

The Origin of the Executive Faculty of the Main Campus of Georgetown University

In the Fall 1993 semester, Patrick Heelan, S. J., Executive Vice President (EVP) for the Main Campus of Georgetown University, convened the department chairs to announce a thorough strategic planning process. Many chairs expressed a reluctance to put much effort into the exercise, citing a long history in which the results of such plans were fruitless. Fr. Heelan promised that he would take the strategic plans of the departments, synthesize them into a strategic plan for the Main Campus, and submit the results to the chairs for discussion and approval. With this assurance, the chairs went back to their departments, produced their plans, and submitted them to the EVP by the end of the semester.

When the faculty returned from Spring Break in 1994, Fr. Heelan issued a "Progress Report" (March 15, 1994), a "White Paper" (March 17, 1994), and other documents in which sweeping changes were announced for the Main Campus. The administrative structure of the campus was to be reorganized: the School of Languages and Linguistics was to be merged into the College; the three departments of the School of Foreign Service (Economics, History, and Government) were to be transferred to the College; and two programs in the Graduate School were to be transferred to the School of Foreign Service. The enlarged College would be divided into Divisions with administrative officers and budgets of their own. A "third year review and sabbatical" for junior faculty would be instituted, resulting in non-continuance if the review was unsuccessful. The core curriculum was to be overhauled, and managed by Heidi Byrnes (Associate Vice President) and a new Core Curriculum Committee. TA training for graduate students would be mandatory. Finally, a Main Campus Rank and Tenure Committee was proposed to consider and approve applications before submission to the University Committee on Rank and Tenure. As mandate for these sweeping changes, Fr. Heelan cited the strategic plans submitted by the chairs, and the recent Middle States Report. The chairs had not discussed these issues, however, and did not see how the EVP's plans related to their strategic plans. No faculty governance body, including the executive committees of the schools, had been consulted. The Deans of the three schools were as surprised by the proposals as the faculty.

Finding intense and widespread opposition to these unilateral actions of the EVP, Wayne Davis, Chair of the Philosophy Department, called a meeting of all Main Campus chairs and program directors on April 25, 1994. Citing long established principles of faculty governance and the *Faculty Handbook*, he submitted a set of proposals, the first of which called for the creation of a broadly representative "Main Campus Executive Faculty" that would stand to the EVP as the Executive Councils of the Schools stood to their Deans; all academic policies proposed to be implemented by the EVP would be submitted this body for discussion and approval before becoming final. The second proposal was that the Main Campus Chairs and Program Directors serve as an Interim Executive Faculty until one could be officially constituted; this was amended to include representatives from the Main Campus Caucus of the Senate. The third proposal was that the Interim Executive Faculty draw up a constitution for the Executive Faculty. The Chairs and Directors endorsed these proposals, with some amendments, and plans were made to take them back to departments for discussion in advance of a general Main Campus faculty meeting to be convened by the Faculty Senate President, William C. McFadden, S.J., and chaired by Victoria Pedrick (Chair, Classics) on May 6. Before the May 6 meetings, Main Campus departments and programs approved the three proposals (or variations thereof) with near unanimity. They were approved by the faculty present at the May 6 meeting by a vote of 145 in favor and 1 opposed. A fourth proposal was approved at the May 6 meeting specifying that the recently announced plans for the Main Campus not be implemented without the approval of the Executive Faculty. Fr. Heelan accepted the four proposals at the May 6 meeting.

