



University of Denver FACULTY FORUM

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A word from the senate president

Leon Giles
Reiman School of Finance

I am sure all of us share the sense of excitement and regeneration that accompanies our return to campus at the beginning of each academic year. This has been particularly true over the past several years as we have enjoyed the excitement and benefits from dedicating and using a series of new academic and athletic-recreation facilities, and from fostering initiatives to improve the rigor and scope of academic programs. Much has been accomplished, but even more remains to be done. As we move forward, what we do and how we do it (individually and collectively) will determine the character of the University and how it is viewed academically by the communities in which a reputation for excellence and quality matters. Regionally, the reputation of DU, its faculty and its academic programs are strong. Nationally, however, although progress has been made, the picture is less clear and is uneven. There is little doubt that we all share a commitment to quality in everything we do, and to its continuous improvement. As we begin this new year, let us not be willing to settle for anything less than the very best, and to conduct our affairs to assure that all are held responsible and accountable for pursuing the often arduous path of continuous improvement.

Bridges to the Future, the Public Good, and Institutional Identity

Dean Saitta

Anthropology

This year's Bridges to the Future project is an opening salvo in the University's effort to realize its vision of creating "A Great Private University Dedicated to the Public Good". Gala events and high profile speakers will attract the general public to campus throughout the academic year to discuss American history and values after September 11. At the same time, individual faculty have been invited to open their

classrooms to our fellow citizens, and to offer mini-courses and seminars free of charge within the initiative's "Public Curriculum" aspect. Individual units of the University are free to piggy-back on the Bridges initiative in whatever other ways they feel are appropriate.

The University community committed itself to serving the Public Good during last year's University Planning Advisory Council (UPAC) deliberations. UPAC is a group of faculty, staff, students, and administrators who serve at the pleasure of the Provost to keep the University on track in realizing its mission and goals. UPAC established a Public Good Task Force, co-chaired by myself, Carol Farnsworth, and Tilden Lemelle, to brainstorm about what serving the Public Good means, and about the kinds of institutional and individual activities that could be supported under the rubric of Public Good work. Several Task Force members have been actively involved in coordinating Bridges to the Future events and planning delivery of the Public Curriculum.

Thus, with Bridges to the Future the central ambition of the University's re-designed Mission and Goals is being aggressively advanced. The approach is experimental. Bridges to the Future represents just one kind of institutional commitment to serving the Public Good. It remains to be seen whether projects like Bridges will be a regular part of our future. It also remains to be seen how the University will further define its commitment to the Public Good, and what faculty and staff rewards for doing Public Good work will look like.

ADDRESS:

Our task force is engaged in a continuing discussion about these issues. What is the Public Good? What “Public” are we talking about? How do we achieve community consensus on the definition of Public Good so as to avoid a diffuse, scattershot approach? Should the scale of involvement be local, regional, national, international, or some combination? Should we focus on general problems that are broadly experienced, specific problems of particular places, or both? How many, and what kinds, of discrete outreach initiatives should we cultivate at the institutional level?

Concerned to avoid rigid norm-setting, our task force is sympathetic to a very general and open-ended definition that allows individuals to interpret the Public Good in their own way. But some of us are also keen on a more activist definition that makes an explicit commitment to the cause of social justice, and to structural change that can remedy the various social inequalities that bedevil our communities. All of us are concerned to avoid paternalism, and to emphasize the importance of community partnership. Thus, we are currently defining Public Good work as *work that builds a community’s capacity for cooperative action and transformative change*. This definition can accommodate a broad spectrum of activities, from service learning to social justice work. These activities can result in structural change, or simply a variety of personal epiphanies and life enrichments that often come with an individual’s engagement in meaningful civic work. Both kinds of results have value.

The task force does not anticipate new requirements for faculty and staff to engage in public outreach of any particular sort. Many of us who engage in public outreach do so as a labor of love. We want to better identify these kindred spirits on campus, and whether there is a unifying theme that organizes their work. Our interest is in legitimizing activities that up to now have not been explicitly acknowledged or rewarded at tenure, promotion, and merit raise time. Such legitimation may be especially important for younger faculty and staff, as these colleagues are often the most enthusiastic about turning their scholarship and pedagogy toward public outreach. As part of our legitimizing effort we hope to create new outreach opportunities and new forms of support for the publicly-engaged scholar and staff person.

This concern to link what we do in the Academy to the Public Good seems uniquely compatible with, and indeed a perfect match for, the character of our University. The Public Good ambition may, in fact, contain a solution to DU’s chronic identity crisis. There continue to be many lamentations around campus about what we are not rather than affirmations of what we are, or can be. “Ivy Envy” is still routinely expressed at faculty meetings where institutional direction and resource allocation are at issue. Having spent my undergraduate and graduate years at institutions that wanted to either be Harvard (Wake Forest University) or that labored in the shadow of Harvard (University of Massachusetts), I find the comparisons uninteresting and potentially debilitating—*unless* they are employed to show the current strategic advantages that an institution like DU has over *both* the Publics and the Ivies (e.g.,

political autonomy, minimal historical inertia, maximum flexibility to experiment). This is something I believe the Chancellor successfully accomplished at a recent meeting of Social Sciences faculty.

