Minutes of a
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
September 17, 2008

Call to order by Speaker Steven Beer: “I would like to call the meeting of the University Faculty Senate to order, his first meeting of the 2008-2009 academic year. We are awaiting the arrival of a quorum and in the interim I will ask every one to please turn off or silence their cell phone and will remind everyone that there will be no photography or recording. Just a reminder at this point we have a rather full agenda but there are no speakers lined up for the five minute Good and Welfare session, so those five minutes will be allocated to other events of the day.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 14, 2008 SENATE MEETING

Speaker Beer: “Ok, I have been informed that we have a quorum. Thank you all for signing in. Since the first speaker on the agenda is not here yet, we will consider the minutes which were distributed to Senators with the call to the meeting, minutes of the meeting held May 14, 2008. Are there any revisions or corrections? Seeing none I will entertain the motion for acceptance of the minutes. So moved. The minutes are accepted unanimously and I am very pleased that President Skorton is here and I am very honored to introduce the President of Cornell University, Dr. David Skorton.

“Dr. Skorton has approximately forty minutes for remarks and possibly question and answer session.”

2. REMARKS BY AND QUESTIONS FOR PRESIDENT DAVID SKORTON
(Remarks as prepared for Faculty Senate presentation.)

Thank you, Professor Beer. It is a pleasure to be here for this first Faculty Senate meeting of the new academic year.

- I want to congratulate Professor Bill Fry on his election as Dean of the Faculty.
- I also want to thank Professor Charlie Walcott – who recently completed five years of distinguished service – for agreeing to serve as associate dean of faculty this fall while Professor Brad Anton is on sabbatical leave.
- I also thank Charlie for his extraordinary guidance in my first two years at Cornell.
- Finally, I’d like to recognize and thank Prof. David Harris for his extraordinary work as interim provost. David is not treading water – he is moving decisively on many issues and skillfully leading the academic mission.

I have focused in my first two years on becoming familiar and comfortable with the Cornell culture, focusing first on the environment for undergraduate and graduate
students and on meeting alumni throughout the world as part of the initiation of the university-wide campaign.

- I am pleased to report that we have now raised some $2.3 billion toward our goal of $4 billion.
- I have had some 70 departmental and faculty visits during this time, and participated in another two dozen events involving faculty.
- I now intend to redouble my efforts to engage with the faculty throughout the university.
- Guided by Bill Fry, Biddy Martin’s and Charlie Walcott’s earlier advice, and now David Harris’s guidance, I look forward to knowing you better by visiting your departments, labs, and studios; by hosting small lunches with faculty in my office, and by calling together groups on specific issues.
- For example, I met recently in my office with Professors Chris Barrett, Susan McCouch, Rebecca Nelson, Per Pinstrup-Andersen, David Sahn, and Vice Provost and Professor Alice Pell to obtain their good counsel in advance of a meeting at the U.S. State Department on the world food situation. The meeting was convened by Secretary of State Rice and attended by Secretaries Rice and Gates, USAID Administrator Fore, Dr. Nina Fedoroff (Science Advisor to Rice and Fore) and senior colleagues from Energy, Agriculture, State, the World Bank, the Gates Foundation, the International Food Policy Research Institute as well as Pepsico, Land O’Lakes, Monsanto, Nestle and others.
- My theme was the role that university faculty can play in dealing with aspects of the world food crisis.

Also want to congratulate the faculty on another year of distinction. Just a few highlights, from many that could be noted:
Building on the success we had in 2006-07, we had five faculty elected to the distinguished national academies last year:
- Jon Kleinberg, professor of computer science, elected to the National Academy of Engineering.
- Four new members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences:
  o Barbara A. Baird, Horace White Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Biology;
  o John Guckenheimer, professor of mathematics;
  o Carol Krumhansl, professor of psychology;
  o G. Peter Lepage, professor of physics and Harold Tanner Dean of College of Arts and Sciences
- Cornell now has almost 190 current and emeritus faculty members in the national academies.

E.g. Institute for the Social Sciences working on its fourth interdisciplinary theme: “Persistent Poverty and Upward Mobility.”
- Over next three years (2008-2011) will look broadly at why some people remain poor for long periods of time while others manage to advance economically – a global problem, considering that roughly half of the world’s 6+ billion people live on $2 or less a day.
Core team of faculty from across the university, with Chris Barrett, the S.B. & J.G. Ashley Professor of Applied Economics and Management, serving as project leader.

I already have the kickoff lecture, by Chris Barrett, on my calendar for April 22, 2009.

**E.g. The Cornell Population Program, formed last year, ushers in a new era in demographic studies at Cornell.**

- Outstanding population research and graduate training have been accomplished here for years.
- Now, with this new campus-wide program, research will be even more coordinated and interdisciplinary, with opportunities for faculty members and graduate students in related areas to interact, discuss ideas, and generate and analyze data in a cooperative, cross-disciplinary way.
- CPP recently received a hugely significant vote of confidence in the form of a $1.15 million grant from the U.S. National Institutes of Health. The NIH awards one such grant annually to a new program that shows the most promise of becoming a leading population research center.
- This is a real honor – a remarkable acknowledgement of the strength of our faculty, the great promise of our graduate students, and the effective organization of the program.

**E.g. Fourteen Cornell faculty members among those involved in new Institute for Computational Sustainability based at Cornell.**

- Directed by Carla Gomes professor of computing and information science, the institute has just received a $10-million grant from the National Science Foundation.
- Will work to advance computer science in order to study problems in ecology and conservation more effectively – and collaborate closely with the Cornell Center for a Sustainable Future.

**E.g. Robert Morgan, Kappa Alpha Professor of English, poet and novelist, awarded the 2008 Thomas Wolfe Prize from their shared alma mater, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.**

- Among his works – best seller Gap Creek and Boone: A Biography.
- Professor Morgan will be the first speaker at a series of literary lunches that Robin and I are hosting at our home beginning this fall– open to the first 25 people who sign up each time. A chance for groups of people from inside and outside Cornell to interact in a more intimate environment with writers.