Davis convened the first meeting of the Interim Executive Faculty (IEF) on May 16. He was elected Chair, and given the power to appoint committees, including a steering committee. The IEF approved a plan to set up a Constitution Committee (chaired by Anthony C. Arend), a Restructuring Committee (chaired by Margaret Hall) to review the proposed reorganization of the Main Campus), and a Divisions and Deans committee (chaired by Dorothy Brown) to review the proposed reorganization of the College. On May 17, Fr. Heelan asked for IEF recommendations by the end of October, 1994. All three committees met frequently during the summer, presenting proposals to the IEF by September. The Restructuring Committee recommended that the reorganization proceed subject to a number of conditions designed to ensure that it would succeed. The Divisions and Deans Committee recommend that the College not be structurally divided, and that deans for specific functions be appointed instead, including a Dean of Faculty. A subsequently convened committee (chaired by Paul Betz) recommended that the third year review and sabbatical be replaced by a junior faculty fellowship, and another (chaired by Jeff Von Arx) drafted guidelines for joint appointments. These recommendations were endorsed by the IEF and accepted by the EVP. The IEF also set up a committee to make recommendations about capital campaign priorities for the Main Campus (chaired by James Reardon-Anderson), whose proposed priorities were approved in January 1995.

With the endorsement of the EVP, the Council of Deans, University Counsel (Larry White), and the University Vice President (Michael Kelly), a draft of the Executive Faculty Constitution was approved by the IEF on November 9, 1994, by those in attendance at a General Faculty Meeting called by the Faculty Senate on December 8, by a vote of all Main Campus Faculty by December 22, and by the Board of Directors on May __, 1995.

The first meeting of the duly constituted Main Campus Executive Faculty (MCEF) was held on February 8, 1995. Wayne Davis was elected Chair, Vicki Pedrick Vice-Chair, and Ralph Fasold (Chair, Linguistics) Secretary. The remainder of the Steering Committee was approved on February 15. The Executive Faculty was briefed by the Main Campus Academic Committee on its proposed framework for core curriculum review, and expressed concerns; the proposal was subsequently withdrawn. The MCEF worked with the Senate leadership to draft a "Memorandum of Understanding" on the relationship between the MCEF and the Main Campus Caucus of the Senate. Prompted by an alarming report from Joe Pettit of the Office of Institutional Research that Georgetown Undergraduates studied less and partied more than their counterparts at peer schools, the MCEF appointed an Intellectual Life Committee (co-chaired by Vicki Pedrick and Kathy Olesko) to look broadly and deeply at ways to improve undergraduate education and the intellectual life of the campus generally. The recommendations of this Committee were presented to and approved by the MCEF and the new Executive Vice President William E. Cooper in Spring 1996. This led to many changes on campus, including the creation of the New Student Convocation and the John Carroll Scholars Program, a review and revision of the undergraduate admissions process, the creation of a Main Campus Space Committee, and realization of the goal of an office for every member of the ordinary faculty.

One recommendation of the Restructuring Committee was a review of the Graduate School. The MCEF began this task in September 1996, charging the committee to evaluate and make recommendations concerning the roles and functions of the Graduate School and graduate education in general on the Main Campus under the restructuring, including an external review. An external review was part of the process. The recommendations of this Committee, approved by the MCEF in May 1998, were embraced by the new Graduate School Dean, Joe Serene, leading to important changes, including a significant increase in graduate student fellowships.

In its first term, the MCEF also participated in the search for the new EVP, discussed and approved "Institutional Support for Research," which increased faculty development funds over

four years; discussed, approved, and implemented the proposals for an Honor System developed by a committee chaired by Terence Reynolds; discussed and approved an “Assessment Plan” for the Main Campus, setting a schedule for the review of all departments and administrative units; and discussed an approved “Centered Pluralism.” Finally, the MCEF was instrumental in blocking a proposal by the Interim EVP (Richard Schwartz) to replace the faculty merit increase with a cost of living adjustment. It called for a review of the Main Campus budget process, and the development of a salary increase plan based on benchmarks from peer institutions. This eventually resulted in a ten-year plan adopted by then EVP Dorothy Brown in October 1999.

In May 1997, at the end of the first term of the MCEF, Anthony C. Arend was elected as the second chair of the MCEF. That event, and the election of new representatives in accordance with the Constitution, signaled that the MCEF had become an established part of the governance of Georgetown University.

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