

**What follows is an excerpt from the original report delivered to the Board of Trustees. Copies of the full report may be obtained from the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, tel. 603-646-3999**

March 13, 2000

**MEMORANDUM**

To: The Trustees of Dartmouth College

From: Edward Berger, Dean of the Faculty

Re: SLI Report: Faculty Responses

Enclosed is a report of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' response to the recommendations contained in the report entitled "The Student Life Initiative at Dartmouth College." Included are responses from: the Standing Committees of the Faculty, together with a summary written by Professor Parati, Chair of the Committee on Organization and Policy (Appendix I); the four Divisional Councils which include Humanities, Sciences, Social Sciences and Academic Programs (Appendix II); two individual faculty and from the Enrollment Committee, which is a group of faculty and administrators who meet regularly do discuss and plan for enrollment issues (Appendix III); and the minutes and votes of two Arts and Sciences Faculty meetings that were devoted to discussing and voting on the seven SLI recommendations (Appendix IV).

The bulk of my report is in the form of appendices that contain the full text of narrative responses. These appendices fully document the nature and tone of discussions and debates that took place. In the following section, I try to provide the Board with a comprehensive summary of discussion points that are common to many, or all, of the various responses.

**Faculty Response to SLI Recommendations**

1. The construction of additional housing in the form of residential clusters and social space will address the longstanding shortage of residential housing on campus and has the potential to create an attractive set of social opportunities for undergraduates.
2. The vote of the Faculty was to recommend the progressive derecognition of Greek houses, over a five-year period. Residential space planners would then need to consider the needs of these displaced students in their formula.

3. Creative thinking about the design of residential space will want to incorporate both academic and social space. Enhancing effective faculty-student interaction within the residential system should be an explicit goal of the planning process.
4. There were mixed feelings about the segregation of first-year residential space.
5. There was unanimous support for construction of graduate housing and graduate social space. A petition signed by 138 Dartmouth faculty is included in Appendix I.
6. Creative thinking should be used in the design and creation of social space within academic facilities. These spaces will create a convenient and congenial place for students to “hang out” and get to know their professors. The need for dining facilities on the North campus was a topic discussed repeatedly.
7. The Faculty was disappointed by the general absence of explicit reference to the academic mission of the College. For example, the need for a World Cultures Initiative was raised without considering how that initiative could take shape and what resources would be needed to create an effective initiative.
8. With all the planning being discussed, this is an ideal time to re-examine and, perhaps, reconsider our commitment to the D-plan and to understand the consequences of moving off the D-plan to another calendar.
9. Throughout all the discussions there was implicit and sometimes explicit concern that the potentially substantial cost associated with implementing the SLI recommendations would create a significant, and perhaps serious, impact on academic initiatives in terms of both resources for facilities and programs.

## **Summary of the Reports from Standing Committees**

### **Dartmouth College**

#### **Responses to the SLI Document**

In the Winter Quarter 2000, the COP charged a number of the Standing Committees of the Faculty (COI, CAFA, COCA, CGS, COS, COF, and COSL) to respond to the SLI report. They were requested to respond in writing to the COP. COI, CAFA, CGS, COF, and COSL submitted their final report. COCA and COS's responses are still not available.

#### **SUMMARIES**

The **Committee on Instruction** supports the SLI recommendation for residential clusters. It suggests both that the clusters be connected to academic advising, and that the clusters reflect Dartmouth's diversity.

COI requests that the spaces created for social gatherings also be used for academic purposes.

The Committee supports the construction of graduate housing and a graduate center and suggests the College only recognize residential housing which reflects the diversity of the student body.

COI indicates that housing could be organized around a common academic purpose.

The Committee on Instruction objects to the use of academic scheduling as a remedy for alcohol abuse.

It asks for a re-examination of the D-Plan in order to analyze its impact on the problems that the College is trying to solve.

The **Council on Graduate Studies** strongly supports the SLI recommendations for graduate education and graduate students concerning both graduate student housing and a graduate student center.

It also stresses the importance of establishing a shuttle bus service to and from Sachem Village. CGS includes 138 faculty signatures supporting graduate student related issues in the SLI report.

The **Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid** argues that the correct method of elevating student behavior is to set higher standards and then hold the students accountable, especially for illegal conduct.

It declares the need for more concrete methods of student/faculty interaction outside the classroom and in this regard suggests that dining facilities within the clusters could increase the ability of students and faculty to meet in an informal setting.

CAFA expresses a strong apprehension about segregating first-year students to a specific cluster.

The committee supports the creation of a greater range of social options to lessen the dominance of fraternities on social life.

It voices concern that the report contains too many restrictions and might discourage some students from applying to Dartmouth.

The **Committee on the Faculty** applauds the recommendation to resolve the long-standing shortage of housing for undergraduate students and suggests that this recommendation be given priority.

It also commends the inclusion of graduate housing needs in the recommendation.

The Committee expresses concern regarding the cost of meeting the recommendations in the report. It also stresses that the astounding price tag of the SLI can reduce funds for both an increase in faculty salaries (necessary to make them competitive with our comparison institutions) and worthy academic initiatives.

COF points to the shortcomings of the SLI Document and voices its disappointment concerning the neglect in the document of the relationship between the recommendations and the true mission of the college, that is liberal arts education.

It expresses disappointment with regard to recommendation #7 (other matters) as it suggests academic changes in class scheduling to modify student's alcohol abuse habits.

COF states that the SLI inadequately addresses problems concerning a student culture that both encourages disdain for academics and learning and dissuades the brightest applicants, particularly those with interest in the humanities, from attending Dartmouth.

The **Committee on Student Life** in general approves the concept of first-year clusters whose aim is to improve class solidarity. It suggest that students be grouped together by interests, but questions whether enough upper-class students would be available to live and advise first-year students in the dorm.

COSL believes that students should not be bound by the one-time opt-out option.

It supports the call to strengthen and improve interpersonal relationships while finding some aspects of interpersonal issues under-specified.

With regard to gender issues, the Committee stresses that there are too many male dominated spaces, and that there must be more awareness of sexual assault cases.

With regard to identity, race, and ethnicity issues, COSL embraces the sentiment behind the World-Cultures Initiative, but remarks that the recommendation requires more specifics before implementation. It recommends to increase resources in support for affinity housing. It suggests that there is a need to open an Office of Multicultural Affairs.

For what the D-Plan is concerned, COSL finds that the D-Plan causes instability and discontinuity.

With regard to counseling on campus, COSL states the Dick's House does not currently meet student's health needs.

With reference to student/faculty relations, COSL recognizes that student/faculty relations need to improve outside the classroom. Specific recommendations are forthcoming in the COSL annual report.