Results of planning process are incorporated into annual budget plans |
| June, July | Progress against plans is incorporated into feedback and next year's goals |

## Working Group on Annual Planning and Budget

Adam M. Keller, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Dartmouth strives to hire exceptional employees and to create a work environment that is welcoming as well as supportive. Fundamental to its hiring practices is the effort to achieve a diverse and inclusive campus; the Dartmouth community should reflect the heterogeneity and complexity of the nation and world in which its students will live and work.

The Working Group has met regularly since May. These meetings have included two open sessions, each of which was attended by approximately 40 to 50 people, to get feedback from the broader college community. Michelle Meyers, the acting director of the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity ("IDE"), and Traci Nordberg, the Chief Human Resources Officer and head of the Office of Human Resources ("HR"), each met with the committee twice. The Working Group also examined comparative information from approximately twenty campuses, gathered largely through the efforts of Jessica Friedman in HR operations, and conducted a phone interview with Cornell's head of HR as well as the head of their Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity and Life Quality. (Cornell was identified as a school that appears to have made significant strides toward some of the goals that Dartmouth seeks to achieve.)[2]

Our focus has largely been on searches for *non-faculty*, exempt positions, though some portions of our recommendations will also apply to non-exempt positions. Faculty searches remain under the purview of the respective deans.

The following issues came to the fore early in the committee's deliberations; these were the focus of subsequent meetings and have guided the directions of the report:

(1) Many managers and search committee participants see the hiring process as overly complex and slow. Many have commented on slow responses from HR, IDE, and the Budget Committee at stages of the search process when permission is needed to proceed.
(2) Those involved with searches feel inadequately supported, both in terms of receiving basic information (about search protocols, the use of search firms, etc.) and in developing a pool.
(3) While Dartmouth states that we are trying to develop a more diverse work force, participants in the search process do not always fully incorporate the goals of diversity in the search process, and many of those who attempt to focus on diversity issues feel insufficiently supported in their efforts to identify a diverse applicant pool.
(4) Due diligence in checking references and other qualifications is not carried out consistently.

This Working Group also examined the issue of staff retention in detail. The majority of our remarks on retention, however, are not presented here but instead are incorporated in a separate report prepared jointly by this Working Group and the Communication and

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[2] Throughout the report, use of the term IDE refers to the entire office of Institutional Diversity and Equity. In referring to functions that relate specifically to Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action only, this report uses the abbreviation IDE/EO-AA.

Culture Working Group chaired by Sheila Culbert.  Both Working Groups found that the chief issues concerning retention centered on workplace matters, and therefore determined that they were best addressed in a separate focused report.
One retention and community issue this report does address is Dartmouth's grievance procedures because, like hiring procedures, they are entwined with the structural roles of HR and IDE.

We note at the outset that we are making a number of recommendations regarding both HR and IDE.  Because these recommendations involve implementing changes in both organizations, we also recommend the creation of a time-limited advisory committee to work with HR and IDE in carrying out the changes.

Implementing several of the recommendations would place additional responsibilities within HR and thus would require additional staffing. While alternative locations were considered for some of these functions, the Working Group concluded that the College would be best served by placing these functions within the HR office and working to ensure that HR has the necessary resources to carry out these tasks.

**THE SEARCH AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

McKinsey & Company observed that "[s]enior leadership needs to clarify the functions of Institutional Diversity and Equity and Human Resources with respect to hiring of new employees . . . [and] development of candidate pools"[3] and recommended that "HR handle all the transactional aspects of the search and hiring process, and that IDE concentrate more on a broader institutional diversity program effort as well as on the development of diverse pools of candidates."[4]  McKinsey also advised "HR should develop better support and clearer policies around advertising, the search process, and compensation and benefits packages."[5]

### *Clarifying the Roles of HR and IDE:*

Currently, for professional, administrative and managerial positions, the Office of Human Resources advises hiring managers on the position description and grade/salary for the position.  At that point, HR essentially leaves the process, and the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity enters.  Although IDE's direct responsibility is to promote compliance with College policies and legal requirements concerning equal opportunity and affirmative action, its energies and time are frequently dispersed into serving as general adviser to the hiring manager and search committee, a role usually filled by HR departments in most organizations.  The current division of responsibilities frequently is confusing to managers and staff members.

We agree with McKinsey that HR should handle all transactional aspects of the search and hiring process.  We recommend below changes to the hiring process and additional HR functions designed to expedite the hiring process and improve the quality of hiring outcomes.

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[3] IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES: THE MCKINSEY REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, p. 4 <www.dartmouth.edu/~presoff/report/summary.htlm>
[4] Id., at p. 5.
[5] Id., at p. 4.

