

Report & Recommendations from the Blue Book Commission

February 2008

This "Report and Recommendations from the Blue Book Commission" has been prepared for distribution to core faculty at the non-residential campuses and to the University Leadership Council. The report has four parts:

- I. Overview of the BBC vision
- II. Summary of the major results of the BBC survey
- III. Specific actionable recommendations 2008-09
- IV. Next steps

I. Overview of the BBC

We present this "Report & Recommendations from the Blue Book Commission" in the midst of a question none of us thought would be asked: What is Antioch University without Antioch College? This is not necessarily the frame wanted but it is the one we have. In many ways, the current crisis presents us with the opportunity to think about the University of the future, and specific to the BBC mandate, the faculty of the 21st century Antioch University. The specific recommendations below are proposed as initial steps within the context and vision of creating and nurturing an Antioch University with a new compact between faculty and the institution; a robust academic environment built on our best traditions; a strong, collaborative and supportive academic integrative center; security and growth for faculty and improved faculty work-life; and, high expectations for engagement in scholarship, student learning, service and institutional citizenship. While all of these issues are important for those of us here now - it is also very important to recognize that over the next 10 years our university will experience a huge generational faculty turnover. To be competitive in attracting and retaining our next generation of faculty in order to build a strong university of the future, we must be able to offer far more attractive contractual arrangements and more appealing growth opportunities for faculty over their career-span.

II. Summary of the Major Results of the BBC Survey

After a year of conversations among the BBC members and with faculty colleagues on campuses, we prepared and shared our vision and draft recommendations with the ULC and with core faculty. We sought comment in the form of the first-ever university-wide faculty survey, which was sent to all core faculty on the non-residential campuses in the first two weeks of January 2008. The faculty were asked to review the BBC document and then respond to the survey questions. Of the 170 core faculty surveyed, 109 (64%) responded. We believe this technologically enabled way of seeking faculty opinion was an excellent start.

(Note: The complete set of survey results are posted in the new icon (called Blue Book) on your FC (faculty) desktop so please feel free to review them at your leisure. As well, we're asking each campus to hold an upcoming faculty meeting to discuss the BBC survey results and most specifically, their own campus responses).

The campus distribution of respondents is below:

Unit	Total Core Faculty	% Total Univ. Core Faculty	Responses by Campus	% of Campus	% of Total Univ. Responses
Antioch Los Angeles	25	14.7%	20	80.0%	18.3%
Antioch McGregor	17	10.0%	13	76.5%	11.9%
Antioch New England	55	32.4%	36	65.5%	33.0%
Antioch Santa Barbara	16	9.4%	9	56.3%	8.3%
Antioch Seattle	47	27.6%	18	38.3%	16.5%
PhD in L'ship	10	5.9%	9	90.0%	8.3%
Unidentified			4		3.7%
Total	170	100.0%	109	64.1%	100.0%

At the BBC meeting on February 2-3, 2008, we reviewed all of the survey materials in depth and the following are some of the highlights of our observations:

There was a very high degree of substantive agreement with the general BBC directions and draft recommendations. This is highly unusual and it affirmed for the BBC that the group's work was in sync with the directions and sentiments of the faculty across the system. For example, wide support was expressed for multi-year and less than 12-month contracts. Support was expressed for redefining faculty work, having the primary site of faculty's work-plan and accountability be the unit, and changing faculty work over the course of a career. There were some exceptions, to be discussed below.

With regard to governance, faculty satisfaction varies greatly in terms of department/unit, campus, and the university. A high percentage of the faculty are satisfied with the current system of shared governance at their unit/department level (59% agree-to strongly agree). At the campus level, in aggregate, 18% agree-to strongly agree that they are satisfied with campus governance, although there was significant variation by campus. Most telling was the response to the university level: 45% agree-to strongly agree that they are *dissatisfied* with their involvement in governance at the university level. Adding "somewhat dissatisfied" brings the total to 78% of core faculty who are dissatisfied with faculty involvement in university governance.

- A large minority of the faculty (41% agree-to strongly agree) would like the University to consider tenure at the non-residential campuses.
- Approximately 90% of the core faculty want less-than 12 month contracts; 77% favor a 9-month version and 15% favor a 10-month contract. Fifty-five percent believe that less-than-12 month contracts should be cost neutral.
- Less than half of the faculty (48%) are familiar with the University's rank policy. Twenty-nine percent of core faculty had no awareness of the University's current rank policy, and the remaining 23% were only somewhat familiar.

- There were several surprises: We were surprised that there wasn't more difference in responses between the responses of "older" (more than 10 years at Antioch) and "newer" faculty (less than 3 years). We were surprised to find that some resistance exists about changing work over life-span. We were surprised about some hesitancy of the role of student learning in performance reviews and the role of the external reviewer. While these were in the minority, they and other points of divergence deserve more attention and exploration.