When Dean Bill Fry and I talked a few weeks ago, several themes emerged as being of particular interest/concern to members of the faculty. I want to speak to them today – and then leave quite a bit of time for your questions and comments.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE ECONOMY FOR CORNELL:**

Tight economic times are a challenge for all Americans, and also for universities.
Based on the complex and difficult situation in the financial sectors of the American economy, we are projecting lower than average endowment returns for the next 3 years, which will impact the availability of endowment resources to support academic programs, financial aid and other initiatives.

We also face a very tight federal budget, which may further impact resources for NIH, NSF, and other federal sources of research funding.

In addition, parents may be feeling additional economic pressure, which could impact our financial aid budget.

While much of our concern relates to the national economic downturn, we believe that it is critical to maintain academic quality.

Of particular immediate concern are the state budget and its implications for colleges and universities. State budget cuts will lead to budget pressures within the university and this could affect academic programs, facility construction, and perhaps other activities.

Governor Paterson and the State Legislature have completed action on a budget reduction.

We are awaiting final figures from SUNY, but we anticipate that our share of the budgets that come from the state to our contract colleges and extension programs may face a reduction close to $10 million this year alone.

In addition, contracts from state agencies such as the Department of Agriculture and Markets that affect the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Veterinary Medicine will also see reductions. These specific program reductions total approximately $1.6 million.

Please remember the great strength of the Cornell budget, which is based on multiple, diverse revenue streams including tuition, investments, grants and contracts, state funding and philanthropy.

While we consider the best manner of handling any immediate state budget cuts, much of our concern does relate to the national economic downturn as well the direction of the federal research budget, which has been flat and resulted in some reductions.

As stewards of this institution, we have an obligation to continually assess—as Biddy and Carolyn have in years past and as David Harris is doing now—our existing strategies and be prepared to adapt to the very real external factors, such as those that have dominated the news in recent days, which are nevertheless out of our control.

Hence the importance of being open to considering moves that go beyond the immediate issue of state budget cuts and address other matters in a way that positions Cornell more effectively for the long run.

I’ve appointed an ad hoc committee to assess the situation and the appropriate response to it. I just received their report and am reviewing it.

We will look at all the recommendations of this group as an opportunity for self-evaluation to strengthen the long-term health of the university.

Strengthening the long-term financial health of the university and thus our ability to achieve our highest priorities will require consultation, planning, prioritization, cost containment and revenue enhancement.
• I will be guided in specific actions by the deans, senior staff and provost’s staff as we adjust to state budget reductions and the general economic climate of the state and nation.
• And once our direction is set, the usual offices and leaders, the Provost and deans and VPs, will manage the budget as usual.

**We likely have some tough times ahead.**
• I will be honest with you. I will be as transparent as I can be.
• We are trying to figure out exactly how the state and national situation is affecting us.
• We know we have some challenges but we are strong.
• We cannot panic because we need to keep recruiting, and we need to keep bringing in research dollars.
• So we will need your help and counsel in cutting waste and collecting new revenues.
• Unfortunately, I have lots of experience with belt tightening.
• Substance and rhetoric both matter.
• You need to be a part of helping me communicate in the right way to your colleagues. I will trust you and ask you to trust me.

**PLANNING:**
Planning is and should be largely decentralized at Cornell, as at all research universities. Nonetheless coordination, summarization, and communication of plans in and out of the university are critical and must be employed. This is particularly true during a period of relative budget constraints.

The new strategic plan aims to position Cornell as the “exemplary comprehensive research university of the 21st century.”

• Comprises five overarching goals I introduced last fall in my State of the University Address, along with a set of enabling strategies for each goal. Those goals are (in shortened form):
  1. Sustain and renew the exceptional intellectual quality of the university by recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse and talented faculty, staff and student body.
  2. Provide a distinctive education and extracurricular experience in an integrated living-learning environment for the most deserving and talented students; inspire them to be ethical and purposeful citizens.
  3. Enable and encourage the preservation, discovery, transmission and application of knowledge, creativity and critical thought.
  4. Extend our leadership in the use of research and education to serve the public good, in fulfillment of Cornell’s land grant mission, and its longstanding commitment to capacity building in communities in the U.S. and around the world.
  5. Ensure the long-term stability and quality of the institution through careful planning, efficiencies, the appropriate integration of operations across the university, development of new income sources, and increases in private support.

• This last goal indicates the rationale for Cornell to operate in a more coordinated planning environment.
The plan also contains a common-format summary of previously developed strategic goals by the provost and each college and vice-presidential division.

After two years of intense work, a new master plan for the Ithaca campus also has been completed.

- It provides the university with an integrated framework to guide its long-term physical development.
- Driven by academic planning priorities, the master plan provides a set of guidelines for decisions about where to locate the university’s research, teaching, residential and recreational priorities and programs.
- It also offers a campus-wide frame of reference for the university’s current capital plan and links with precinct plan goals and with existing and emerging college facility plans.
- It is motivated by our plans for the future and closely linked to the City and Town of Ithaca, the county and the state, whose relationships have made an impact over time.
- This plan will also ensure that the development of the campus supports a culturally diverse community of faculty, staff and students who require a wide array of housing options, social and cultural programs and recreational opportunities in a healthy, safe and vital Greater Ithaca, while continuing the university’s long history of stewardship.

These plans, along with the 10-year financial plan, the capital development plan, and the provost’s academic plan, will all be reviewed each year to be sure they reflect the concerns of the faculty, staff, and students of Cornell.

TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID: Continues to be an important issue within higher education and at the national level. Maintaining access is one of our highest priorities, as it has been since the founding of the institution.

- In 2009 U.S. News & World Report, Cornell ranked 4th (tied with MIT) among top-ranked national universities in socioeconomic diversity – based on the percentage of our undergraduate students receiving Pell Grants. Within the Ivy League, we ranked 2nd – with only Columbia having a higher percentage of Pell Grant recipients.
- Percentage of Pell grant recipients – relatively stable for past several years; increased by .2 percent for 2007-08.

Last winter Cornell was one of 136 colleges and universities with endowments of $500 million or more asked by the U.S. Senate Finance Committee for detailed information on endowment growth and spending on student aid—responded with a detailed 25-page report.