IDE/EO-AA should continue to provide statistics on the "availability" of women and minorities for each search. As we discuss below in the section on "Diversity," IDE/EO-AA should also continue to report annually to senior administrators and to the Dartmouth Trustees on our success in meeting goals for hiring women and minorities. HR can be instrumental in assisting the hiring process by developing pools of minority and women professionals.

Under this revised structure, responsibility for attaining a diverse workplace would reside with the hiring managers in each area. Therefore it would be up to the managers, rather than IDE/EO-AA, to review the applicant pool and the short list. If the composition of an applicant pool fails to reflect the availability of women and minorities by a significant margin, hiring managers would be expected to consult with HR regarding steps they might take to remedy the situation (including accessing resources maintained by HR, described below). Vice presidents and deans may wish to require that short lists include women and/or minority candidates with respect to positions for which these groups are "underutilized" at Dartmouth (i.e., where their participation in the Dartmouth workforce significantly lags behind their availability in the labor pool). Ultimately, managers need to harness their own efforts and also take advantage of the resources provided by Dartmouth in order to assure a strong and diverse set of finalists and to meet the hiring goals.

### *The Hiring "Infrastructure":*

Our committee was unanimous in the view that the search process is too slow and that the College does not provide sufficient guidance or resources for hiring managers.

Based on our own experience and information received from colleagues (including comments at the two open meetings held by our committee), it takes far too long for HR to review position descriptions and determine the grade levels/salary for open positions. HR needs to move more quickly. If the problem is a lack of resources, HR should reallocate personnel to this task or request and be granted additional positions (perhaps in the form of "recruitment consultants" as we suggest below).

Many commented that the delays they experience in the hiring process are not solely the responsibility of HR. Budgetary approval for filling vacancies and/or new positions has often been very slow; in keeping with the goal of giving more responsibility to managers our committee recommends that this step be eliminated. Similarly, under the current system we have heard many comments regarding IDE/EO-AA's failure to respond in a timely fashion when permission is needed to go forward to the next stage of the search process. Several commented that slow searches have broad impact on the hiring unit: morale may suffer as remaining staff bear the burden of additional work caused by the vacancy, and promising candidates may become discouraged by the lengthy delays and lack of response and pursue other opportunities.

Once the appropriate offices have approved the position description and grade/salary, hiring managers need better guidance in conducting the search. Hiring for administrative positions is as much a skill—albeit a different skill—as hiring for faculty positions. Developing a pool of strong candidates, including strong minority and female candidates, involves far more than simply preparing a job description, publishing an advertisement, and awaiting applications. It requires proactive efforts through research and networking to identify and attract the best candidates available. Yet very few

managers do enough hiring to develop these skills, and fewer still have received any formal training in the process.

Currently, HR provides no systematic support for exempt administrative hiring. Rather, such guidance as is available comes from IDE/EO-AA in the course of advising the hiring manager on equal opportunity and affirmative action. This is not sufficient, in our view. We believe the College should provide the following resources:

- HR should establish a group of professional recruiters to serve as recruitment consultants for exempt searches. These recruitment consultants should work directly with the search committee or hiring manager for each exempt search to plan and carry out the strategy for the search including development of the position description and determination of grade level, pool building and outreach (including use of the resources to identify promising women and minority candidates, described below), evaluation of applications, correspondence with candidates, interview strategy, due diligence (e.g., reference checking), fulfillment of non-discrimination requirements and active pursuit of affirmative action goals, and record retention. Large units that hire on a fairly frequent basis may not need to utilize these recruitment consultants; we expect they will be most helpful to smaller departments with less experience in hiring.

- The HR recruitment consultants should create a clear and concise search handbook for hiring managers with pertinent timetables, resource material, sample letters, and other information. There have been numerous comments from candidates who have gone through the application process that Dartmouth often does a poor job of simply notifying applicants of their status in a timely fashion. The handbook should provide clear guidance on these and similar matters.

- Our Working Group heard several requests for improvements to the HR website. While some of these referred to issues outside hiring (e.g., the difficulty in getting clear information about benefits), it was noted that many peer institutions have websites that make it easier for applicants to find information about job opportunities and application status.

- As we discuss below in the section on Diversity, the College should establish, within HR, a process for identifying and developing a list of qualified, diverse candidates for employment as well as contacts with organizations that may help us create a diverse applicant pool. A critical component of this is sustained efforts to establish ongoing relationships with potential recruits, i.e., an ongoing attention to networking. Hiring managers and recruitment consultants should utilize this resource during the search process.

