Building the Future of Arts & Sciences at Dartmouth

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David Kotz
Provost
Pat and John Rosenwald Professor in the Department of Computer Science

Nina Pavcnik
Niehaus Family Professor in International Studies and Professor of Economics
Originally, Dartmouth was the College — an organization focused on undergraduate education, providing a limited amount of support for undergraduate living.

Over time the institution created a medical school [1797], an engineering school [1867], a business school [1900], and finally a graduate school [2016] — structures with their own leadership, greater autonomy within the institution, and support systems designed for their distinct student bodies.

The undergraduate core, meanwhile, grew to encompass more than 40 academic departments and programs, and a large operation to help students thrive in every aspect of their lives.

Leadership responsibilities are now divided between a Dean of the Faculty of the Arts & Sciences, leading faculty governance of curriculum, teaching, and research; and a Dean of the College, overseeing Student Affairs, Residential Life, Careers, and more. Their budgets are created and advanced through different processes, and their deans report to different leaders.

Over the years, Dartmouth leaders have wondered whether this asymmetry within Dartmouth’s organization, and the organic development of structures governing the undergraduate core over many generations, have kept up with the growing demands inherent in offering a world-class undergraduate education and experience, while also strengthening the ability of Arts & Sciences to attract and support world-class faculty who create and disseminate new knowledge.

Dartmouth is deeply respected as a leading liberal arts college and an R1 institution and we aspire to continue to lead the way. We are hearing from many faculty colleagues and other members of the Dartmouth community that we have outgrown our current model. The current system does not always work well for faculty and staff, and it could be improved for students, as well. Now it is time for a step-change in A&S so we once again lead the way.
In 2022, President Phil Hanlon launched a project to examine these questions and if appropriate, identify alternative organizational and budgeting structures that strengthen Dartmouth’s ability to fulfill its mission.

At Dartmouth, we are committed to tackling these questions head-on, as a community, and finding the best answer for this outstanding and truly distinctive institution, to ensure that we continue to grow and provide global leadership in undergraduate education, while engaging in R1 research.

It is important to note that regarding students, the charge of this project is primarily focused on the undergraduate education and mission. It is true that models that may evolve as part of this process will impact the graduate student experience, but the graduate education mission is not the area of focus at this time. However, any potential impacts on the graduate student experience, research, or teaching must and will be taken into account and opportunities for enhancement of support for our graduate students will be addressed separately.
This project began in Fall 2022 with the creation of a steering committee and thematic working groups. Importantly they began with a set of guiding principles that continue to lead the project as it evolves into its second year.

**Empower Decision-Making:** Position resource allocation authority close to the area of greatest impact and create more transparency in the decision-making processes;

**Champion Liberal Arts Education:** Enhance the student experience including curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular offerings, championing the liberal arts as a core tenet;

**Promote Academic Excellence:** Instill a culture of critical thinking and creativity through rewarding and incentivizing academic excellence, exploration, growth, innovation, and scholarship;

**Facilitate Collaboration:** Remove barriers between Dartmouth’s units, increasing the accessibility and effectiveness of infrastructure, policies, and resources for students, faculty, and staff such that the holistic Dartmouth experience is well-supported, connected, and easy to navigate;

**Create Opportunities for Strategic Academic Investments:** Coordinate decisions around strategic funds to accelerate learning and the creation of new knowledge;

**Maximize Use of Resources:** manage resource allocation to ensure efficient and effective operations — It’s important to pause here and note that efficiency is not a euphemism for reductions or cuts; the project does not presuppose a larger or smaller budget for undergraduate education and experience, though it does seek in the long-term to find opportunities for growth.

And finally, **Advance Dartmouth’s Reputation:** Advance and elevate the reputation of the Dartmouth education, unlocking the College’s potential to offer the leading liberal arts education of the future.
that is inclusive and accessible to all.
Over the last year, committees made up of faculty, staff, and administrators have been collaborating to build a vision of how Dartmouth can better advance its mission. That work has identified several opportunities that emerge from a more unified arts and sciences structure. In addition, they articulated a series of open questions that this year’s inquiry would need to address.

We still have many questions to investigate, but there are a few things we know will not change.

First of all, this does not change Dartmouth’s core mission, its commitment to an unparalleled undergraduate education, its commitment to the liberal arts, its academic pre-eminence, or the global leadership that defines both our historical legacy and our future.

