

ALUMNI COUNCIL NEWS

I attended my first meeting of the Alumni Council as a Regional Representative on Dec. 1-3, 2005. The Council is committed to improving communications with all alumni. In that spirit, here is a brief report on the meeting.

Rick Routhier '73 T'76 is the new Alumni Council President. Those who heard him speak to our club last May appreciated his candor, enthusiasm and willingness to face and tackle challenges. Rick displayed all those qualities as he led the Council through this important meeting.

The Academic Experience at Dartmouth : Dartmouth regularly surveys graduating seniors and regularly receives the highest praise from 95-97% of students. Student satisfaction is highest surrounding: intellectual challenge, quality of faculty, access to faculty, quality of facilities and opportunities to study abroad.

The College's stated goal is to offer "the best undergraduate experience in the country." Programs and staff and facilities are evaluated in terms of how well they serve this goal.

Recruitment and retainment of the best faculty is central to this goal. The Dean of Faculty spoke to us about the challenge this presents. Every other top school wants the best faculty too, so getting and keeping these people requires a constant effort.

Admissions had another banner year. Applications were up; average SAT scores are now 716 (verbal) and 720 (math). Legacies and recruited athletes do receive a significant boost in the admissions process. However, because of the large numbers of legacies and athletes applying, not all can be admitted.

Athletics: The College wants to do more to support club sports, in which 1,000 students participated last year. The Figure Skating club won a national championship recently. These clubs are student run. In supporting them, the college faces a facilities crunch and the problem of limited funds.

Alumni Relations

1. *Proposal to survey alumni annually* ("survey of core, trendable content") to deepen and expand communication amongst the College and its communities.
 - last real base line survey was 10 years ago
 - need better communications and transparency as we dialogue about alumni governance proposal
 - will be funded by Dartmouth Alumni Council (\$65-75K annually)
 - organized, ran and tabulated by independent outside firm
 - all alums invited to participate
 - Goal: launch first survey after May 06 Council mtg; have results analyzed by Dec 06 mtg
2. *Alumni Governance Task Force* (9 alums appointed by presidents of Assoc of Alumni & Alumni Council; includes new faces. Members, several of whom have been publicly at odds over the past 5 years, have debated and compromised for years 2 years while working on a

proposal for a new constitution. This diverse group has found accord and excitement about a proposal which seeks to:

- strengthen traditional partnership between Dartmouth & her alums
- be more transparent, democratic and inclusive of all viewpoints than current system
- renovate & enrich the 151-year old Association of Alumni to which all alums belong .

Please realize what follows summarizes a careful, lengthy document. If my condensation raises questions, please look for clarification at AGTaskForce@alum.dartmouth.org

1. *Structure:* Association includes all alums, structured:

- Alumni Liaison Board (2 way communication vehicle for alums & college)
- Alumni Assembly (elected reps; functions as a senate and service organization)
- Nominating Committee (to bring all alumni leaders to the fore)
- Balloting Committee (to oversee all alumni votes)
- Alumni Council would be replaced by the more representative Assembly.

2. *Leadership:* Association members would elect (by mail or internet ballot) the president-elect each year. This person would hold 3 roles in succession over 3 years: 1) chair the Assembly 2) president of the Association 3) Past President (chairing the Alumni Liaison Board). Candidates for president elect would have to be current Assembly members or have recently completed Assembly service. This provision ensures experience in alumni activity and commitment.

3. *Trustee nominations.* Nominating Committee would annually put forth a slate to fill alumni trustee vacancies. Petition candidates would need signatures from 1% of alumni body (up from a fixed # 500).

4. *Voting.* Designate first and second choices if more than two candidates. Winner would need majority of first choice votes. Currently, alums may vote for more than one candidate, which has proven confusing.

5. *Enactment.* If 2/3 of Alumni Council and 2/3 of those present and voting at an annual or special meeting of the Association of Alumni approve the proposed Constitution, the whole alumni body would vote by mail or other means. 2/3 approval by those voting would enact the Constitution.