UPAC has spent considerable time discussing DU’s identity and niche. The University’s revised Vision, Values, Mission, and Goals reflect a new consensus about the combination of features that make us unique. We have a relatively small liberal arts center surrounded by a constellation of professional schools. We have a desirable location in both geographical (the nexus of Mountain, Plain, and Plateau) and public policy (Urbanizing/Suburbanizing West) space. As our new Mission statement indicates, we are uniquely equipped to engage “diverse local and global communities” and foster “productive synergies between...theoretical knowledge and professional practice”. With the new focus on funding programming through the Marsico and Cherrington Global Scholars initiatives, and with grass roots faculty efforts to establish new programs that integrate liberal and professional learning (such as the Urban Studies undergraduate minor connecting faculty in the Arts, Sciences, and College of Education) there are new opportunities to strengthen the liberal arts center, its linkages with the professional schools, and the connection of both to wider publics and issues of public concern. I doubt that there are many other colleges and universities as well-positioned as us to realize this particular institutional vision.

New calls at the national level for development of a “pragmatic liberal education” suggest that DU is already poised to be a leader on the next wave of higher education reform. While national trend may not be the best reason for going down that road, there’s certainly something here upon which to trade if we’re genuinely interested in answering the lingering questions about institutional direction and identity. For some of us, the direction feels good and promises new opportunities to give voice to the dormant public intellectual that lies within. There are many ways to participate in this trajectory that require neither the abandonment of academic first principles, nor the mortgaging of psyche or soul. The Public Good Task Force is working on a plan to host, in the months ahead, campus-wide conversations about the issues at stake.

A Call for Faculty Input - Marsico Initiative

**George Potts
Psychology**

The goal of the Marsico initiative is to enhance undergraduate education in Arts and Sciences. Faculty have long argued that more resources should be targeted to directly enhance the academic life of the University. The Marsico gift is an important first step in that direction. We must make the most of it.

Last spring the Arts and Sciences faculty elected a faculty steering committee to oversee the development of programs to be funded by this gift. The committee met over the summer to identify those aspects of the undergraduate experience that we felt needed enhancement and to discuss procedures for soliciting broad-based faculty and student input into this process. An overarching goal was to improve the

overall intellectual climate at DU. Though the areas identified by the committee should not be considered complete and will be revised based on continuing faculty input, the committee felt that the curriculum could benefit significantly from improvements in three areas:

- Developing and refining basic skills such as writing and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Enhancing the first year experience by offering academically rigorous small-enrollment courses to students in their first year.
- Establishing programs that would enable all undergraduates in the Arts and Sciences to explore their areas in greater depth and to apply this knowledge to address real-world problems.

Achieving any significant improvement in undergraduate Arts and Sciences education will require the full participation and support of faculty in the Arts and Sciences. To that end, we have engaged in a wide variety of activities to invite and encourage faculty input in this process. At the beginning of the term, we sent an Email to faculty describing our actions and inviting their comments and proposals. We also established a “Marsico Steering Committee” Blackboard site on which we post the minutes of our meetings, proposals we have received, and other relevant information. Faculties were invited to register on this site to monitor our discussions. Steering Committee members have been meeting with department Chairs, departments, and divisions to encourage open discussions regarding the initiative. We also established a student advisory committee to advise us of the student perspective on these issues.

To facilitate the processing of ideas and proposals from faculty, the Steering Committee established five subcommittees (“cells”). One cell is focusing on writing across the curriculum, one on numeracy across the curriculum, one on the First-year Experience, one on Experiential Learning, and one on Intellectual Depth. As we discussed these initiatives, it became clear that we will need to provide support for faculty to implement these programs. To explore ways of doing this, we have recently established a sixth cell that will focus on Faculty Enrichment.

We are in the process of refining the procedures for submitting and processing proposals from faculty. A request for proposals in specific areas will be issued shortly, with a proposal submission deadline in January. Though we may fund some specific proposals, we may also combine proposals in various ways to develop a stronger programmatic emphasis. At this point, we do not want to constrain the content of proposals and will entertain any creative idea. Proposals do not need to fall within the bounds of one of the cells listed above. There are a few administrative constraints, however. Though the University may decide to continue to fund certain projects beyond the 5-year period of the Marsico grant, continued funding should not be assumed. Thus, Marsico money cannot be used in any way that alters the base budget of a unit (e.g., it cannot be used to establish tenure line positions or enhance departmental S & E budgets). Marsico money also cannot be used to fund scholarships or endowments. Finally, the Marsico initiative should not be viewed as a mechanism for bypassing existing University approval processes for such things as

courses or majors; any such program must go through the normal approval process.