Second, this project will not change our curriculum. The Arts & Sciences curriculum remains the Arts & Sciences curriculum, and its future will be determined by the Faculty of Arts & Sciences.

Finally this is not about budget cuts. In the long term, the right budget structures, models, and leadership will help align resources to mission, and help us grow. In the short term, senior leadership has agreed that any immediate disruptions will be evened out through the central institutional budget — individual school and unit budgets will be “held harmless” until all have had a chance to adjust and plan the best route forward.
Opportunities to center the Arts and Sciences:

1. Establish a single leader that is responsible for and pursues the whole A&S mission
2. Provide A&S faculty and staff a platform to advocate for their priorities
3. Bring the A&S faculty and staff organization together around A&S mission
4. Transparently distribute revenues to promote mission-driven investments

We do seek to organize the arts and sciences at Dartmouth — and we mean the research, creative, teaching, and student-facing enterprise as a whole, not just the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

We see real opportunities to:

1. Establish a single leader who is responsible for and pursues a more holistic approach to our mission: one leader, in conversation with the leader of the faculty and leader of the students, significantly focused on the priorities of the A&S.

2. Provide A&S faculty and staff a platform to advocate for priorities: Give Faculty of the Arts & Sciences a stronger platform and greater voice to promote collaborative teaching and research that taps into the interdisciplinary strengths of Dartmouth by removing institutional barriers.

3. Improve student experience by bringing together the A&S faculty and staff organization. Take a more holistic approach to the undergraduate education and experience that creates a more seamless experience for students, helping them tap Dartmouth’s deep resources

4. Transparently distribute revenues from arts and sciences mission to promote mission-driven investments in arts and sciences.
First, as we are focusing on the Arts & Sciences org and budget structures, we see opportunity to establish a single leader who is responsible for and pursues the whole A&S mission, faculty research and students education and residential experience.

Currently the Arts and Sciences faculty does not have a clear institutional venue in which to advocate for academic goals, policies, budgetary needs, etc. in a way that holistically supports our mission of education, student residential experience, and creation of knowledge. Neither do professional experts focusing on supporting the whole student in the student affairs. Leadership responsibilities are currently divided between a Dean of the Faculty of the Arts & Sciences, leading faculty governance of curriculum, teaching, and research; and a Dean of the College, overseeing Student Affairs, Residential Life, Careers, and more. Their budgets are created and advanced through different processes, and their deans report to different leaders. The Dean of the Faculty reports to the President, the Dean of Student Affairs to the Provost.

In the current setting, the decisions to invest in new student programs and research priorities occur at senior most levels of the institution (President and Provost). The Provost and the President simply do not have the same unique focus on and visibility into A&S faculty priorities and student programmatic needs as a leader focused on A&S might. For the Arts & Sciences, there is no guarantee of alignment on those elements, and no guarantee that they will be considered together in final decision-making. Talented individuals who care deeply about Dartmouth have, through personal commitment, hard work, and good will, partially bridged these gaps over the years, but a new approach would better harness their energy and dedication.

The goal is to provide a structure in which our A&S faculty and staff have the support and framework in which to make their voices heard – and a leader responsible for and positioned to advocate for all parts of the Arts & Sciences mission, knowledge generation and education and residential student
experience ... much as the deans of the professional schools do today.

One obvious possibility we are exploring would create a single unit, analogous to a school, and a leader dedicated to the entirety of the undergraduate enterprise, with clearer reporting lines above and below. The A&S Leadership Task Group is addressing the question of whether the A&S leader might report to the President or Provost.

The faculty voice would remain strong. This leader would be a leader of a bigger unit with a bigger budget and broader responsibility for the whole of the A&S mission, better positioned to leverage that leadership and budget. The leader will represent A&S priorities as well as provide input on institutional priorities at the institutional level to the President and the Provost. This includes President’s Senior Leadership Team and the Presidents and Provost Deans meetings. Such a dean (or vice provost/vice president) will also be a distinguished tenured member of the faculty, and can thus carry the voice from the faculty and DOF upward, while advocating for the whole A&S mission.
Last year’s working group discussions highlighted aspirations that faculty of arts and sciences have as researchers and as teachers, reflected in the Dartmouth teacher-scholar model and supported by dedicated staff. At the same time, conversations with faculty reveal the difficulty of achieving these research aspirations, with the current levels of support for research infrastructure and staff support. The faculty and staff have been doing a lot, in part hindered by the current organizational and budget structure.