There is much more that could be said, but we want to keep this report a manageable length and hope that the campus-based discussions will enable faculty to go deep into the meaning and learning from all of this.

III. Specific Actionable Recommendations 2008-09

Within the context of the larger vision stated at the outset, the BBC believes it is possible to make initial positive steps forward. In this section of the report, the specific areas around which we are making concrete recommendations are:

- Re-conceptualization of Faculty Roles & Responsibilities
- Multiyear Contracts
- Nine-month Contracts
- Faculty Voice

• RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF FACULTY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

As apparent in the BBC survey, there was widespread support (80% agree to strongly agree) for redefining faculty roles in the following four categories: engagement with student learning; engagement with scholarship; engagement as a university citizen; and, engagement with practice/service. The BBC believes these categories are consistent with the range of faculty roles in our non-traditional system and address much of the current national thinking about faculty roles and responsibilities. Faculty have as their mission to "nurture in their students the knowledge, skills and habits of reflection to excel as lifelong learners, democratic leaders and global citizens who live lives of meaning and purpose" (Antioch University Mission Statement). As faculty engage in student learning, scholarship, university citizenship, and service they should use this mission to shape their relationship with and responsibility to the university.

The proposed BBC description of faculty work in these four areas is as follows:

• Engagement in student learning

Broadly defined, this role includes a variety of student-focused learning activities, including but not limited to teaching courses, workshops, and training sessions; preparing assessments of student work; advising; supervising guided and independent studies internships, practica, theses and dissertations; staying current with the field of study; serving on degree committees; reviewing applications, and pre-admission interviewing, counseling, and recruiting.

• Engagement in scholarship

This role reflects the faculty's responsibility to engage in scholarly and creative work, and may focus on a) the scholarship of discovery, which includes research as well as forms of creative expression in the arts b) the scholarship of integration, which includes interdisciplinary work, syntheses of knowledge, and the effort to bring knowledge to wider audiences; and c) the scholarship of engagement, which includes the generation of knowledge stemming from the interaction of theory and practice, ideas and action. The key to this role is the critical aspect that faculty's disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and/or professional expertise plays in scholarship, research and other creative work. Furthermore, the knowledge or practice base of one's field and applying one's expertise

to the problems and needs of our local and global societies are all evidence of intimate engagement in the teaching and learning process.

- **Engagement as a university citizen**

In addition to being citizens of our classrooms and disciplines, Antioch faculty are also citizens of the university. This responsibility for citizenship dictates that faculty are intimately involved in the governance and operation of our campuses/units and the university as a whole. The principles of shared governance assume that faculty, administrators and trustees share responsibility and accountability for the operation of our units, campuses and university with regard to planning, decision making, and budgeting. Faculty involvement is critical in (1) new program development, curriculum, degree process and design, methods of instruction, and scholarship; (2) faculty membership (hiring, appointment, reappointment and separation); and (3) those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process. Because each of these areas is affected by financial decisions, the faculty should participate through appropriate governing bodies in deliberations relating to the preparation of annual budgets.

[Shared governance does not assume, however, that faculty participate in planning and decision making that is purely administrative, unrelated to the education process, or not enhanced by the contribution of an academic perspective. In addition, faculty engagement as a university citizen should not supplant the engagement of administrative and support personnel in the operations of departments, campuses/units, and the university, nor release the university from its obligation to appropriately staff administrative and operational functions].

- **Engagement in service/practice**

While engagement as a university citizen is one form of service, shared governance is such an important component of faculty work that we felt it was important to separate it from the other understanding of service. In addition to university citizenship, Antioch faculty are also citizens of their communities (for example, serving on community boards) and citizens of their disciplines or professions (for example, holding an office in a professional society). These are distinct from the scholarship of engagement discussed above but round out the nature of Antioch core faculty work.

The BBC asks the ULC to support this long-term goal:

- *To endorse this new articulation of faculty roles as stated above;*
- *To support the development of HR documents and performance review practices using these four areas of faculty work so that they could be used to describe and evaluate faculty work;*
- *To support the implementation of these documents, criteria and practices no later than by 2009-10, allowing for experimental pilots before that.*

- **MULTI-YEAR CONTRACTS**

The BBC survey asked a series of questions about multi-year contracts, tiering them in intervals of one, three, and five/six years, making performance reviews more comprehensive as contract intervals are met, and the like. The BBC believes that moving in the direction of multi-year core faculty contracts is the right thing to do for many reasons, including:

