

TO: Faculty and Students
FROM: Marty Wyngaarden Krauss
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
RE: Announcements
DATE: March 21, 2005

Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning

At the special faculty meeting held on March 3, Dean Jaffe gave a report on his intentions for the continuation of discussions and planning activities related to the Arts and Sciences strategic plan, in light of the Advisory Report of the Faculty Review Committee and the comments posted by the Brandeis community.

I want to weigh in as Provost regarding Adam's report. I concur with his decisions to work with the Department of Classical Studies to continue to offer instruction in Greek language and literature, to continue the ongoing work by a group of faculty now exploring new options for an interdepartmental program in Linguistics, and to continue the discussions with the Music Department regarding the undergraduate curriculum and the graduate program in music composition and theory.

As I said at the special faculty meeting on March 3, strategic planning within Arts and Sciences, now and in the future, is necessary to ensure the best use of our precious resources. Planning is an ongoing process that takes time; planning must involve the careful thought of the administration, the faculty (especially the elected standing committees) and the students. I very much appreciate and respect the dedicated work that many individuals and groups continue to give to this process.

I also want to acknowledge that we've all felt many different levels of stress over the past several months. It's been a challenging time for the academy, but we now have a better sense of shared fundamental values and principles. We are a liberal arts university that provides a great breadth of curriculum, especially given our size. We are committed to the traditions of a liberal arts education and to providing an education that prepares our students for the 21st century, including innovative programs that explore the cultural, social, and intellectual dimensions of various professions. We need continually to assess the curriculum in light of our shared values as a liberal arts institution and as a modern university that educates an intellectually curious and civic-minded community of students.

University Integrated Planning

As you know, the University has been engaged in an intense effort of Integrated Planning for the last year and a half. This mandate from President Reinharz is prompted by the recognition that we are a much healthier and more stable institution now than any time in Brandeis' history. We will have more resources to allocate in the future. Our task is to determine the best stewardship of those resources.

On December 16, a special faculty meeting was held to discuss various aspects of the integrated planning process. At that time, it was difficult for the faculty to focus on the integrated planning process because of the many concerns voiced about the Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan.

We need now to return to considerations of Integrated Planning. To this end, an interim report on the status of our integrated planning activities has been written by members of the senior

administration, and issued by President Reinharz initially as a report to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. This report is now available to the campus community, and can be found on the integrated planning website (<http://www.brandeis.edu/president/integrated>). I urge you to read it. It is now being distributed to the entire Board of Trustees as well as to the campus community.

Re-accreditation Update

On March 15, a kick-off meeting for the re-accreditation process was held. Over 40 faculty and staff who have “volunteered” to participate on 11 different committees assembled for the production of the self study were present, as were President Reinharz, EVP/CFO Peter French, Senior Vice President Jean Eddy, Dean Jaffe, myself, and other involved administrators. A website has been created where documents and information related to how we are managing the self-study process can be found (<http://www.brandeis.edu/NEASC>).

This is an enormous effort for the entire University community, and many of you will be called upon to participate. Over the next 18 months, we will be doing the hard work required to produce a comprehensive self-study of Brandeis that will form the basis for the re-accreditation activities. This is an opportunity to understand better how we do what we do, why we do it the way we do, and how we could improve ourselves for the future.

Report from the Contract Faculty Committee

The Contract Faculty Committee, chaired by Prof. Mick Watson (PSYCH) issued its report on March 17 and it has been posted on the Provost’s website (http://www.brandeis.edu/provost/contract_faculty_comm.html). This committee was formed last spring, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, to examine important considerations and practices with respect to valued faculty members who serve the university on contracts, rather than through the tenure system.

This hard-working committee deserves our thanks for their many hours of inquiry, analysis, and deliberations. Their report is a strong one—and I urge you to read it in its entirety with care. They make many recommendations that deserve your attention and consideration. We will discuss this report at the April 21 faculty meeting.

Let me note that many universities have conducted similar studies of the role and status of contract faculty—this is a national issue in higher education and one that warrants our collective attention. The Committee’s analysis focused on faculty who have a continuing relationship with the university—as distinct from adjunct faculty who may be hired to teach an occasional course. These faculty are a critical part of Brandeis, part of the enduring instructional and research enterprise of the University. It behooves all of us to take this opportunity to rethink the ways in which we treat, compensate, reward, and nurture our colleagues whose dedication to the university is evident daily in their interactions with students, their relationships with the faculty, and their service to the mission of Brandeis.