- Senator Grassley (R-Iowa) and Senator Peter Welsh (D-Vermont) now appear to some extent to be backing away from original proposal to require universities to spend 5 percent of endowment each year, but they have indicated that Congressional interest in this issue will continue after the Presidential election.
- We are intensely involved in national discussion on these issues.
Cornell’s new financial aid policy—announced before the Senate inquiry—will improve greatly the accessibility of a Cornell education by a more strategic use of grants instead of need-based loans as part of our financial aid packages.

- Beginning this year, students from families with annual income less than $60,000, which is near U.S. median family income, will acquire no need-based student loans to attend Cornell.
- For next academic year, the income level below which no need-based student loans will be used will rise to $75,000, and we will index it as needed to be sure that debt is not a consideration for those who aspire to a Cornell education and who fall in the lower half of the socioeconomic spectrum.
- For incomes up to $120,000, we will cap need-based student loans at $3,000 per year, about half of the current average indebtedness of Cornell graduates.

We are funding this augmented financial aid policy by strategic reallocation of resources, by seeking continued and even enhanced philanthropic support of need-based student financial aid, and by carefully increasing the payout from our endowment.

- Of course, we need to walk a very fine line on the use of our precious endowment dollars.
- We need to maintain the growth and stability of the endowment for generations to come and to support faculty aspirations now and in the future.
- At the same time, we need to use the strength of the endowment to help keep our doors open wide for new generations of Cornellians, no matter their economic circumstances.
- Will continue to resist efforts by some in Congress to impose mandatory levels of endowment spending on colleges and universities.

CARBON NEUTRALITY: As you may remember, on February 23, 2007, I signed American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment.

- With strong support from faculty, staff and students—and joining with other U.S. colleges and universities –
- I committed Cornell to achieving climate neutrality, with respect to greenhouse gases, starting with our Ithaca campus, understanding fully the challenges involved and the reality that its achievement will require the development of technology not presently available.

Through efforts that include Cornell’s lake-source cooling system, aggressive transportation mitigation, energy conservation, laboratory energy efficiency programs, and electrical purchases the university has achieved a “net zero” increase in its carbon footprint, (and in fact we have actually reduced out emissions) although the campus has grown more than 15 percent since 1990.

- We currently emit approximately 319,000 metric tons of CO₂ per year – before offsets such as the oxygen produced by Cornell-owned forests.
- When the Combined Heat and Power Project goes online in 2010, the university’s greenhouse gas emissions will drop more than 30 percent below 1990 levels, well beyond Cornell’s own 7 percent goal, set in 2001.

In keeping with the goals of the Presidents Climate Commitment, on September 15th we submitted our first greenhouse gas (GHG) emission report for the Ithaca campus and estimated the commuter and business air travel GHG emissions.
Faculty in Natural Resources have completed an estimate of the absorption of CO$_2$ in the 14,000 acres of mostly forested land owned by Cornell within 20 miles of Ithaca. Using the existing management, those forests offset about 40% of the carbon emitted by faculty and staff commuting to work.

Vice President of Facility Services Kyu Whang and Professor Tim Fahey of Natural Resources co-chair the Presidents Climate Commitment Implementation Committee (PCCIC), which includes faculty, staff and students, and I thank them for their efforts.

- With a $425,000 matching grant from NYSERDA, we are preparing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) – due to be complete in September 2009.
- A Faculty Climate Neutrality Committee is actively engaged in developing the CAP, and exploring teaching and project work in the classroom.

We have more than 300 faculty members who have identified their teaching and research as involved in some aspect of sustainability. Over the summer Cornell Center for a Sustainable Future solicited proposals for its new Academic Venture Fund program.

- The venture fund will support research that advances sustainability locally, regionally and internationally and that shows promise for securing external funding.
- It is designed to connect scholars across disciplines and with external partners, and to fill a gap in research that would not normally be funded by traditional grants because they are too interdisciplinary, undeveloped or high risk.
- Final proposals were due earlier this month – will provide funding for periods of 6 to 24 months, depending on amount of funding requested.
- I’ll keep the campus updated on our efforts to achieve carbon neutrality and maintain a sustainable campus through my column in the Cornell Daily Sun and in other forums.

Let me say once again how grateful I am for all you do for the university through your teaching, research, creative work, professional service and contributions as university citizens.

Thank you for your efforts on Cornell’s behalf. I look forward to our continuing work together. In the time we have left, I’d welcome your questions and comments.”

Speaker Beer: “Thank you very much President Skorton. I would ask the senators and members of the faculty with questions, please stand, state your name and department or other administrative unit affiliation prior to asking the question. Are there any questions for President Skorton?”

John Weiss, Professor, History Department: “I noticed the plan to make financial aid to make students debt free and given that, does that policy apply across to international students?”
President Skorton: “No, it does not apply right now. It’s a very important question, John. We have thought about that. They will correct me if I get this wrong, I think right now the need based financial aid available for all international students went up to $1.5M a year! So it’s very important point that we do not have the same capacity to help international students by any stretch of the imagination as we do domestic students. We looked in, David and Biddy and I and now David and I have been working very hard to increase new funding from outside the university as opposed to reallocation of very precious resources exactly toward that goal reducing a need based indebtedness and we hope to be able tell people about some success in that area within the next six to eight weeks of things we are working on right now. So that’s a very important question that you raise. We don’t do anything here like we hoped and hope to see that number go up very substantially.

Associate Professor Risa Lieberwitz, ILR and At-Large Faculty Senator: “President Skorton, I wonder if you could just describe a little bit more of the ad hoc committee that you talked about with regard to looking into some of the financial issues or about how it was put together and who is on it and then also with whatever reports are made will that be made public?”