- It demonstrates mutual commitment, which will promote the health of institution
- It makes AU a more appealing and attractive employer of choice for hiring new faculty and retain excellent faculty
- It is cost effective because it decreases turnover
- It supports programmatic cohesion and stabilization of campus culture

- It enables faculty to secure certain grants that require guarantees of faculty longevity on the campus
- It allows for a greater sense of accountability including more substantive expectations of scholarship, professional engagement, etc.
- It has great symbolic value at this time of institutional upheaval and instability

However, there are so many issues involved – such as developing an effective performance review system and eligibility requirements, stabilizing institutional planning while also taking into account the need for flexibility, and furthering the necessary work on faculty roles and negotiated work plans so that performance reviews are formative and demonstrable, that the BBC felt it was premature to propose a set of concrete recommendations regarding multi-year contracts at this point. It is the BBC's intent to work diligently during 2008-09 so that a comprehensive proposal could come forward for action at this time next year.

At the same time, the BBC believes that some progress can be made on this direction. We ask the ULC to agree to the following:

- *To support the BBC in its efforts to create processes and systems to increase faculty security and growth;*
- *To endorse the concept of multi-year contracts and authorize the BBC to move forward in exploring a variety of multi-year options with the goal of bringing a proposal forward in 2009-10.*

More immediately, we submit to the ULC the following two proposals for consideration this year:

- *That the ULC/BoT approve an expansion of the current University policy that allows presidents to request of the Chancellor approval of a multi-year contract, from the current 2-year limit to the possibility of a 3-year limit;*
- *That the ULC/BoT arrive at clarity on the termination language for core faculty contracts. The BBC requests that for 2008-09 and beyond, regardless of contract length, if a core faculty contract is not to be renewed, faculty will receive a terminal one-year contract at the end of the current contract term regardless of when the notification is given.*

• **NINE-MONTH CONTRACTS**

The BBC survey demonstrated widespread and substantial support for nine-month contracts for core faculty. The BBC believes it is critical for the future of the University in its ability to have competitive contracts and attract new and retain talented faculty. We recognize the valid concerns about cost and are attentive to addressing this, as will be discussed below. We also must ask about the cost if it is not done in terms of the inability to attract, retain and nurture excellent faculty. Finally, we also recognize valid concerns raised about what faculty will do with their three months of non-contract time. This is the question that virtually all colleges and universities face. The answer must be viewed within the context of negotiated work plans and expectations of faculty productivity along the four major lines of faculty work (discussed in that section of this report).

Moving to nine-month contracts must be done carefully and thoughtfully, but we believe it is the right thing to do. We actually say nine-month "or equivalent" because we realize that some programs/units cannot have faculty away for three months

because of the nature of the program's delivery, or the smallness of the program's faculty staff or the nature of certain research designs, or other reasons. In such cases, the BBC understands that the need for nine-month equivalencies - whether counted in terms of weeks or days - is up to the unit and campus in question.

The BBC asks the ULC to support this long-term goal by approving the following:

- *The standard for core faculty contracts be 9-month contracts.*
- *That this would be fully implemented by Summer 2011 (in 3 full years).*
- *That each campus would develop its own transition plan, which must be approved by its president. It is understood that any transitional piloting in 2008-09 must be absolutely cost-neutral.*
- *That faculty must accept that there will not be substantial (or necessarily any) funds to off-set this contractual shift; therefore, faculty and departments will be expected to think creatively about how they do their work and rethink the unit, campus resources, and even shared university resources.*
- *That core faculty compensation will not be reduced due to the re-conceptualization of these contracts. Core faculty who work more than 9-months of scheduled work would be paid accordingly. This would need to be worked out consistent with the commitment to be cost-neutral 2008-09, and limited (if any) additional funds in the future.*
- *The move toward these new contractual arrangements is embedded in the notion of faculty work and performance, not in the accounting of days or weeks. It is important that we work to develop a clear statement of how faculty work is conceptualized, based upon the requirements/obligation of the unit.*

SUPPORTING FACULTY VOICE

As mentioned at the report's outset, a high percentage of faculty are satisfied with shared governance at their unit/department level. Depending upon the campus, faculty felt more or less engaged in campus governance; and across the board nearly 80% of the faculty felt dissatisfied with their involvement in governance at the university level. Based on the survey results, and the perspectives of academic leadership, it is clear to the BBC that:

- (1) The University must rethink faculty voice in University governance;
- (2) The mechanisms of faculty voice must be appropriate and sustainable given Antioch University philosophy and resources; and
- (3) Understandings of shared governance are widely divergent and we must work to develop our own understanding of what this means at the unit, campus and University level.