We have outgrown our organization. There is an opportunity to create an organizational and budget structure that empowers A&S leadership to identify and pursue step changes rather than incremental changes in delivery of A&S mission.
Institutional structure and leadership:
2. Provide A&S faculty and staff a platform to advocate for priorities

- Establish a leader positioned to advocate for all parts of the Arts & Sciences mission
- Set up the new unit with appropriate resources, dedicated to achieving A&S priorities (e.g., fundraisers, communicators)
- Control and align budget: Revenue gains from Arts & Sciences mission are invested in A&S priorities

How might we provide a structure in which A&S faculty and staff are better empowered to identify and pursue priorities?

1. A&S currently does not have a leadership structure that can make strategic decisions in the best interest of the whole arts and sciences (faculty and students).
   a. In the current setting, the decisions to invest in new programs and research priorities occur at senior most levels of the institution (President and Provost). The Provost and the President simply do not have the same single focus on or visibility into A&S faculty priorities and student programmatic needs as a leader focused on A&S might.
   b. In a proposed system, A&S would be supported by a leader responsible for and positioned to advocate for all parts of the arts and sciences mission, research, education, and residential student experience.

1. A&S (DOF+DOSA) also currently does not have a team of fundraisers to support FAS priorities. It needs a bigger communications team to celebrate and increase visibility of faculty and student research and innovations. In the new unit, the A&S leader would be supported by committed resources (e.g., fundraisers, communicators) to pursue the priorities of the arts & sciences.

1. The current Arts and Sciences budget (that is the budget of Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) and the budget of Student Affairs (DOSA)) is not directly tied to the revenues from the arts and sciences mission. Each of these two units receives an allowance from the Central budget. This inhibits innovation and collaboration and monies from arts and sciences mission-
related revenues cannot be reinvested into FAS or DOSA priorities.

A new budget model would align incentives: Revenue gains tied to A&S mission would be directed to the arts & sciences and can be reinvested in the priorities of the arts & sciences. We will revisit the budget later, providing more specific examples of how it gives the A&S leader the incentives to innovate and invest in A&S strategic priorities.

*With these in place...*

We could enable A&S to more effectively pursue revenue for the bulleted items on previous slide (and more) because their pursuit of revenue would come back to benefit A&S as a whole and could be invested in these priorities. Not really possible today!

We could expand infrastructure for collaborative research because A&S would have the financial resources and structures to invest in research infrastructure (facilities, programs, services) to an extent difficult today when the Faculty has to request resources from Central administration.

We could create new interdisciplinary programs and joint degrees because the A&S unit would have financial resources and standing to collaborate with other deans to manage costs and revenues for such programs.
Third, we see an opportunity to improve student experience and increase collaboration between faculty and professional staff in student affairs.

There are many examples to consider, but let us consider our current student affairs advising structure and how it connects to A&S faculty and curricular activities.

On the slide, you can see the people and offices who might be advising any given undergraduate: a faculty advisor reporting up through the Dean of Faculty, our Registrar’s office, the Center for Professional Development, a student dean from the Undergraduate Deans Office, a House professor, the Center for Professional Development, the Office of Pluralism and Leadership, Undergraduate Advising and Research, and more. They offer complementary advice toward the same goal of educating a whole student. We must consider the whole student in our support structures - the curricular, co-curricular, community life, and professional development. But their advice is currently not coordinated.

**Here is the challenge we face in delivering seamless student experience.** Currently, some of the advisors report to the same unit as A&S faculty and curricular activities [faculty advisor, UGAR]. And thus to the President. The others report to DOSA, and thus to Provost. By unifying FAS and Dean of College advising support structures under one leader, the new structure should help facilitate collaboration between faculty advising and professional advising staff and improve student experience.
DOSA staff have historically lacked representation at tables where decisions on undergraduate education and experience are made and at which their professional expertise would be valuable. A new A&S organization would not only better recognize Student Affairs staff as co-educators vital to Dartmouth’s undergraduate mission and honor the interconnection of their pedagogical expertise with faculty, but create venues where faculty and staff are in conversation together about undergraduate education and student residential experience.

For example, greater collaboration between staff and faculty on issues like:

- Changes to the ORC in which the changes may adversely affect different student populations.
- Planning for first year student orientation and the special pre-orientation programs (FYSEP, NAP, EE JUST). All the introductions to the academic credit system, campus life, community standards, etc. happen in that orientation period, and could benefit mightily from more robust partnerships in planning.
- The increasing number of requests from students to do research projects/internships based on organizations in students affairs: Center for Social Impact; SVPP; Wellness; Cutter/Shabazz; Tucker.
- Navigating the establishment of economic hardship grants—Not just for students needing winter clothes and glasses, for example, but also to participate in off-campus programs, the arts, and other co-curricular activities related to academics, rather than spending that out-of-class time working for money.
What are potential benefits to our student of bringing faculty and staff organization together?