President Skorton: “Well, let me start with the report. Once I digest that report, Risa, the senior staff the people who have to make decisions about the budget, especially the provosts - once we digest it, which should happen very, very quickly, of course the end result will be made public and here’s why I put the committee together. And again, I’m glad to take my lumps on this but this is how I decided to do it. I did it based on other experiences I had at higher education having to put together a committee to think about doing things. I wanted the committee to be a combination of people who normally deal with budget cuts from the state so I had Susan Henry on the committee and Ron Seeber. I wanted it to be people who do not normally deal with state budget cuts but are important representatives of decisions have to be made, so Peter Lepage is on the committee. I wanted to have the usual suspects are actually going to have to make decisions so the Vice President for Budget and Planning who works directly to the provosts is on the committee now that has been Carolyn Ainslie and as you know her last day was yesterday. She’s going to become CFO of Princeton and Paul Streeter – he can be described as her deputy was on the committee and then a bevy of the member of vice presidents on the senior staff. Bill Fry who, thanks to Charlie’s and UFC’s discussions with me in the past, we now have the Dean of Faculty having more access to senior staff meetings. He goes to those meetings and he is there for discussion of the way things were set up. I was not going to put rank and file faculty, staff or students on that group, because the decisions are not ultimately going to be made by rank and file faculty. Consultation, of course, will be made by rank and file faculty, staff and students. I wanted the committee to feel empowered and free to put anything in to answer the questions that should be considered and my experience and once again I am glad to take my lumps and be criticized if you think this is the wrong way to do it, I did
not want the committee to be constrained or concerned by people’s reactions to things that are purely conjectural. Let’s think about the different ways we can cut a budget. We can cut a budget by firing people. 62% of our university is personnel. The last university I worked at and led, 72% was personnel. So the first thing, in a human resource intensive organization people talk about when they do budget cuts is about firing people in a large way. In general that’s not an option for the university, not only because of tenure but because of the fact that it quickly makes the university go backwards in quality. But nonetheless I wanted them to talk about what possibilities we have for changing and hiring a structure in a university - you have to do things like that. Another way one can cut the budget is to change how services are delivered. And I wanted them to think broadly how we deliver services on campus and I want to be very open about this. I am constantly surprised at how decentralized Cornell is administratively. Now it’s hard to argue with success – Cornell is hugely successful – it’s the best school I’ve ever been at and so I am in awe of the way things have developed. That doesn’t mean it couldn’t operate more efficiently. It doesn’t mean that there has to be every administrator function, every communication function, every IT function does not necessarily have to be distributed equally throughout all administrative units. I wanted to think, suggest to me what we might look at - one of the things we might look at. If we don’t look at things like that openly and courageously what will happen is that we will slowly but surely stop being as good as we are. We have to maintain money for the core functions of the university. I wanted the group to be able to tell me exactly what they thought. Perhaps the most difficult question is that I wanted them to give me the basis of their wisdom of how much liquidity, how much extra financial capability do we need at the university to be able to prosper in difficult times. How many more faculty will not get their grants funded because the federal side funding is going backward or at best or staying flat. How much will provosts want to spend to make sure that those faculty efforts continue to go forward, money has to come from somewhere. How much can we expect the financial returns on investments to go down? People who do this for a living every day will advise me on that. And finally, how much will we expect, actual cash in our hands, from the enormous philanthropy. Last year again Cornell was in the top ten of all schools in the United States, sixth actually in the amount of philanthropy we receive. Last year in cash we were to report in the Ivy League, in the top half of the Ivy League is very, very, very substantial philanthropy but what can we expect now, the way things are in the sectors that represent some of the livelihoods of the people who helping us with generous gifts and I wanted to do those types of deliberations quickly. They took just seventeen days, something like that, two and half weeks to do it and to be fearless and give me your best thoughts on it and we will get the boiled down version to every body very, very soon. There is no sense me sending out to the faculty and students or staff at large ideas that are rejected that were put in there because I wanted a broad view of what goes on. I will not keep that from you. Remember all the years before when I was at a public setting where you could edit any information you wanted just by the Freedom of Information Act but I wanted them, as I did in Iowa, I
wanted them to be able to really “let their hair down” so to speak and talk about the broad range of things that might have to be done. So you will be hearing from us soon.”

Speaker Beer: We have an additional four minutes of questions and answers session with President Skorton.”

President Skorton: “And you have an unlimited number of minutes that you can write me notes and tell me that I do this wrong or try to come see me if you can get past my handlers other than the three more minutes now that I’ve eaten them up. Anything?”

Assistant Professor Tarleton Gillespie, Department of Communications and Senator-At Large: “We have talked about this a number of times and last year too this question about the funding shrinking and some struggles the faculty are facing about getting financing too. And the junior faculty live in the short term, the one year ‘til tenure, two years, three years, four years – is there going to be a way if you’re faculty are spending more time seeking funding and less expense getting funding that that ... how is that going to be considered in the tenure process subsequently rather than if tenure committee happens to be privy to the fact that it is harder than it was ten years ago? Is there way to reorient our actions or will that be taken into account?”

President Skorton: “In a second the Provost is going to talk to you. I am going to do something else and leave you here all by your lonesome and I defer 100% on academic matters to the Provost but I will tell you what I am doing about it. I am doing two things. I am personally working very hard with the science coalition by direct meetings with heads of the agencies to push hard. Somebody else was at that World Food Crisis Meeting was the head of the World Food Prize which is why I got mixed up just now but also the head of the NSF was there. Also the head of The Fogarty Center at NIH was there. I’ve built up relationships over three decades of doing this kind of work. I work directly with them. Secondly we are using the Trustees and Overseers of the universities to go to their elected representatives and they have even more clout than I do. I am almost zero clout. They see me walk in and they say “let me guess you want more money, less regulation.” But I’m getting help; I’m getting sort of transduciveness of the trustees and overseers so I am doing everything I can on the revenue enhancement side which less of an issue. David has thought about this a lot but it’s crazy for me to tell his words to you. He can tell his words to you. One more quick question?”

Professor Phil Nicholson, Astronomy: “We are hosting a meeting next month with about 750 people coming to campus and one of our goals is to make the conference as Green as possible. Clearly one of the biggest generators of greenhouse gasses is the air travel involved. So there are two questions: (1) When you quote the number of institutions the vast majority associated with campus activity and (2) when you tabulate
the University’s production of CO2, do you account for air travel by the staff and faculty?

President Skorton: “I think that’s right for faculty, staff and employees at the university. I don’t know if it counts as student travel. It definitely counts as employee travel but not guests of the university that you bring to the campus.”

Professor Nicholson: “I have a proposal for the longer term. As there is so much CO2 associated with air travel it seems to me that we need to consider how to reduce the number of times that we are all flying in & out of Ithaca en route to Philadelphia or Europe. Initiatives such as the new inter-campus bus to NYC seem to be moving in the right direction here. Perhaps improved video conferencing facilities might even reduce some European travel.