### *Search Committees:*

Over the years, use of search committees for exempt searches has become standard practice and can be perceived as mandatory at Dartmouth.[6] As noted in the McKinsey

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[6] IDE's MANUAL OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROCEDURES FOR EXEMPT EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND HIRING states: "Exempt positions are filled by means of a search committee, typically composed of three to seven members, with one of the members designated as the chair." http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ide/docs/exempt_recruitment_manual.pdf at p. 5.

Report, many administrators are dissatisfied with the search committee process and feel that it is over-used at the College. Our survey of other institutions indicates that Dartmouth utilizes search committees much more than most of its peers, including peers who have achieved greater workforce diversity.

Search committees have certain strengths and weaknesses:

*Strengths*:
- Search committees provide the hiring manager with a broader range of views on the suitability of applicants.
- Committees reduce the risk of hiring by making the decision more of a matter of collective judgment.
- For certain searches, search committees augment the hiring manager's knowledge concerning the backgrounds and qualifications of the candidates.
- Committee members, in some cases, can help to build the pool.
- Committees can serve as a counter-weight to the possible tendency of hiring managers to hire people with styles or backgrounds similar to their own. In particular, the involvement of women and minorities on search committees can help to promote diversity.

*Weaknesses*:
- Search committees constrain what is perhaps the hiring manager's most important responsibility: selecting staff. They therefore reduce accountability.
- Search committees are time-consuming and cumbersome; the process of scheduling committee meetings frequently delays the hiring process.
- In practice, search committee members generally find it difficult to assist with the outreach or pool-building effort.
- Given that many people report being overworked, search committee responsibilities are often experienced as more of a burden than an opportunity.
- Search committees have not been an effective means to attain diversity. Despite using search committees to fill exempt positions, the College still has a significant underutilization for both women and minorities in the Executive/Administrative/Managerial (EEO-1) and Professional/Non-Faculty (EEO-3) job groups.

Although some may think that the underutilization might be even greater without the use of search committees, we think it is time to try a different approach from the one that Dartmouth has relied on for more than two decades -- with results that still do not meet our expectations for increased diversity.

Balancing the pros and cons, we believe the College would be better served by eliminating the presumption that search committees should be used for all exempt searches. As always, the goal should be to make the strongest possible appointment for Dartmouth, while at the same time placing emphasis in the search process on the development and use of resources to identify and recruit highly-qualified minority and women candidates, as we recommend below in the section of this report on Diversity.

Specifically, we recommend that search committees be *required* only for searches at the Dean/Vice President level. Below that level, the decision whether or not to use a search committee for a particular search should rest with the responsible dean or vice president, bearing in mind the value that a search committee may add to the evaluation process given the particular field involved and the hiring manager's own knowledge of that field.

Even where a search committee is not used, we believe the hiring manager can obtain valuable feedback and improve the successful candidate's chances for a smooth transition by having the short-listed candidates interview with key administrators. Similarly, we believe that achieving diversity can be advanced by involving in the interview process women and minority staff members who are not part of the search team.

We recommend that when the changes we propose are evaluated, special attention be paid to the results of searches where committees were not used in order to see how well the new system has functioned and whether progress has been made toward achieving diversity goals.

**"Waivers":**

At present it is possible to receive a waiver in order to avoid a full national search when a strong internal candidate exists for a position. Other schools have done away with this term and have made the process of receiving permission for an expedited search easier than it has been at Dartmouth. We recommend eliminating the term "waiver" and allowing deans/vice presidents to grant permission for an expedited search. Making the process less burdensome may help ease the impression that Dartmouth discourages internal hiring, an issue that came to the committee's attention as it looked at retention. Deans/vice presidents would inform HR and IDE/EO-AA whenever such expedited searches are authorized.

### DIVERSITY

Achieving diversity in employment is a formidable challenge for any institution, but especially for one located in a rural section of northern New England. It is hard, labor-intensive work that cannot be accomplished merely by avoiding discrimination at the point of the hiring decision, but instead requires a comprehensive strategy implemented through sustained effort, including:
- Articulation of the College's values by senior leaders;
- Managers and divisional leaders held accountable for results;
- Training for faculty and staff;
- Communication to the outside world that Dartmouth is a place where difference is respected;
- Developing and maintaining relationships with organizations concerned with issues facing minorities and creating a database of promising personnel for future searches;
- Attention to issues of diversity during candidate visits to Hanover;
- Assistance in new staff members' personal and professional transitions, to help them adjust and succeed; and
- On-going support for diverse affinity groups of employees.

To elaborate on a few of these points:

**_Leadership Commitment to Diversity_:** The effort to achieve and maintain workforce diversity is unlikely to succeed unless it is identified as an institutional priority by senior leadership and communicated effectively across the College community. The College's policy is clear. Nevertheless, the President and other senior leaders should periodically reiterate that policy in communications with managers and others.

