

Dear Colleagues,

In response to suggestions by many of you, I am pleased to announce a new structure for strengthening faculty leadership in the FAS.

Background

As you know, the departments and programs in Yale's Faculty of Arts and Sciences are organized into four broad intellectual areas – Humanities; Social Sciences; Biological Sciences; and Physical Sciences and Engineering – each advised by a standing committee of tenured faculty. These committees have two roles: as “Advisory Committees,” chaired by a tenured member of the faculty, they meet regularly with chairs of departments and programs or among themselves in order to assess the appointment needs and strategic plans of the departments and programs in their areas; as “Tenure Appointments and Promotion Committees” they meet, chaired by the Dean of the FAS (joined, in relevant cases, by the Dean of Engineering or the Medical School), to evaluate cases of promotion and tenure within the FAS. Historically, the term “Divisional Director” was used to refer to the faculty chairs of these advisory committees. Henceforth, we will be using this term in a slightly different way.

Divisional Director Reconceived

FAS faculty should play a central role in FAS strategic planning. The broad structure of the advisory committees is one obvious site where faculty leadership can be enhanced. With this aim in mind, I have asked three faculty colleagues to serve in newly conceptualized roles as Divisional Directors of the Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences. These will be half-time positions that allow them also to continue as regular members of the faculty engaged in research and teaching. These Divisional Directors will take a leadership role in identifying and articulating the intellectual priorities of their divisions, and in working to align resources with these priorities. In most cases, each Divisional Director will also chair the appropriate Advisory Committee.

In the cases of Humanities and Social Sciences, I have asked the current Chairs of the Humanities and Social Sciences Advisory Committees – Amy Hungerford and Alan Gerber respectively – to take on these expanded roles. (As a consequence, Amy will step down as the Master of Morse College at the end of this academic year.) In addition to chairing their respective Advisory Committees, and playing their traditional important role in overseeing cases of tenure and promotion, Amy and Alan will also be involved in the day-to-day workings of the Office of the FAS Dean, making sure that administrative decisions align with intellectual priorities.

The case of the Sciences is more complicated. Conversations with colleagues across Science Hill have made it clear that one widely shared concern is how we can support the crucial interdependencies of scientific discovery across the physical and biological sciences. At the same time, it is important not to diminish the traditional roles of the chairs of the two science Advisory Committees, or to overstate the similarities between the distinct fields that they oversee, particularly in light of the complicated interconnections that characterize science across the university as a whole.

Consultation with a wide range of colleagues suggests the following strategy. We will retain two distinct Advisory and Tenure Appointments and Promotion Committees in the sciences, each chaired by a faculty member who will continue to play all of the roles traditionally played by the (old) Divisional Director (chairing the Advisory Committee and overseeing, in conjunction with the Dean, cases of tenure and promotion), as well as the new role of sitting on the Faculty Resource Committee (FRC). But, in addition, we will have an FAS faculty member whose job it is to think about the FAS sciences as a whole, and to

help guide the FAS leadership in aligning resources with intellectual priorities. This person will hold the title of Divisional Director for the Sciences.

I have asked Scott Miller, current Chair of Chemistry, to serve as Divisional Director for the Sciences, a position he will begin to hold fully in July 2015, following the completion of his current term as department chair. When Scott officially begins in this position next July, he will also take over the position of Chair of the Physical Sciences and Engineering Advisory Committee, replacing Jonathan Ellman, who will then have completed his three-year term in that role. Dan DiMaio will, of course, continue his three-year term as Chair of the Biological Sciences Advisory Committee, chairing the committee in its advisory form, overseeing (in conjunction with the Deans of FAS and the School of Medicine) cases of tenure and promotion, and representing the biological sciences on the Faculty Resource Committee (FRC).

Structuring Faculty Leadership in the FAS

Over time I expect each of these positions to be held by faculty that represent the full range of each of the three broad divisions. And if we discover that this particular configuration does not make sense, we will, of course, rethink it.

For those familiar with the traditional Yale system, the repurposing of terms will take some getting used to. And for those unfamiliar with the traditional Yale system, the entire independent-yet-overlapping structure of the FAS oversight committees is likely to seem confusing. The newly conceptualized and expanded role of Divisional Director aims to draw together this appropriately nuanced and organic structure.

It is my hope that this new role will ensure that faculty are present, effective, and fully informed in the most central decision-making and strategic planning both within and across departments and divisions in ways that will allow us, together, to build an even stronger FAS.

Yours,

Tamar Gendler
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Vincent J. Scully Professor of Philosophy
Professor of Psychology and Cognitive Science

Advisory Committee and Divisional Leadership, 2014-15

- Amy Hungerford: Chair, Humanities Advisory Committee; Divisional Director, Humanities
- Alan Gerber: Chair, Social Sciences Advisory Committee; Divisional Director, Social Sciences
- Dan DiMaio: Chair, Biological Sciences Advisory Committee
- Jonathan Ellman: Chair, Physical Sciences and Engineering Advisory Committee
- Scott Miller: Divisional Director-Designate, Sciences

Advisory Committee and Divisional Leadership, 2015-16

- Amy Hungerford: Chair, Humanities Advisory Committee; Divisional Director, Humanities
- Alan Gerber: Chair, Social Sciences Advisory Committee; Divisional Director, Social Sciences
- Dan DiMaio: Chair, Biological Sciences Advisory Committee
- Scott Miller: Chair, Physical Sciences and Engineering Advisory Committee; Divisional Director, Sciences

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