At the highest level, we can pursue a more holistic approach to undergraduate education and residential student experience — from classrooms and labs to performance venues and athletic teams, from curriculum to co-curriculars, to experiential education, to community life.

Bringing many of those supports under one structure, with one clear plan for supporting students, will help the advisors on the ground coordinate their efforts, offer more consistent and complementary advice, making it easier for students to get the support they need, when they need it. The right structure will create the most impactful educational experience in a manner that helps students grow as scholars as well as whole persons — and prioritizes mental health and wellbeing to equip all its students with the resources and skills to thrive at Dartmouth and beyond.

The house system, and its collaboration between house professors and house staff, is a great example of the type of faculty/staff collaboration that we want to create opportunities for.

Finally, this more unified structure should help create a more seamless and navigable experience for student through co-curricular and community advising, giving them an easier and more direct path to access all the resources Dartmouth provides to help them explore and thrive here.

In addition, a new unified structure supporting student advising systems enables faculty and professional staff to do what they do best, and provide students with better, holistic advising.
The fourth opportunity we see is to create a budget structure that rewards A&S for successfully delivering its mission and for fundraising. That is, we must transparently distribute revenues from arts and sciences to arts and sciences to give A&S more budget autonomy (and responsibility), to align incentives, and to promote mission-driven investments into A&S priorities.

In our current budget model, the A&S programs (Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) and the Dean of Student Affairs (DOSA)) are on an allowance from the Central administration. Their budgets are not directly tied to revenue sources associated with the A&S mission such as undergraduate tuition or flows from endowed funds. For example, A&S does not receive direct benefits from increased tuition, because the allowance is not directly tied to tuition. Likewise, the current structure also reduces direct benefits from fundraising and inherently inhibits incentives to fundraise.

Example:

*Dartmouth College Fund (Annual Fund)*: In the current budget model, if funds are raised in the annual fund, it does not directly increase A&S net revenue. It increases Central’s net revenue. Funding for FAS or DOSA would only increase indirectly, only through a central budget allocation (if requested and granted).

In a potential future model an A&S unit’s budget would be directly tied to net revenue (i.e., tuition revenue brought in by A&S programs, less unfunded financial aid, less Annual Funds). Any funds raised through Annual Fund would therefore increase the A&S unit’s net revenue. This increased revenue could be allocated by the A&S leader to support priorities of the A&S unit (faculty research, faculty lines, staff support, new academic initiatives, new co-curricular initiatives, etc).
Endowed professorship example:

In current “allowance” model, if funding is raised for an endowed professorship in the Arts & Sciences, the associated funding does not necessarily increase the current FAS budget in perpetuity. The endowed funds reside in FAS and the flows from the endowment fund a professorship. However, the Central administration can simply decrease the allowance/subvention allotted to the FAS from the central budget, potentially leading to no changes in overall FAS budget. This disincentivizes fundraising.

In a proposed future model, the endowed funds would reside in an A&S unit as they do now in FAS and the flows from these endowed funds would pay for a professorship, as they do now. However, the A&S budget would be based on net tuition revenue model (rather than an allowance). Therefore, the flows from endowed professorship would increase available funds for use in other initiatives in A&S, as A&S is no longer on an allowance from the Central budget. Instead, it retains the net total revenue.

*Note: FAS: Faculty of Arts and Sciences.*
Student Affairs Example:

In the current model, if funding is raised for a student program in the Arts & Sciences, the associated funding does not necessarily increase the current DOSA budget in perpetuity. It is up to negotiation. If the funds are for an existing student program/activity, it simply decreases the subvention/allowance allotted to the DOSA from the central budget. If the funds are for a new activity, it might increase the overall fund (and not reduce the subvention). In a new model, the endowed funds would reside in an A&S unit as they do now in DOSA, but their presence would increase the total funds available for use within the Arts & Sciences.
The potential budget structure incorporates greater transparency, more independence (and responsibility) for A&S leadership, faculty, and staff, and aligns incentives among stakeholders to align decisions with desired outcomes. How can tuition and other revenues (from fundraising) be distributed in a way that is transparent, while promoting mission-driven investments into A&S priorities? What budget structure and incentives would allow and encourage an Arts & Sciences leader to maximize success of the Arts & Sciences educational and scholarly mission, while also aligning incentives with the Central?