In his letter reaffirming the College's policy of equal opportunity, printed in the introduction to the IDE MANUAL OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROCEDURES, President Wright stated:

> " . . . [W]e need to protect our hiring and admissions practices, build on accomplishments in this area, and articulate for the wider community the benefits of diversity. A campus that values difference and supports diversity is a campus that encourages its members to explore the complexities that are central to the intellectual life. Matters of race, ethnicity, and gender are not always easy to confront. But they must be confronted, for issues concerning them are critical to our society. As an academic community we cannot afford to do any less than this."

Such statements serve to remind members of the College community that a more diverse and inclusive work environment can improve organizational performance. We recommend that senior leaders communicate the importance of diversity throughout the College, on an ongoing basis. In particular, we urge that the President convey to all vice presidents and deans the importance of achieving diversity, and that the vice presidents and deans convey this message to their own departments. (As discussed below, success in hiring and retaining a diverse staff should be reflected in performance reviews.)

_Communicating Dartmouth's Commitment to Diversity_ – The College should also take steps to communicate its commitment to diversity to the external world, in order to inform prospective employees that Dartmouth is an institution that welcomes employees of all backgrounds and perspectives. Actions by HR staff, such as participation in professional meetings and job fairs designed to interest women and people of color, can help to communicate this message and can improve non-exempt as well as exempt hiring. In addition, Dartmouth needs to make sure that both its website and its publications fully reflect this commitment.

**_Pool Building_:** Without better resources to identify and recruit a pool that includes promising minority and women candidates at the *start* of the search process, hiring managers or search committees, however conscientious, face great obstacles in achieving a diverse workforce. The College should establish a process for identifying and developing a diverse pool of qualified prospective applicants for employment:

- A unit within HR should maintain a national database of highly-qualified professionals in relevant fields, including minority and women professionals, who come to the College's attention through Dartmouth searches, networking, contact with women and minority professional associations, or other means. This database should regularly be reviewed, updated and routinely shared with hiring managers. In addition, IDE as well as HR should establish contacts with various national, regional and local organizations that are concerned with the issues

facing minorities and use these groups to identify candidates for exempt and, where relevant, non-exempt jobs.

- HR should work with Alumni Relations to identify Dartmouth alumni, including minority and women alumni, who work in relevant fields and could become actively part of the recruiting network and pool building.

***Support for New Staff; Helping New Colleagues Succeed:*** As is discussed in the joint report on retention and campus culture, although Dartmouth closely monitors exempt searches and compiles detailed records concerning the race and gender of applicants and hires, many offices pay little attention to helping staff members adjust once they actually start work. While this is a problem for all new employees, the situation particularly affects those of more diverse backgrounds who may come from larger and more urban areas where it is easier to find support or affinity groups.

We recommend that the College take several steps to address the personal and professional aspects of adjustment:

- The College should establish a "Welcome" office within HR to actively reach out to staff members new to the area, hear their concerns, and help them access resources including housing, education, health care, employment opportunities for accompanying spouses/partners, community/social involvement and other services. This office could also organize social events to introduce new staff members to one another and to other Dartmouth colleagues.

- The Welcome office should create a new-employee handbook with information on the history and organization of the College, the Upper Valley, and the above subjects.

- The College should establish and publish a list of colleagues who are willing to serve as confidential, professional mentors to new staff members. The network should be developed by a steering committee appointed by the Provost. Its membership should include a diverse group of men and women from academic and administrative departments throughout the College.

- Hiring managers should also anticipate who might need mentoring or special help with adjustment to Dartmouth and initiate contacts with those who can be of assistance.

***Assessment:*** Success in meeting diversity goals should be assessed annually, on a top-down basis, for both the College as a whole and individual departments/managers:
- Vice presidents and deans should include a section on diversity goals in their annual reports to the President, and those at managerial level and above should report on their efforts in this regard to their immediate supervisors.
- As part of its annual affirmative action report to senior officers and the Board of Trustees, IDE/EO-AA should evaluate Dartmouth's performance in meeting diversity goals.
- Performance reviews of individual managers should include an assessment of performance on diversity initiatives.

## DUE DILIGENCE

Based on our experience and communication with colleagues, we believe that hiring managers sometimes extend offers without engaging in due diligence. We believe that for every hire it is necessary to:

- Complete a reference check that includes speaking with the candidate's immediate supervisor at each of the applicant's last two places of employment;

- Confirm the accuracy of the applicant's educational credentials by contacting the institutions' registrars; and

- Perform an Internet search for information concerning the individual (e.g., "Google" the applicant), while recognizing that such searches may turn up information indiscriminately so that the results need to be vetted carefully.