President Skorton: “Before my time sir, let me not take credit for this. Thank you very much.

3. REMARKS BY AND QUESTIONS FOR INTERIM PROVOST DAVID HARRIS

Provost Harris: “Thanks. It’s a pleasure to be here. Thanks to Bill for inviting me. It’s good to see so many familiar faces out there, people I have known in various capacities. I told President Skorton when he said he was going to leave early, that was good, because I could tell you I didn’t agree with anything he said. The reality, of course, is that it is a really good working relationship. I think we should feel, as faculty members, as I do that it’s wonderful the President puts so much weight on the provosts, consults, well maybe not so much, but consults an awful lot with the Provosts about what needs to happen in the academic part of the university and so it’s extremely important for the university and from a faculty perspective.

“I wanted to hit on four different topics. President Skorton talked about several things that we are working very closely on, such as the state budget and related issues as well as external funding issues and I wanted to hit on four areas that I think you would be interested in and Bill also suggested some things on the list.

“One is the administrative transitions. The second is to talk you very briefly about external funding. Third, where we are with admissions and financial aid, and fourth something about diversity. I want to be sure I leave time for you to ask questions about these areas the areas that President Skorton touched on and anything else.

“First, just to let you know, you will hear later about the provost search and how that’s going. I saw Martha in here somewhere. I saw the agenda. I think that, as interim provost, it is an interesting opportunity. I think it’s important for you to know that I
think this is going to be a period where there is a lot going on, there’s a lot of decisions to be made, but I have very strong working relationships with a range of folk who are involved in these processes, having been vice-provost for three years and deputy provost for one and really it’s a residual that can feel comfortable with what’s being created in terms of the team environment amongst the deans and vice provosts, so building on that. So there’s a lot of transition. It’s hard to keep the score card straight at Day Hall. Biddy has left for Wisconsin, Vice Provost for Diversity and Faculty Development, Bob Harris, stepped down. After eight years in the position, Bob left June 30th and he has been replaced Betta Mannix; she is a professor in the Johnson School of Management. There was a search for a chief diversity officer for Cornell but we were not be able to fill that position. We had an excellent candidate but for a range of reasons one of which was not small was Biddy’s departure. It is very hard to imagine getting someone who is a top candidate who would work very closely with the provost on something like diversity to come when they have no idea who the provost even is going to be. So that was very difficult. We are relaunching the search. We are very excited that Betta agreed to do this. Hopefully you know her. She has tremendous credentials as a scholar and teacher in areas related to diversity.

“Second – International Relations. David Whitman has left; he is the current Dean of the University of Minnesota Law School. David was replaced in that position held originally held by Alice Pell, who many of you already know. She has been around Cornell a while, Professor in Animal Science, Director of CIIFAD and Alice has hit the ground running and we are working very closely on a range of things including campaign related issues.

And the last one in terms of changes and a huge one as David mentioned is Carolyn Ainslie’s leaving Cornell. Yesterday was her last day. She’s on vacation the next two weeks and then she starts at Princeton October 1. Many if not all of you know who Carolyn is, know how important she has been to the function of the university. She has been here for the last 22 years, about a decade in the provost’s office. Paul Streeter, who has tons of experience, is stepping into this role in an interim capacity. As far as a search for Carolyn’s successor, we have made the decision that we will not launch that search until the new provost is identified which I think makes a lot of sense since this person reports to that provost and it would be difficult to hire someone and not know who the provost is, I think we owe it to the next provost to be able to define that position in anyway he or she wishes and so we are going to get the machinery going as much as we can over the next month or so and we are going to wait until the new provost is in to really get going. There are two new deans, Alan Mathios, Human Ecology and Kent Kleinman in Architecture, Art and Planning. There is a lot going on.

External Funding. The only thing I’m going to add to this is the Cornell Population Program (CPP) that President Skorton mentioned has received NIH funding. I just wanted to acknowledge that the Institute for Social Science, which hopefully all of you
know about. This is the first project we funded in the Institute for Social Sciences and when we funded that project they delivered. The thing they said that we would have at the very end was a grant from NIH for the POP Center so it’s really quite exciting having to see our first project bear fruit.

“I am going to use the remainder of my time talking about admissions and financial aid. It’s a really a very important area. If there were no students we wouldn’t have much of a university. I’m not in the classroom anymore but when I was in the classroom as a faculty member I learned it is extremely important to have great students in the classroom. It makes everything worthwhile. It’s a lot of fun to have great students and intellectually curious students and so we’re working very hard to get financial aid to make sure that continues to be the case. This year we met or exceeded our enrollment goals in every undergraduate college. We were a little on the high side which makes people like vice-president Susan Murphy a little nervous. She had eight beds this year, she told me, that if we had nine more kids she didn’t know where she would have had that last person sleep. But I would rather be on the high side than the low side, so that’s good news.

Financial aid and admission. We have a new financial aid plan that you’ve heard about. We’re excited. I am more proud of that than almost anything else I have done at Cornell. It was an incredibly frustrating experience because when Carolyn, Biddy and I sat down and finalized it, we knew we weren’t doing everything we should be doing. We knew we just couldn’t afford to do all we should be doing, that, as important as access is to university it is just not possible. We’ll continue to look at this and work on it.