This slide walks through the current state budget and potential future state scenario, one at a time. This is a simplified look, not the most accurate representation of the budget plan. It focuses on components associated with net tuition revenue. For example, it abstracts revenues from research grants and flows from endowments.

On the left, in the current model, FAS and DoSA see no direct impact of an increase in revenue. Monies from tuition, less unfunded UG financial aid, plus funds from Annual Fund, flow to Undesignated Central Revenue. If revenue increases in the current state model, FAS/DoSA do not automatically receive additional funds in budget allocations. Incremental funds flow centrally and are available through budget requests and annual budget process. In this model, A&S (FAS+DoSA) does not benefit directly from tuition increases nor increased fundraising for the Annual Fund.

On the right, in one possible model, a new A&S could see a direct increase in revenue. Monies from tuition, less unfunded UG financial aid, plus funds from Annual Fund flow to Net UG Revenue Pool. This Pool is then split between A&S, Thayer (they also educate UG students), and
Central. All three parties share the benefit of any net revenue increase, with A&S receiving a proportionate share.

Through new fiscal and organizational structures for A&S, we are better equipped to:

- Align incentives through A&S directly benefiting from revenue sources associated with A&S mission (for the unit; and across the central and A&S (and Thayer))
- Revenue sources include UG tuition, but also distributions from gifts. The future A&S unit must be resourced to raise funds for academic programs, student success, and other mission priorities.
- With a single leader sitting at the table with institutional peers, and overseeing the holistic undergraduate experience and advocating for academic and student affairs programs, A&S is better set up to innovate through cooperation with other units on campus, including fundraising.
- Increased revenues can then be invested in A&S priorities and mission.
Obviously, we don’t have all the answers for you today about what might or might not result from this project — the nature of the project is to take the time to engage the right stakeholders and give them time to develop the best answers possible. This fall, we are particularly focused on engaging stakeholders more broadly.

In broad strokes, this is the trajectory we are planning:

- In fall, we established six task groups organized around particular questions identified last year. They have been hard at work since August, gathering data and expert input, analyzing options, and developing recommendations. It is important to note that our Task Groups have representatives from A&S, central units, the President’s Office, and Thayer.
- These task groups are also actively engaging with faculty governance committees, staff teams and leaders, and the senior leadership of the institution to answer specific questions. We have over 40 meetings already scheduled or in the process of scheduling for the Fall. Meetings range from targeted inquiries to faculty committees, to Town Halls, etc. A goal of this phase is to engage the community on the progress and ideas around this initiative, and ensure more perspectives are taken into consideration as leadership and the Steering Committee craft the future of A&S.
  - For example, the Institutional Registrar task group is meeting with A&S registrar and each of the registrars of professional schools for their inputs, and
  - the UG Student Affairs Task Group is facilitating a design thinking workshop around new ideas and solutions to be solved in the future
  - Nina Pavcnik and Scott Frew will attend the Committee on Priorities in October to discuss the directional budget model.
  - David Kotz and Nina Pavcnik will meet with DOSA
  - Christie Thomas and Nina Pavcnik will attend the Committee of Chairs meeting in
October to discussing T&P, followed by meeting with Divisional Councils.

- Task groups will deliver their recommendations to the Steering Committee at the end of December. This winter the Steering Committee will pull those recommendations together into a formal proposal, and refine it via feedback from key stakeholders.
- Then in the spring, we will discuss that proposal with the campus community and incorporate refinements and enhancements.
- If any elements of the proposal require faculty or trustee approval, our spring discussions will feed those formal processes, with the goal of coming to a set of decisions by summer.
We are coming to you today to make sure you have a foundational understanding of this project and where it will lead. But this is only our first round of significant community consultation.

We will continue to provide written and online updates as warranted through the fall and the winter, and then on through the spring.

Once we have a formal proposal, we will again hold a series of town halls or other gatherings open to the Dartmouth community.

Finally, at every step, we will provide opportunities for individual members of our community to ask questions and make their voices heard.

Even now we welcome queries and comments through an online form you can find on the Arts and Sciences Future website. There, you can also take a detailed look at the work, the people undertaking it, and how it will play out over the next year. Just search “Arts and Sciences Future” on Dartmouth.edu, and it should be the first option on the page.
Q&A