This procedure could be carried out either by the recruitment consultants in HR or by the hiring officers.   In either case, HR should establish a procedure for certifying that the above steps have been completed before a new employee may be placed on the payroll.

## CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES

McKinsey observed that "[s]enior leadership needs to clarify the functions of Institutional Diversity and Equity and Human Resources with respect to . . . the handling of grievances"[7] and recommended that the handling of concerns and grievances "should transition to HR."[8]

Currently, responsibility for handling employment-related grievances is divided between two processes administered by two different College offices:

- Staff members who believe that they have been treated "in a manner inconsistent with written College policy" have recourse to the grievance procedure described in the Exempt and Non-Exempt Staff Handbooks.  The Office of Human Resources administers that procedure.[9]

- Staff members who feel that they have been discriminated against in violation of law or the College's nondiscrimination policy[10] have recourse to the Equal

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[7] IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES: THE MCKINSEY REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, p. 4 <www.dartmouth.edu/~presoff/report/summary.htlm>

[8] Id., at p. 5.

[9] This procedure is available to non-unionized staff members.  Unionized staff members are governed by the grievance-arbitration mechanisms of their respective collective bargaining agreements.

[10] The College POLICY CONCERNING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, or military or veteran status in the College's programs, organizations, and conditions of employment and admission. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ide/policies/nondiscrim.html>

Opportunity Grievance Procedure described on the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity (IDE) web site.[11]  That process is administered by IDE.

This division of responsibility has presented a number of difficulties:

1. It is confusing; many members of the community do not have a clear understanding about where to take their concerns.

2. The distinction between discrimination grievances and grievances based on violation of other College policies is less clear in practice than in theory.  Many grievances that identify potential discrimination are intertwined with issues about managerial policy or practice and could most satisfactorily be resolved as a general issue.

3. The often murky dividing line separating discrimination grievances from grievances involving general management issues creates inducements for "forum shopping" by staff members and results in jurisdictional conflicts between HR and IDE.

4. Conceivably, the problems caused by the two offices' divided/overlapping roles could be overcome through effective coordination, but coordination has been irregular.

5. Each office is regarded by community members as having certain strengths and weaknesses, which can lead to people choosing an office on bases other than the nature of the grievance.

Our committee agreed on the need for a change in the way the College handles grievances and considered several options. We compared the Dartmouth grievance system with the systems in use at a number of peer colleges and universities, and our findings confirmed the recommendation within the McKinsey report.  While some had separate processes for discrimination and other grievances, the majority had a unitary system, usually located within HR and often with a specific officer dedicated to dealing with discrimination cases.  Some schools also have an Ombuds office.  The Ombuds office varies somewhat from campus to campus, but it is generally part of an effort to encourage the informal resolution of most issues, to provide mediation in more serious instances, and on occasion to refer cases to other offices.

While the model of dealing with formal grievances in one place, whether or not an Ombuds office also exists, may be seen as the "best" (or at least the most common) practice, we did not feel it was practical to move abruptly to such a system. At the same time, we believe it is necessary to deal with some of the confusion that we have identified in the current structure at Dartmouth and to offer employees a problem-solving resource for employees and managers that stands outside regular organizational processes and supplements the efforts of supervisors and human resources.

Therefore, we recommend the creation of an Ombuds office, which would be a neutral source of advice for employees with concerns or questions and a first stop for employees who are considering filing a formal grievance with either HR or EO/AA. The office by

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[11] http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ide/policies/grievance/index.html

definition needs to be impartial, independent, and completely confidential. It would serve both managers and other staff members. It would operate outside the formal grievance procedures, in some instances simply offering advice and information, in others facilitating a resolution of the matter at hand and offering mediation when necessary. In consultation with the employee, the office would forward formal complaints of discrimination to IDE/EO-AA and formal complaints of violation of College policy to the grievance process administered by HR. The director of the Ombuds office would report to the President, and would have a close working relationship with HR, EO-AA, and the General Counsel's office.

Our belief is that by establishing and creating broad awareness of such an office it would be possible to eliminate much of the confusion and would encourage greater use of facilitation and mediation. We would hope to see the Ombuds office create a web site that effectively describes this approach, perhaps in terms similar to the Columbia University Ombuds Office, which states:

> The Ombuds Office offers a safe place for any member of the Columbia community to discuss workplace issues, interpersonal conflict, academic concerns, bureaucratic runarounds, and many other problems. You can speak freely to us because we promise to keep our discussions confidential, and we are not part of any formal University process. We don't take sides in disputes and operate independently of the Columbia administration, reporting only to the president.
>
> Get in touch with us as a first step or a last resort--or at any point along the way. We will listen to your concerns, give you information about the University's policies, help you evaluate your situation, and assist you in making plans to resolve the conflict. You control the process and decide which course of action to take. And we respect your choices.[12]

### SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Overall, the recommendations outlined in this report would result in significant changes to both HR and IDE.