“When it comes to African American students in the entering class, this is another disturbing story and very frustrating. It turns out, we’ll have official counts after two weeks, but there is less than 140 black students in the entering class. It’s probably a twenty-year low. That is a 20% decline since last year in the number of black students in the entering class. That’s something that I’ve been paying an extremely large amount of attention to and have been, since I think March when I first realized that this was going to happen when we looked at the number of students being admitted. Then we started asking things like what can we do about yield? We’ve been working very hard. We realized we were not able to make it up in yield. I’ve been working very hard with Doris Davis, Associate Provost for undergraduate enrollment and admission. We are trying to figure out what happened and how can we make sure it doesn’t happen again. And, the story here is, and it may not be a surprise to you is there is no smoking gun. There is no single thing that explains it. It’s a range of things that explain it. We are working very hard to get a sense of what those things are and we can talk about it if you want. I am trying to get some sense of how to turn it around.
“Two quick other things. This past spring, Biddy asked me to lead an effort working with Carolyn Ainslie, Susan Murphy, Doris Davis and a couple of others, and we were looking at our own priorities. This was motivated by at least three things. One is this gap between what we need to do to assure access and what we were able to do. The second is the decline in black students and the extreme concern about what we are going to do to turn that around. And third is the increasing pressure from Athletics. As you may know, some of our peer schools in the Ivy League are offering students financial aid packages that are far beyond anything Cornell can do. We are all need-based schools but the definition of need – there is no consistency anymore. There used to be a sense as to what need was and so our peer schools have abandoned that and in fact have given away aids in ways we cannot possibly understand how they can do this in the need based aid. It looks like scholarships, quite frankly in some cases. Cornell is getting a lot of pressure from some folks. We have to match. We have to be top in Ivy League athletics. That means we have to do for these students what some of our other schools are doing and so, prompted by that, we decided that “you know what, let’s take a step back and ask the questions: what are our highest priorities when it comes to enrolling undergraduates? What can we do to attract them? To admit them? To enroll them? And lastly, what changes should we make in what we’re going to do for athletes. What lessons do we learn? What should we be doing for under-represented minorities if both groups are high priorities? Or for looking at what we do, for most groups, what can we learn about what we should be doing to attract the most academically advanced students to Cornell? Those are things we’re working through. It’s one of those funny things that I didn’t know I was going to be sitting in this seat and so I wrote the report for the provost and now I have to deal with it. There’s a lot of things I wished I had known.

Lastly, on admissions and financial aid. You all got a note from me about PeopleSoft and faculty advising. Actually, that is my biggest concern when it comes to PeopleSoft. It’s a big issue but the bigger issue is financial aid for students. This was in the Sun, but I don’t know how many of you people noticed it. Because of PeopleSoft related issues and our inability to prepare for it there are several hundred continuing students at Cornell who have no idea what their financial aid package is for the current year. And this is causing stress. Interestingly and you might realize it too as soon as I say it. The students aren’t all that stressed. Their parents, on the other hand… are watching very closely. The students are saying, “ah, it will all work out.” Parents have told me, “God what am I going to do?” and have actually gotten emails that are heart breaking about parents talking about they’re going to struggle and scrape and they move them back here sophomore year and say, “what am I going to do if the financial aid package comes back and we’re a thousand or more short. So I’m working hard as I possibly can to do everything I possibly can to get them their packages ASAP. Doesn’t mean I’m not paying close attention to PeopleSoft issues that some of you have raised. It’s really important, but my first priority has got to be to get those kids financial aid awards.
Lastly, I would like to mention the Institute for Diversity. I think it is a very positive story and I want to thank the folks on the faculty senate for being involved. This is the program we put in place this past summer. It was the first time we implemented it. Instead of having a university course diversity requirement as some recommended, we drew on the experience from Hamilton College and why not make every course or as many courses as possible, as smart as possible around issues of diversity. That means not only the content but it also means how courses are taught and so the idea was to have students and faculty go offsite for a retreat for three or four days and have a trained facilitator come and look at the syllabus or a portion of it and ask questions like, what can we do to improve this course from the diversity perspective, not preaching to anybody about content issues and changing content? But asking how can we have a course that is more consistent with the students you are teaching. My favorite example is in the social sciences – I’ve been through these courses. There are some economists here, economists who talk about issues in the labor market and says, “well, let’s talk about white men because women are too hard to deal with because they go out of the market because of child-bearing and minorities have such spotty records in the general labor market…” and I say, “whoa, wait a minute – what did you single out all those people when you taught your course around general labor, let’s talk about for a minute about those other folks. It’s too complicated. There’s a lot of long standing issues. There’s a good story here. We’ve had over forty faculty applying – we were able to have twenty faculty there with a range of departments and a range ranks from full professors to assistant professors. We will continue working on this.

“I’ll be glad to answer questions.”

Professor Stein, Physics: I was knocked back in my seat by one remark I must have misunderstood. Is it true that some of our Ivy League peers are giving what used to be called athletic scholarships namely where you give a scholarship to a person for their athletic ability instead out of line with other financial aid?”

David Harris: “Well, what I can tell you is, that we are not and point two is that we cannot figure out the others are doing it. The coaches come to us and I feel for them. We are very focused on equity issues at Cornell. And they are focused on that but they’re also saying “I’ve got to think about these other schools and I have to go play hockey and football and basketball against those schools and be able to compete” and so they are coming to us with letters that these kids have from schools – you fill in the blanks – and they’re saying “why can’t you match it?” and I’m sitting down with Doris Davis and umpteen others and they’re saying there is no way we can justify this on the basis of need. Those are two facts.
Professor Stein: Ok, but it would seem to me that the appropriate thing to do is to bring this up with the other institutions that also swears as much as you do that they don’t give out athletic scholarships.

David Harris: That’s been done. And their comment is “well, you know, need is something that is difficult to define.” How much can one pay for college? And you know, they say we are actually not doing this just for athletes, we’re doing it for everybody. And so, we’ve got enough money and you don’t, and that’s your problem and that’s the sort of subtext. They don’t explicitly say that but I’m not that far off.”

Professor Stein: Need is what you need to get them to come, right?”

David Harris: “There you go! Need is what you need to get your goals.” Thank you!

Speaker Beer: Now I call on the acting associate dean of the faculty, Charlie Walcott for a report from the Nominations and Elections Committee.

4. REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Charles Walcott, Acting Associate Dean and Secretary of the Faculty: Well as a substitute Brad Anton allow me to present the report (Appendix 1) of the Nominations and Elections Committee. It’s reasonably straightforward. You’ve had it all sent to you in the mail so let’s just go through this. Next. Next. Next. Next. Next. Next. Now, here’s one that I need to spend a moment talking about. University Faculty Committee is, as you well know, the Executive Committee of this body and normally those on the UFC are elected at large from this body. One of UFC members, Kathryn March has had the audacity to go on sabbatical leave this year and it was necessary to replace her. It turns out she was the only person from the humanities in Arts and Sciences and so the Nominations and Elections recommended Jonathan Culler as a one year substitute. Jonathan Culler is not a member of this body. On the other hand there was a recommendation from the Committee of Faculty Governance that recommended that a certain percentage of the UFC be elected at large from the faculty not being constrained by not being a member of this body so we’re aiming in that general direction and we will have that brought up to you for discussion at a future meeting but I am asking you to approve this exception to our general rule.
Academic Programs & Policies
Thomas Cleland, A&S
Michael Walter, CALS

Educational Policy Committee
Bruce Levitt, A&S

Faculty Advisory Board on Information Technologies
Janis Dickinson, CALS

Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics & Physical Education
Susan Ashdown, CHE
Bill Brown, A&S
Jim Maas, A&S

FACTA
Tove Hammer, ILR
Molly Hite, A&S

Faculty Committee on Program Review
Ynte Schukken, Vet.

