

Gentlemen of the Class of '60:

It was delightful to attend the 197th Dartmouth Alumni Council session December 4-6 in Hanover: brisk, archetypal, though snow-less NH weather, a beautiful Christmas tree in the middle of the Green, hurrying, exam-bound students, venues in the venerably old (105 Dartmouth), the "shortly-after-us" (Rockefeller Center) and the brand new (Floren Varsity House) . . . it was good to be back. So much for "color."

Our webmaster Walt Daniels will also post this email on our Class website together, eventually (i.e. probably later in December or early January), with an official narrative summary of the Council meeting, its full minutes, and other documents of pertinent interest; the website will also list references to other websites of interest.

In the meantime here is what I heard – in plenary sessions, committee meetings, over dinner, with a drink in hand and reading between the lines:

1. The financial state of the College was primarily presented by Adam Keller, VP for Finance and Administration, as well as by Jim Wright and trustees Ed Haldeman '70 and Jose Fernandez '77. The College's endowment has taken a serious but bearable hit of 14% so far. (Compare Harvard's reported 22% drop.) The administration therefore intends to reduce expenses by \$40 million over the next two years. Specifics are being worked out over the next 60 to 90 days. There will be no cuts in salaries for tenured and tenure-track faculty nor any reductions in financial aid. Construction projects actually underway will be completed, primarily the Life Sciences building. All other building projects will be put on hold, although in-process planning work will be completed. Putting some of these projects on hold will also require additional maintenance expenditures. All other expenses are liable to be cut. *<For more detailed information see our Class Website. I'll also post the Student Council's take on the need to cut back.>*
2. The topic of alcohol on campus was well aired by Dean Tom Crady and a panel of students. 60% of students have experience with alcohol prior to coming to Dartmouth. Binge-drinking is prevalent on campus: in 2008 44% of the students did it, in 2004 57% and in 2000 45%. (Binge-drinking is defined as 5 drinks in one sitting for men and 4 for women.) Our peer schools wrestle with the same numbers. There are no hard rules and answers yet. The tendency of Dean Crady is to put more of the responsibility on the individual students themselves. *<See our Class Website for more details and for access to a number of reports by experts, many of them contradictory.>*
3. Dartmouth's internationalism, i.e. both foreign student on campus and our foreign study program, was discussed by students and administration officials. If I have the numbers right 10% of the student body now comes from abroad; the goal is to make it 12% and to get more kids from South America. As the December issue of *DartmouthLife* reported we are the #1 Ivy for study abroad (64% of students vs. 36% for #2 Princeton) with the most popular foreign venue being Barcelona, followed by Beijing and Paris. *<See the mentioned issue of DartmouthLife for more details.>*
4. The Alumni Council strongly endorsed the proposed changes in the constitution of the Association of Alumni for the election of alumni-nominated trustees. The proposal will be put to a vote by the entire alumni body in the spring of 2009. The changes will need two-thirds of the votes of the alumni voting to become effective. The changes essentially provide for a) a "one person, one vote," b) fewer Council-nominated nominees and c) a run-off election if none of the nominees receive a clear majority. The petition nominee procedure remains unchanged. As I have reported earlier, the trustees appointed five new members to the Board, all alumni of apparently excellent qualifications. Trustee Chair Ed Haldeman '70 explained that the other three open trustee positions would be filled after the new president has been installed. In response to a specific question about "adding more alumni-nominated trustees," Haldeman said he had neither a "yes" nor a "no" comment at the moment. John Mathias '69, Chair of the Alumni Association, had previously indicated that some talks had taken place between himself and members of the Board of Trustees. *<For more details, copies of the actual constitutional change proposals and other websites with relevant information, see our Class Website.>*
5. The new lawsuit to prohibit the Board of Trustees to expand itself without maintaining parity between trustee-appointed and alumni-elected was briefly mentioned. The College hopes that it will be dismissed without costing too much in dollars-and-cents in these difficult economic times. *<See a copy of the report by The Dartmouth on the lawsuit on our Class Website.>*
6. Trustee and Chair of the Search Committee Al Mulley '70 reviewed the search for the new president. The original list of about 300 "possibles" has been reduced to 20 to 30 people in whom Dartmouth has an interest. Over the next several weeks extensive due diligence is under way and about a dozen or so candidates will be interviewed. The Search Committee expects to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees sometime this coming spring. Mulley felt that Dartmouth's proposed \$40 million cutback over the next two years will not be detrimental

because the candidates will undoubtedly come from organizations where deeper or at best similar cutbacks are taking place. He further feels that the new lawsuit, although an annoyance, will not seriously hamper the search. <See our Class Website for the website address of the Search Committee where update reports appear regularly.>

7. The question of social gender inequality was touched on lightly. The College apparently no longer opposes the founding of "local" fraternities, sororities or non-Greek organizations. The College also, as previously reported, purchased two buildings and is in the process of renovating them for the use of two sororities. As far as I can see these are two major steps to address social gender inequality on campus. This now gives the three national sororities an argument with their national organizations to relax the social regulations or possibly face the loss of a Dartmouth chapter. But there still are not enough sororities and sorority-like organizations on campus to properly accommodate the women. <For more details see our Class Website.>
8. With respect to athletics three students, the captains of the football team, of women's hockey and of figure skating, were heart-warming in their talks about their passion and their dedication to their sports and what it has meant to them during their college careers - all stuff that hasn't changed much over the last 50 years. Buddy Teevens '79 had laryngitis and spent only a few minutes at the rostrum. Josie Harper never did answer my direct question: "What will your department do to avoid another 0-10 football season next year?" Instead she handed it off to the football captain. This stonewalling -accidental or intentional- was the one disappointing aspect of the weekend. But the new Floren Varsity House facilities including the weight training area, and particularly the football offices and spaces, are truly magnificent.
9. Finally, as many of you know the DOC celebrates its 100th birthday in 2009. Many events are tentatively planned. The one that struck me as a possibly great -and healthy, no less- way to prepare for our 50th Reunion in 2010 is the first-ever one-day hike of the entire Appalachian Trail on October 10, 2009. The trail will be divided into sections and it is intended that groups of alumni and students will hike each of these sections from Maine to Georgia. Interested? <See the DOC website for details as well as for some of the other planned events: www.dartmouth.edu/~doc/centennial.>

I have responded to all those of you who commented on my most recent pre-Council communication. Let me again thank you very much for your suggestions. I was not nearly as well organized after my first email to you earlier in the year, though; some of you who shared your thoughts with me did not get individual answers. For that I apologize. Please keep your commentaries coming!

Which brings me to the last point of this email. I'd like to post most of your thoughts on our Class Website, initially anonymously and eventually, after your very specific permission, with your name attached. The reason for this suggestion is that I have only touched on nine topics in this email. You, however, raised another half dozen subjects that are equally important and should be discussed among ourselves, even if it is only on our website. I haven't checked out this idea with Walt Daniels, our webmaster. But nevertheless, I'm running it up the flagpole.

Have a very Merry Christmas, a great holiday season and a New Year that sees our economic fortunes improve and during which our health stays at least as good as it is now.

Best regards,

Axel