

**Science Chair's Council**  
**Summary of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting - Nov 3, 2009**  
**Special Meeting with President Levin and Provost Salovey**

**Attending:**

*Chairs:* David Bercovici, Mikhail Kapranov, William Kelly, Jeff Kenney, Thomas Pollard, Rick Prum, W. Mark Saltzman, Abraham Silberschatz, Mitchell Smooke, Douglas Stone, Patrick Sung

*Chair Representatives:* Jung Han, Ramamurti Shankar

*Provosts:* Peter Salovey, Steven Girvin, Timothy O'Connor

*Divisional Directors:* Bill Jorgensen

*Guests:* Richard Levin, Michael Donoghue

**I. President Levin gave an "Opening Statement" with 5 Main Topics** (Appendix on separate page):

1. Broad strategy for university advancement in next 5 yrs
2. Budget situation & slowdown in faculty hiring
3. Advancing science at Yale and how the West Campus fits in
4. Management reform at Yale & improving business practices
5. West Campus

**II. Discussion between Science Chairs and President & Provost, with Goal of "Strengthening the Sciences at Yale"**

**1. Unproductive Senior Faculty** - Tom Pollard (MCDB) urged the administration to provide retirement incentives for unproductive senior faculty (broadly defined). He suggested that "implementation of the plan itself might solve the problem". President Levin suggested buyouts of 2.5-3x annual salary, but said they could consider other plans, and reducing salaries was an option.

**2. West Campus** - Some departments requested "better engagement" on West Campus planning, which some faculty perceive as "mysterious". The opportunity to hire people associated with the West Campus can be an incentive for departments to engage with the West Campus.

Dave Bercovici (Geology) has proposed an energy research center on the WC. Energy research is one of the most important and potentially lucrative areas in modern science. This would be great for Yale, and would involve a broader range of science than is currently being considered for the WC.

Avi Silberschatz (Computer Science) suggested a "mini Bell Labs" on west campus (although noted that Bell Labs cost \$300M/yr)

**3. High Performance Computing** - Jeff Kenney (Astronomy) urged the administration to get scientific leadership for HPC and improve the organization of HPC. He reported on faculty unhappiness with the large role of ITS in making decisions in areas where it is not qualified.

**4. Centralization** - Patrick Sung (MBB) reported that his faculty are "against centralization", since both loyalty and skill level within dept are important.

**5. Timing of SCL Renovation** - Bill Jorgensen (Chemistry) urged the administration to start the SCL renovation ASAP. The renovated SCL will be a destination for undergrads on science hill, a key part of the plan for making Yale more science friendly and improving Science Hill. Yale has the lowest fraction of science majors of all its peer institutions, and the SCL renovation can help turn this around. Pres. Levin is torn over whether to first build the 2 new residential colleges or the 2 science buildings, although pointed out "everything at Yale has grown except the undergraduate enrollment."

## **APPENDIX: Notes on President Levin's "Opening Statement"**

### **1. Broad Strategy for University Advancement in the Next 5 Years, and the Role of Science & Engineering:**

- A. Maintain excellence of Yale College
- B. Maintain leadership in Humanities, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, Law School ("many departments in top 3 or 5")
- C. Strengthen science and engineering("many departments ranked between 10-20" and "Yale should have top 5 activities in everything" and "Yale wants to be one of the top 5 universities in the world" although in response to questions he also said in engineering the standard must be 'selective excellence', since Yale engineering cannot grow enough to be top 5 overall.)
- D. Strengthen clinical reputation of medical school
- E. Strengthen school of management ("not yet top 5")
- F. Continue Yale's leading role in internationalization will do more here only if cost-neutral.
- G. "Ratchet up" environmental activities, education and green-ness
- H. Maintain momentum to improve New Haven
- I. Use west campus as a tool for achieving goals

**2. Budget Situation & Slowdown in Faculty Hiring** - No salary freeze this year but will moderate salary growth. More selective staffing cuts may be announced in Dec-Jan.

Last year the faculty grew by 3%, over last 10 yrs faculty has grown 14%. He said the faculty has already grown in anticipation of new residential colleges.

This year most faculty searches will be delayed by ~1-2 yrs; exceptions where there is enrollment pressure.

No money now for new biology building or SCL renovation (~\$700M total). ("I don't want to leave until they are underway.")

The SCL renovation will produce 2 research floors not needed for the chemistry department.

**3. Management Reform at Yale & Improving Business Processes** - We have 50% more staff people per \$1B than the median business/organization (best practice business: 65 median: 220, Yale: 330).

At Yale, 70% of HR transactions occur in departments, not the "center". In business, usually is: 10% in "periphery", 90% in center.

Procurement expenses (?) are 6x worse at Yale than a standard business.

**4. West Campus** - "If Jefferson hadn't bought Louisiana, what would history have said?"  
"Purchased at 15% of replacement cost".

He wants us to think broadly about West Campus opportunities. He appeals to us to think imaginatively about using the West Campus to improve departments. They are not trying to plan & develop West Campus from the "top down" but rather be consultative.