Financial Policies Committee
Donald Smith, Vet.

Institutional Biosafety Committee
Andrea Quaroni, Vet.
Christine Smart, CALS

Institutional Review Board for Human Participants
Gary Evans, CHE

Local Advisory Council
Charles Aquadro, A&S
David Caughey, Engr.
Brian Crane, A&S
John Hopcroft, Engr.
John Schimenti, Vet.
Stephen Wicker, Engr.
Martin Wiedmann, CALS

Professor-at-Large Selection Committee
Shelley Feldman, CALS
Graeme Bailey, Engr.

Sexual Harassment Co-Investigators
Risa Lieberwitz, ILR
James Liebherr, CALS
Jery Stedinger, Engr.

**University Conflicts Committee**
Dorothy Ainsworth, Vet.
James Gossett, Engr.
Ann Lemley, CHE
Michael Spencer, Engr.

**University Faculty Committee**
Jonathan Culler, A&S

**University Faculty Library Board**
Jenny Mann, A&S
Kim Haines-Eitzen, A&S

**University Lectures Committee**
Jerrold Meinwald, A&S
Dong Lai, A&S

**University-ROTC Relationships Committee**
Sherry Martin, A&S

**ASSEMBLIES**

**University Assembly**
James Blair, ROTC
Elizabeth Sanders, A&S

“That’s my report”.

Speaker Beer: Thank you very much, Dean Walcott. It is appropriate to accept and approve the report of the Nominations and Elections Committee. (Approval moved.) Is there any objection to accepting the report?

“The report is accepted unanimously. Thank you. Now, I am very pleased to call the Dean of Faculty, Professor William Fry, a good friend and colleague.”

5. **REMARKS BY DEAN OF FACULTY**

Dean of Faculty, William Fry: “Thank you Steve. “It is a real pleasure to be here. I first want to start off by saying, as part of the austere budget measures for the university, we do not have refreshments. But that’s not quite right. There was just some mix-up and the food didn’t get delivered.”
“What I would like to do today is to just describe to you the first ten weeks I’ve been on the job. It is a steep learning curve. I would like to share with you some of my impressions from those first ten weeks and identify some issues for the Senate. And I will be glad to answer any questions. But first I would like to make some introductory comments and I want to say publicly it’s an honor to serve as the Dean of Faculty. The previous deans have been exceptional and I have tremendous respect for them, especially since I’ve seen personally what they have done. I do take this responsibility very seriously and I’ll do the best job I can.

And second I want to say how much I appreciated the accomplishments of the former deans, Walter Lynn, Peter Stein, Bob Cooke and Charlie Walcott. I’ve had a chance to meet with each of them and learn quite a lot. I have learned the most from Charlie since I’ve had more contact with him. As David Skorton identified, there were a lot of things that Charlie did that were not visible to the rest of us. I know quite a bit about that and I think it’s fair to say that he’s improved the situation of the University Faculty quite considerably as a result. So Charlie, I can’t thank you enough. We all owe you a debt of gratitude.

“And I’ll just say a little about my experience at Cornell. I’ve been here longer than David Skorton - I started about thirty-seven years ago on the faculty. My first academic job was at Central Connecticut State College. My PhD is from Cornell so I get all those solicitations like many of you do.

I was Chair of my department for quite some time and I’ve been on a lot of university faculty committees and I was a faculty trustee from 1998 to 2002. I was on the president’s search committee that identified Jeff Lehman as the president and most recently I was senior associate Dean in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Last year I was sabbatical leave in South Africa where I made some discoveries in the lab. I understand the Dean of Faculty position is a part-time job so like you, I have graduate students, I teach an undergraduate course, Introduction to Plant Pathology on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and labs on Tuesday and Wednesday. I also attempt to do research. I have a very small research group now. If you count all the people in my lab, the full time people, the part time people, and the volunteers, they total eight bodies in the lab and like you just heard, I’ve been writing grant proposals and I am with the majority, I get rejected most of the time. I submitted five, but have only received funding for one this year.

“So let me turn to my first seventy days, first ten weeks, as dean of faculty and let you know what I’ve been doing. I’ve met with a lot of people. I’ve met with each member of UFC individually and as a group a number of times. I don’t know if they are re all here but I would like to identify the UFC members – Rod Dietert from Vet, Kathy Gleason from Ag and Life Sciences, Fred Gouldin from Engineering, Howard Howland from Arts & Sciences, Ellis Loew from Vet, Dennis Miller from Ag & Life Sciences,
Vicki Meyers-Wallen from Vet and Tim Mount Ag and Life Sciences. I’ve met with members of the faculty, I’ve met with Pete Meinig, chair of the Board of Trustees. I meet with David Skorton and David Harris and as President Skorton said I have attended a couple of the senior staff meetings. During these discussions I have a series of impressions and I’d like to share a few of them.

“The one impression is that everyone in the university, the faculty, administration, the trustees feel the need for a strong and effective faculty governance. I think we all have the same goals and the differences might be in how we get there or how we’ll arrive. I think we’re going to roughly the same place. I think the solutions will appear.

“And finally in discussions I’ve had with the faculty, it’s clear the faculty in this place want to make valuable contributions to the mission of the university. We do that through teaching, research and outreach, but we also do that by playing a role in the decisions that the university comes to and again I think the faculty particularly want some sort of definition of what that role is. I think it’s a bit cumbersome. Some things clearly are in the purview of the faculty. And I think honoring those views is important. Other topics are not started by the faculty, but as David said he wants to be consultative. It is my philosophy that we should consult even if we don’t vote or we don’t approve or disapprove of a particular issue. I think there is tremendous education and benefit that can come from a give and take dialogue concerning those issues and it my hope that we will have some of those issues this year and we will have a respectful type dialogue with a lot of people.