**HR would:**

- Have overall responsibility for all transactional aspects of the search and hiring process for all non-faculty employees;
- Provide greater support for searches, in part by establishing an office of professional recruiters who would assist hiring officers, create a search handbook, etc.;
- Institute a process for identifying and developing a supply of qualified, diverse applicants;
- Establish a "Welcome" office to reach out to new members in each area, with special attention to the concerns of a diverse community;
- Create a list of colleagues who are willing to serve as confidential, professional mentors to new staff members;
- Assure that "due diligence" is carried out before job offers are extended;

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[12] OMBUDS OFFICE WEB PAGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ombuds/)

- Handle grievances involving possible violation of College policy other than the non-discrimination policy, as referred by the new Ombuds Office.

**IDE/EO-AA would:**

- Continue to be responsible for creating the institutional plans for meeting diversity goals;
- Provide consultation on searches in regard both to providing data about the availability of women and people of color in the labor market and in advising on how to develop a diverse applicant pool;
- Undertake more extensive training and educational programs on diversity issues (a topic covered in the separate report being issued jointly by the Working Group and the Culture and Communication Working Group);
- Annually assess and report to senior College management and the Board of Trustees on the achievement of diversity goals;
- Handle grievances involving possible violation of discrimination law or non-discrimination policy, as referred by the new Ombuds Office.

**Hiring managers and their deans/vice presidents would:**

- Assume responsibility for assuring that searches are conducted in a manner consistent with achieving the quality and diversity goals of the institution;
- Determine when search committees will and will not be used;
- Initiate contacts within the College for new staff who will benefit from mentoring or special help with adjustment to Dartmouth.

**The Ombuds office would:**

- Serve as a problem-solving resource for employees and managers that stands outside regular organizational processes and supplements the efforts of supervisors and human resources;
- Become the entity to which individuals would turn prior to filing a grievance concerning a workplace-related issue. The Ombuds office would determine whether the matter concerns possible violation of Federal or State discrimination law or Dartmouth non-discrimination policy (in which case it would be referred to IDE/ EO-AA) or whether it concerns possible violation of other Dartmouth policies (in which case it would be referred to the grievance procedure administered by HR). (The Ombuds Office would not deal with grievances by union members — which are governed by collective bargaining agreements — or grievances against faculty members — which are handled by the respective deans' offices — other than to refer staff and faculty members to the appropriate resources for pursuing such issues.);
- Serve as a source of information concerning College policies and procedures;
- Encourage, whenever feasible, the use of mediation and other informal means of conflict resolution as alternatives to formal grievance procedures;
- Endeavor to educate the community about its resources and procedures for resolving problems; among other things, it should establish a home page on the College web site that clearly and simply explains the resources and procedures available to College faculty, staff and students who seek information or have a

concern about conflicts that may arise in the academic or workplace environment;

• Work closely with HR and IDE/EO-AA to implement the new system. In particular, it is customary for HR staff members to advise managers and staff members on workplace problems. HR staff members should continue to provide this service. If an employee is considering or has decided to invoke the grievance process, however, the matter should be referred to the Ombuds Office and HR should follow that office's advice concerning HR's continuing role in the matter.

**ADVISORY GROUP**

We recognize that the changes we are recommending are substantial, and that some of these have financial as well as structural implications. We therefore recommend that an Advisory Group be appointed to assist with the implementation of these proposals. The role of the committee would be to meet with the directors of IDE and HR as well as of the new Ombuds office, to discuss details of the changes, and to oversee any transitional issues. Since the members of this Working Group are intimately familiar with both the recommendations and with the reasoning behind their adoption, we strongly suggest that a subset of the Working Group be involved with this advisory role.

We encourage establishing target dates for implementing the key recommendations. Finally, we suggest evaluating the changes three years after implementation to see whether any adjustments are necessary and whether there is a need for continuation of the Advisory Group. We recommend that the evaluation consider some of the key issues raised here, including: (1) a review of whether the new system has improved our successes in achieving our diversity goals; (2) consideration of how the timeline of the search process has changed; (3) a review of the number of expedited searches and their outcomes, with particular attention to whether these searches have had an impact on diversity goals, retention (including any impact on perceptions of potential for personal advancement as well as partner hiring/retention), and so on; (4) evaluation of those searches in which a search committee was not used and their outcomes; (5) the overall functioning of the Ombuds Office (how HR and IDE interact with it, whether grievances are being resolved more or less quickly, with greater or less satisfaction, etc.).