We hope all faculty will participate actively in our efforts to enhance undergraduate education in the Arts and Sciences. We invite your comments and suggestions on any aspect of this initiative.

The Committee for the Marsico:

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FACULTY SENATE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

The Faculty Senate Personnel Committee has arranged two subcommittees, one to consider sabbatical applications, the second to consider the university awards which are the purview of the Senate. We have discussed the University’s proposal to eliminate (leaving only the current information on “my-web”) the monthly paper salary notification for faculty (and staff) who receive their salary by means of direct deposit. The result of those discussions was considerable unhappiness with total elimination of the paper notice and suggestion that there might be a compromise in which we were offered an option. I guess if the option does not work out, we could always all go back to requesting regular checks and not using the direct deposit procedure.

Don Stedman

THE CHERRINGTON GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM FOR STUDY ABROAD

**Eric Gould
English**

Starting in Fall of 2004, the University of Denver will introduce the Cherrington Global Scholars Program, open to all juniors and seniors with a DU GPA of 3.0 or above. The CGS Program will offer a significant number of students the chance to study abroad in a DU-sponsored program for one quarter (or semester) at no additional charge, relative to the normal cost of studying on the DU campus. That is, DU tuition and DU room and board payments by students will be credited to the study abroad experience. In addition, the university will pay the student’s (reasonable) airfare overseas. In 2004, the priority entitlement will be for juniors, then seniors, and finally sophomores.

This is a unique program for undergraduates and one that has already been warmly received by parents and students alike. As Cherrington Global Scholars, students will have the opportunity to choose from a growing list of DU study abroad sites, most of them universities that have signed special

agreements with the University of Denver. At least 30 overseas university and other sites are projected. In addition, multilateral exchange programs add more than 100 universities in approximately 37 countries. A frequently-updated list of DU sites is available on-line at www.du.edu/globalscholars.

PASS Scholarship: From now until 2004, the PASS scholarship program is available to provide support for students to study abroad. Details available on-line and from the Study Abroad Office. Since we already have many of the overseas university sites available now, do encourage your students who qualify to study abroad before 2004 to consult with the Study Abroad Office.

The purpose of the CGS program is to give students an opportunity to enhance their DU education by interacting with people of other cultures who often have different perspectives, expectations, and priorities. One of the major goals of the University's mission is to "develop global perspectives and connections by substantially expanding student and faculty experiences abroad." And these global perspectives, it is hoped, will be integrated into students' work in the majors and into their liberal education at DU. The CGS program is not simply about study *abroad*, but *study* abroad and it is the university's intention to make this a first-rate academic as well as cultural learning experience.

The Faculty Board for the Cherrington Global Scholars Program has been appointed by the Provost, working with the Faculty Senate, to ensure that faculty retain oversight of the academic and curricular implications of the program: the preparation and orientation of students for study overseas, the choice of overseas sites, integration of overseas coursework into DU study, academic advising, assessment of learning and site quality, and so on. The committee meets regularly throughout the year (currently every other week) and is preparing materials we hope will be of use to both faculty and students. We are meeting with departments and the various faculties. And we invite you all to send us any of your questions or concerns, along with any advice and ideas that will ensure that this wonderful opportunity for our students will become a success in 2004. Our job is to work with faculty and also to work closely with and support the Director of Study Abroad Office, Carol Fairweather and the administrative Director of the CGS program, George Boyd, both from the Office of Internationalization. They are also members of the CGS Board, which otherwise has faculty representation from all undergraduate divisions/schools. If you wish to be in touch, contact any of the Board members listed below or e-mail the chair, Eric Gould, at egould@du.edu. In the meantime, many thanks for your cooperation.

CHERRINGTON GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM:

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A Letter to the Senate

Dear Colleagues:
 While helping my son, a high school senior, with his college search I've had occasion to compare notes with friends working at other (very DU-like) universities who are doing much the same thing. For these colleagues and their kids, the college search begins with the institutions with which their universities have a tuition-waiver exchange program. When I called DU's Human Resources Department a couple weeks ago, I was surprised to learn that the University of Denver has no such program. I am writing to encourage the DU Faculty Senate and central administration to establish a tuition-waiver exchange program for faculty and staff. It is much too late in the game to develop a policy that would help my son, but there are many faculty and staff with younger children who would benefit enormously from a well-conceived tuition exchange program. This kind of program, particularly if it comprised one element of a more generous benefit package, would help DU attract and retain the very best faculty and staff.

Paul Colomy
 Sociology

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