There are several issues and I think David mentioned some of those. One is the university finances. My hope is that we will look at the university budge. Certainly the faculty doesn’t decide the university budget, but it might ask questions that might help. One is to look at the capital campaign. I think David also mentioned the master plan, capital construction. Another important issue will be graduate student tuition.

“We as senators all have a responsibility in this dialogue and I just want to remind everybody that this is a two way street. You need to consult with your constituencies and bring issues back to the senate. There are three ways to get items on the agenda. One is through the University Faculty Committee - any four members of the Faculty Senate can put an item on the agenda. Or any twenty-five members of the university can put items on the agenda.

“I wanted to identify three general topics that I think we need to address and one is to continue dialogue with the university administration on the general directions of the university and I think David gave suitable examples of that kind of dialogue. Also as Charlie mentioned, the Senate received a report from the Governance Committee in March 2007 and one of their recommendations was to change the composition of UFC. We will be discussing this further.
“Another one of the recommendations is for the president and provost to be more consultative with the senate. I think the Senate can ask, we can’t force them. But my impression is that President Skorton wants to be consultative.

“A specific issue that is facing the faculty at the start of this year is that we are making a change in the academic calendar. The reason for that change is that the people involved with orientation say they need at least one fewer days and therefore suggesting that the fall semester start on a Wednesday rather than on Thursday. This is an issue that the Educational Policy Committee will look at and then it will come to the faculty. I will conclude and take your questions.”

Speaker Beer: “We’ll take two minutes for questions.”

Professor Eric Cheyfitz, English and Director of the American Indian Program: “I was also on the Governance Committee that wrote that report and I wondered if there is a specific agenda since we made more than two recommendations and our consultative recommendations were more specific than just general rapport with the upper administration. Are other recommendations that were made in the report going to be addressed specifically?”

Dean Fry: “Yes, the recommendation was that the University Faculty Committee initiate consideration so that will happen and there were some very specific recommendations. For example, it was recommended that the membership of the UFC be broadened. That hasn’t happened yet. This is a process that will continue.

Professor Cheyfitz: “There were also recommendations that had ways the provostial and presidential searches would be conducted and they were very concrete.”

Dean Fry: “Yes, so that’s a great example. The recommendation was that faculty be added to the presidential and the provost searches and that happened and without forcing it. David Skorton met with the UFC and said, “I’d like to do an internal search, here’s the criteria we have. And the UFC – there was dialogue and consultation on that. And UFC suggested the mix of faculty representation wasn’t quite right and there were too few faculty on the search committee and he adopted both of those recommendations, increased the number of faculty and adjusted the membership.”

Speaker Beer: “Thanks very much, Dean Fry and leads to the next item on the agenda, which is an update on a very important search for provost and for that we have the Chair of the Provost Search Committee, Professor Martha Haynes.”

6. UPDATE ON PROVOST SEARCH
Professor Martha Haynes, Astronomy and Chair of Provost Search Committee: “Thank you. I was just in search committee meeting and that’s why I was late. So, I had a very nice lead in and learned a bit about the search committee that I didn’t know. I’m sure you’re all aware of the search committee because we tried to make our activities public. There are ten people on the committee - four of them are faculty members, representatives of the university administration, from the graduate student assembly, the undergraduate student assembly and the staff assembly and so it’s a very diverse committee. We, as was stipulated by Dean Skorton when he first called me, it’s an internal search it is a confidential search. So I will tell you a little about what we’ve done and where we are now and I will answer not answer questions that I do not feel I should answer. When we were called upon, David explained that it would be an internal search as is Cornell tradition and one of the things we were concerned about was how the process would reach out to find people who are obvious candidates as well people were not obvious candidates, especially when you have a search committee as diverse as ours. And so we spent the summer time trying to develop a process with which we could receive nominations and perhaps you are all familiar with that. At least I hope you are. We have developed a website where people can submit nominations and we had a period of two and half weeks where we went into the community, the entire community of Cornell, including the medical college and our friends in Qatar. What was actually gratifying with this is that we received a lot of nominations. Some of course were the same individuals but they came from all over campus and we even received nominations from alumni. Because we set clear boundary conditions that the person had to currently be a faculty member at the rank of professor, that’s the kind of nomination we got. We also developed with the help of the people in the President’s office and provost’s office a description of the job and the qualifications that seem to be important for the job and one of the things that has been very important is that people took a lot of time on their nominations. They were very thoughtful. When people nominated someone they explained their nomination and some of that was extremely useful to the committee.

“When we first set up the process our understanding was we would have a target date of trying to get to the position where we would write our report, which is deliver a list of individuals to David Skorton whom we believe were qualified to be provost at Cornell University. It’s not a short list that we ranked. It’s a list we hoped that David Skorton would choose from, the decision being his in the end. Our target date to do that was short, such that he could potentially announce the individual at Trustee Weekend in October. I can say that we are working towards that schedule. I am glad my life isn’t at stake at that end result but we are trying to adhere to that schedule because we all realize the importance of keeping to that schedule. The committee has been working very hard to identify candidates and to come up with a criteria by which we can evaluate them and provide David Skorton the information that he needs to make the final decision. I think that’s all I have to say except to say that the committee
is definitely heavily engaged and working very hard and was helped enormously by the time individuals on campus took to write nominations.”

Speaker Beer: Thank you very much. Are you willing to consider questions?”

Professor Haynes: “I am willing to consider questions, just understand that this is confidential process.”

Assistant Professor Shawkat Toorawa, Near Eastern Studies: If the calendar is met, when does the provost take office?”

Professor Haynes: “My understanding from David is that he would like the provost to be in place by the end of the year.”

Professor Toorawa: “The calendar year?”

Professor Haynes: “Yes, but David Harris can probably answer the question better.”

David Harris: “I want the provost to be in place by the end of the calendar year.”

Speaker Beer: “If there are no further questions, thank you very much. The senate has accomplished its business with five minutes to spare and so it would appropriate to make a motion for adjournment.

Adjournment 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Walcott
Acting Associate Dean and Secretary of the Faculty