The Provost's Office in consultation with the Advisory Group Chair, and the heads of HR, IDE and the Ombuds office would ultimately make such determination.

**Working Group on Hiring and Retention**

> John G. Crane, Deputy Librarian of the College
> Robert B. Donin, General Counsel
> Lenore A. Grenoble, Professor of Russian
> Joseph J. Helble, Dean of the Thayer School of Engineering
> Marcia J. Kelly, Associate Dean of the College for Develoment & Administration
> Jerry E. Nunnally, Senior Philanthropic Advisor
> Marga J. Rahmann, Associate Director & General Manager, the Hopkins Center
> Barry P. Scherr, Provost (chair)
> James Washington Jr., Director of Admissions Outreach

# REPORT ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

## BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2006 President Wright established two working groups to address recommendations made by McKinsey & Co. One of the committees reviewed administrative communication and culture and the other examined hiring and retention issues. Although they worked separately, both committees received significant feedback regarding orientation, training, professional development and advancement opportunities at the College. The following report combines the observations and recommendations made by the two committees.

During open meetings hosted by both committees many employees raised concerns about the lack of sufficient orientation and training for new staff. Employees talked about how long it took in some cases to get to know the campus and the general confusion about where to turn for services and support; they noted the challenges of being new to the community and how long it can take to feel welcome and find individuals with similar interests, backgrounds, or roles.

Employees also raised concerns around the lack of support for ongoing professional development and opportunities for growth and advancement. Although internal candidates fill many positions at the College, a large number of employees mentioned what is perceived to be a glass ceiling in the College, due to a dearth of both professional development opportunities and possibilities for promotion and career advancement. Many felt that internal candidates are disadvantaged in the hiring process and that coming up through the system can work against one's chances for advancement, i.e., that new hires/externals are advantaged in terms of promotion and in terms of salary. Employees mentioned that there is not always support from managers for training and professional development and that managers are not always equipped to provide advice or guidance regarding career advancement.

In contrast to the results of the recent college-wide employee survey, many staff provided anecdotes suggesting a low level of morale among those who have limited opportunities for growth within Dartmouth, stemming from a number of considerations, including a sense of being undervalued (because of low raises, lack of promotion possibilities) combined with a heavy workload. The long time that it takes to fill vacancies contributes to the morale problem: current staff need to pick up the extra burden and are increasingly overworked. These and other issues related to investing in our employees have led to frustration, feelings of inertia, and of being "stuck" in a job. Sometimes, they have led to the departure of valuable and talented staff.

We need to create a culture in which we communicate with one another with respect and civility; where professional development is valued and encouraged, and available to staff at all levels; and where employees are recognized and rewarded for innovative and creative ideas. We also need to have managers with strong supervisory skills, who are motivators and listeners, and who can guide employees to resources that can help them with skills development and their own professional growth.

Top performing employees need opportunities to renew their skills, learn new ones, and to grow. As an institution we need to invest in our employees by providing opportunities that help staff reach their full potential. Dartmouth should strive for an administrative

organization that is energetic, responsive, and creative; that encourages risk-taking and rewards superb performance; and that embraces ongoing development as essential to maintaining a top-performing institution. Finally, we need to consider the development of a range of growth and learning opportunities if we want to encourage and inspire talented and motivated employees to stay.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that Human Resources develop an institutional orientation, training, and professional development framework that:

- Takes advantage of internal and external resources and allows for central and divisional/departmental responses to staff development needs;
- Is aligned with institutional values and priorities;
- Includes diversity awareness and sensitivity;
- Is responsive to the changing needs of employees; and
- Involves a blended learning approach (on-line, classroom, individualized).

## ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION OF CURRENT PROGRAMS

The Office of Human Resources, in partnership with appropriate representatives across campus, should:

- Conduct an all-campus needs assessment to determine the types of orientation, training, and professional development needs and interests of our employees;

- Conduct an inventory of existing programs: *Are they open to all or just a discrete group? How often are they offered? How successful are they? Could they be expanded to include more participants? Should they be offered more frequently, or be replicated elsewhere on campus?*

- Determine the skills that are required in certain positions and make sure that training is provided for individuals assuming those roles. Specifically, we recommend a suite of management training courses geared towards new managers, and refresher courses for more experienced managers;

- Determine what should be offered centrally versus within divisions or departments.

**ORIENTATION AND TRAINING**

- **Establish new employee information/handbooks:** In addition to a campus-wide new-employee handbook, each division should develop a supplement or an insert describing its own procedures and policies.   It would be important to include an organizational chart, and to update this document on a regular basis.

