

FAS Senate

AN ELECTED BODY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
YALE UNIVERSITY

Review of Progress in Restructuring the FAS

Report of the FAS Senate Governance and Institutional Policy Committee¹

APPROVED BY THE SENATE - MAY 8, 2018

I. Charge from Senate

The FAS Senate Governance Committee has as its charge “to evaluate the recent changes in the governance of the FAS and the university to inform the FAS Senate about alternative organizational structures and budget processes....” We interpret this primarily to understand how well the structural changes over the last four years are serving the health and excellence of the FAS and what further changes would be useful.

II. Prior Governance Reports

There have been two major governance reports relevant to FAS structure. The 1993 Report (Jerome Berson, chair) discussed changes in decanal structure and budget arrangements. In the end, the 1993 committee recommended some transfer of responsibilities from the Provostial to the Decanal level but had no firm recommendation on the decanal structure.

The most important report for our purposes was the 2014 Report on Decanal Structures (“Decanal Committee”) chaired by Jack Dovidio. This report focused primarily on the decanal structure of the FAS. It analyzed four models: model 1, a three-dean structure, was recommended by a majority of the committee and was adopted.

¹ The Senate Governance Committee for 2017-18 consists of Marijeta Bozovic (Slavic Languages), Alexandre Debs (Political Science), Emily Erikson (Sociology), Brad Inwood (Classics and Philosophy), William Nordhaus, chair (Economics), Mark Solomon (Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry).

The report of the 2014 Decanal Committee, as with earlier reports, expressed concern about the diffuse powers in the FAS and recommended greater authority of the FAS Deans over administrative and budget decisions. The 2014 report is clear and eloquent on this issue (emphasis added):

Each of the professional schools has a dean who bears primary responsibility for the school's budget, faculty, and educational program. In the case of the FAS, the Provost bears responsibility for the FAS budget... (p. 7)

This arrangement has significant consequences. On the one hand, the Provost represents the needs of the FAS and devotes considerable attention to them. On the other hand, because the position of Provost requires impartial attention to concerns of the entire university, **there is no one with financial authority who is in a position to offer direct advocacy for the FAS, an opportunity that deans of the other schools at Yale enjoy.** (pp. 7 - 8)

The committee concluded that, given these considerations, the President should consider seriously the possibility of introducing a FAS Dean or similar position **with primary responsibility for the FAS budget in a manner similar to that in which the deans of Yale's professional schools hold responsibility for their budgets.** (p. 8)

As will be noted below, the budgetary recommendation was not implemented in the new FAS structure.

III. Committee Meetings

Over the last two years, the Senate Governance Committee has held several meetings with leaders of the university and the FAS, officers from the university budget office, members of the 2014 Decanal Committee, and selected departmental chairs. Additionally, members of the Senate Governance Committee had conversations with administrators at other universities concerning their administrative and budget structures, including those at Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, and Stanford.

IV. Findings

In discussing the charge of "how the administrative and budget structures ... are managed and financed," the Senate Governance Committee determined that it would be most fruitful to focus on the recommendations of the 2014 Decanal report. That report examined the then-current FAS structure and compared it with that of other major research universities. With that report in mind, the Senate Governance Committee addressed three questions:

1. Whether the recommendation to create Divisional Deans has been implemented and been successful.
2. Whether the recommendation to create a new Dean of the FAS according to model I (with a tripartite decanal structure) has been implemented and been successful.
3. To what extent the recommendation that the FAS have a budget structure like that in other schools at Yale has been implemented and been successful.

Concerning points 1 and 2: On the whole, the Senate Governance Committee found the university has implemented the first two recommendations (creating Divisional Deans and a Dean of the FAS). While there were selected issues raised that might be reconsidered, most administrators and faculty thought that the new structure was positive for management of the FAS. The additional high-level administrators allow the major issues faced by the FAS to be dealt with in a more timely and effective fashion. It is clear that the FAS has energetic and thoughtful leadership for its designated responsibilities. Particularly for faculty issues, the lines of authority are clear, and major problems are being addressed vigorously.

The one reservation that we heard from several participants was that the new structure is too thinly staffed. That is, the FAS Dean's Office looks understaffed relative to other schools at Yale and the FAS offices at other universities. The FAS Dean's office has a smaller staff than the School of Forestry even though the FAS budget is more than ten times larger. Particularly if the FAS evolves greater responsibility for its budget (as discussed below), it will be necessary for the FAS decanal offices to have a deeper staff to analyze and manage its budget.

Concerning point 3: By contrast, little progress has been made in implementing the third recommendation, namely, that the FAS have a budget structure like that in other schools at Yale.

Virtually all earlier governance reports emphasized the need for greater control of FAS budgets by FAS Deans and administrators. Currently, the FAS budget is fragmented among several offices and is separated into five "budget boxes." Additionally, many important FAS activities are outside the FAS scope of control, such as those relating to science development fund, libraries, information technology, athletics, hospitality, residential colleges, and facilities. For FY 2017, the five boxes of the FAS budget total \$755 million. Each box (such as faculty salaries of \$162 million) has a budget determined by the Provost's

Office but is administered variously among the FAS Deans and the Provost's Office. (Information on Yale's budget can be found at https://your.yale.edu/sites/default/files/fy18_public_budgetbook_v9_pagenumbers.pdf.)

Note particularly the point made in the Decanal Structure Report on budgets. Consider self-support units in the university (such as Law or Medicine). If they desire to reallocate spending among items (say among faculty, staff, scholarships, and facilities), they can do that within broad guidelines. Even a centrally supported school (such as the Library or Architecture) can reallocate among functions if it does not worsen its bottom line. By contrast, it requires extensive negotiations for the FAS administration to reallocate among boxes in a way that virtually any other unit at Yale can do.

In an earlier era – as the quotation from the Decanal Committee above suggests – the Provost was the “super-Dean” of the FAS, with both administrative and budget authority.

The present committee finds that, in the new structure, the FAS Deans have administrative authority but without the budget authority. This inability to determine its fiscal future in some respects leaves the FAS in a worse position regarding budgetary authority that it had before the recent reforms.

V. Recommendations

The Senate Governance Committee has reviewed the structure and evolution of administration and budgets for Yale's FAS. Much has been accomplished over the four years since the 2014 Decanal Report. Many responsibilities are unchanged. Many have moved from the three major offices (Provost, Yale College Dean, and Graduate Dean) to the seven new offices (the prior three offices plus FAS Dean and Divisional Deans). **However, the budget structures remain largely unchanged.**

While identifying the issues, the Senate Governance Committee recognizes its limitations in studying outstanding issues and making concrete recommendations for adjustments and further changes. It has limited time, no staff, and lack of full access to administrative information.

Given these considerations and constraints, the Senate Governance Committee believes that the best course is for the President to commission a review of both the earlier decanal report and the changes to date:

Recommendations: The Senate recommends that the President establish a committee to review the implementation of the 2014 Decanal report. The committee should specifically review the implementation of the recommendations on (1) the decanal structure and (2) the establishment of a FAS budget under the responsibility of the FAS.

Recognizing the complexity of the subject, the Senate further suggests that the review committee should contain significant overlap with the earlier Decanal Committee, as well as representation from the FAS Senate, and membership from the leadership of Yale's Office of Finance.