The BBC wants to begin to explore creative and sustainable ways to engage faculty voice at the University level and sees this as a critical aspect of envisioning our new University for the 21st century. Toward this end, the BBC recommends (and ALG endorses) *creating a "Faculty Conference Council" under the AU Office of Academic Affairs* that would work with the VC of AA and the ALG to design a Spring-Summer 2009 Faculty Conference on "Awakening the New University" - with threads on governance, academic IT, disciplinary sharing, etc. We see this as a beginning to think

about faculty voice in University planning - a first step. Over the next year, we hope to have more discussion about what shared governance means and how we might imagine creating appropriate and sustainable processes, especially as we envision a new university.

The BBC encourages the ALG and university leadership to seek and support ways to build a university-wide community of faculty within the context of a strong academic core that respects campus autonomy while simultaneously sustaining University identity and coherence. These ways could include but not be limited to:

- Technologically enabled faculty voice, creating faculty directory and the like;
- More and different ways of cross-campus collaboration
- Faculty conferences and academic forums - on topics such as culture change and how we envision the unit, etc. - that might not involve everybody from each campus, but could involve teleconferencing and other technological means to convene faculty.
- Cross-fertilization and relationship building among faculty with special assignments to assist the VC in coordinating university initiatives such as assessment, IRB, etc.
- Virtual Learning Commons
- Faculty-populated work groups out of the VCAA Office as building blocks to a more formal representative body to begin to create a thread of faculty voice

Given this, the BBC requests that the ULC approve the following as first steps:

- *An Antioch University Faculty Conference for Spring-Summer 200 - "Awakening the New University"*
- *The creation of a university-wide Faculty Conference Council to plan the conference in conjunction with the ALG.* Tracks at the conference would include but not be limited to: Exploration and training in models of shared governance; visioning (and training) in academic IT; as well as disciplinary and interest group meetings, and networking.

IV. Next Steps for 2008-09

All of the steps below are predicated on securing ULC/BoT support of the directions indicated by the BBC, securing "enabling legislation" as necessary to continue in certain directions, and obtaining specific approval for concrete recommendations.

1. Campus Level

- a) Campuses develop transition plans for three-year move to 9-month contracts for Core Faculty. This must be done in a collaboration between faculty, the campus CFO, and the president.
- b) Campus conversations
 - Upon posting of the survey results, BBC recommendations and ULC decisions, campus faculty hold a conversation to discuss the BBC concrete recommendations and directions
 - In late Spring-early Summer 2008, campuses schedule a half-day faculty meeting. A BBC faculty member from another campus will participate to share experiences from that campus; to listen and be ambassador back to own campus to cross-fertilize; and to build bridges that we are a community of faculty and can learn from each other.

2. University Level

- a) *The BBC*

- Create ASAP a First Class BBC area on all Core Faculty Desktops and post BBC documents; survey results; regular updates; and provide an area for email conferencing on issues of import.
- The BBC establishes that its agenda for work in 2008-09 are multi-year contracts and monitoring the transitions toward 9-month (or equivalent) contracts. We know that there are many important BBC issues to be addressed in the future including rank, load, sabbaticals, budget impact, and the like, but the BBC's top priority will be the development of a comprehensive multi-year contract proposal.
Toward this end:
 - (1) The BBC Performance Review subcommittee develops an internal BBC Action Plan for our work to refine the multi-year proposal including utilizing more surveys as one mechanism for gaining internal knowledge of the issues.
 - (2) The BBC meets (Summer 2008) with an innovative academic HR consultant to learn options elsewhere, refine our proposals; and develop criteria, training and infrastructure planning;

b) *Create the Faculty Conference Council to plan a 2009 University Conference*

- Campuses choose their representatives, who are formally appointed to the Council by the VCAA (recognized as institutional citizenship)
- Representatives collaborate with ALG to plan faculty conference for Spring 2009
- Council 'reports' loosely to VCAA

c) *ALG*

- Discuss academic program review and ways to incorporate redefinitions of the "work of the unit" and re-conceptualization of faculty roles and responsibilities.
- Actively work together to monitor the budget impact of the contractual changes; share experiences; and, seek all opportunities to control costs through resource sharing of all sorts.
- Continue to support and build cross-campus collaboration(s) that support teaching and learning
- Address the need to assure a university-wide academic perspective and faculty voice at the university level

d) *ULC*

Several critical faculty-related policies need to be reviewed in addition to those in this report:

- Faculty compensation practices across the campuses affect ability to retain and recruit.
- The aging of faculty means an increase in hiring over next 10 years. This means we should think about more flexible retirement packages to provide program continuity as well as appropriate opportunity for our faculty.
- Overload policies and practices are inconsistent across campuses
- Consulting and external work policies are inconsistent across the campuses

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