- **Welcoming events:**  The College should host more events (meals, other gatherings) to both welcome new employees and introduce them to employees outside of their general area.

- **Information Sessions:** The *Dartmouth Today* program received high praise but access to this program is too limited. We recommend that HR consider alternative ways to deliver the content from this program to a broader audience.

- **Orientation:** New employee orientation should help employees understand not only their department or specific responsibilities, but should also increase their understanding of the College's mission and the staff role, the role of the faculty and what it means to be faculty. Employees should also be informed of goals, challenges and successes (of one's individual area and of the College as a whole)

- **Web-based Video Training:** The College should develop programs that can be used at any time by any employee to learn the basics of systems such as blitzmail or the telephone system.

- **Focus on Managers:** Specific training should be provided to managers across the institution. Training should include: communication skills (including providing feedback); hiring, supervising, and evaluating personnel; addressing personnel issues (including grievances); setting expectations; helping staff with professional development; creating and sustaining a supportive and diverse work environment.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT**

Create a variety of professional development opportunities at all levels including:
- Virtual and actual learning communities on campus for peer support and shared problem solving;
- Brown bag lunches with colleagues from across the campus;
- Informal gatherings that facilitate communication across departmental boundaries and among staff who would not otherwise come together;
- Lists and a lending library of recommended books and readings;
- A staff career counseling office in HR (this office could be involved with efforts for partner placement and could advise those interested in advancement).

Encourage and support:
- Participation in regional conferences and workshops with peers from other institutions to share best practices and gain a broader understanding of higher education;
- Opportunities to present at conferences;

- Enrollment in courses, at Dartmouth or elsewhere;
- Employee attendance at special events and lectures

**MENTORING**

Mentoring relationships provide new (and continuing) employees the opportunity to learn more about the institution's culture; interact with individuals with similar backgrounds, work experience, and roles; and develop a support network. Such relationships can exist on a number of levels (e.g. between or within departments and divisions) and can provide coaching for new managers, star performers, and employees with performance concerns.

- **Mentoring networks:**  A significant effort is required both to establish and to maintain such networks, and several issues need to be worked out in advance (such as who is eligible to be a mentor, how are they assigned, what are the expectations for participants, etc.)

- **Managers:** To further assist with development of successful managers we recommend creating a managerial mentoring network, which would build a cohort of managers who could mentor one another.

**DIVERSITY**

To support our institutional commitment to create and sustain a diverse work environment we must provide ample opportunities for employees to increase their understanding of and competency with a range of diversity issues; equip managers with the skills to hire, train, and manage a diverse staff; and encourage a culture that supports and affirms all employees.
Specific recommendations related to orientation, training, and professional development include:

- Provide training for diversity awareness/sensitivity for the entire campus
- Create welcoming and orientation programs that focus on issues of diversity
- Conduct regular surveys or assessments to determine whether employees consider the workplace to be supportive and respectful of diversity
- Support and encourage opportunities for all staff to attend diversity-related workshops, MLK events, etc.
- Create mentoring opportunities for minority staff members as part of the overall mentors network described in the report of the Hiring and Retention Working Group
- Support employee-led cultural heritage events and celebrations
- Develop and support diverse affinity groups
- Expand diversity outreach efforts to include membership in professional associations (e.g. Black MBA Association) and partnerships with local, regional and national organizations. The latter not only creates a pipeline for new hires but also provides a support network for current employees and managers.

We recognize that the coordination of several of these efforts would require significant resources.  For instance, Cornell has an Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity and Life Quality at Cornell, which oversees "equal opportunity, affirmative action, diversity, and the 'balance' between work and personal life. The office serves as a liaison to local

community organizations that address the employment interests of individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups."

**RECOGNITION AND BENEFITS**

In addition to training and professional development opportunities employees also noted a variety of ways they would like to have their work recognized and their value affirmed by the College. Employees offered the following suggestions most often:

- Increase recognition of staff in official communications
- Provide bonuses to recognize extraordinary performance, special assignments taken on, etc.
- Increase "special benefits" to staff: this could include discounted tickets to HOP events, to the gym
- Provide maternity leave for employees having a baby or adopting one rather than short-term disability leave
- Provide more support for day care expenses
- Consider flexible work time for positions where work can be done off-campus or after regular business hours
- Sponsor social events, subsidized lunches, more open meetings, more opportunities to meet people across areas.

While it may not be practicable or desirable to implement all of these suggestions, the College and Human Resources in particular should consider how to move forward with some of these ideas. The Office of Human Resources should also encourage staff to submit ideas on how the College can recognize and reward employees.