A COMPACT TO ENHANCE TEACHING
AND LEARNING AT HARVARD

Proposed by the
Task Force on Teaching and Career Development
to the
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Harvard University

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Preface

As members of the Task Force on Teaching and Career Development, we are pleased to present this report for consideration by our colleagues in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Over recent months, the nine of us have grappled with a central paradox about teaching in FAS: devoted teachers abound, yet many faculty members, graduate teaching fellows, and undergraduates doubt that the university values and rewards excellence in teaching. Teachers labor in “pedagogical solitude,” doubting that others will recognize and build upon their key achievements, and wondering whether Harvard will reward contributions to pedagogical excellence, as it does breakthroughs in academic research.

Consulting widely and assembling information on practices across Harvard and at other universities, we have carefully assessed the current situation and looked for ways to improve the civic culture of teaching. At the front of our report, we outline “A Compact to Enhance Teaching and Learning at Harvard.” This serves as an “executive summary” of our conclusions, for it states the principles that guide our proposed new institutional compact, and briefly describes five major reform goals with 18 action recommendations arranged under them. Subsequent sections of the report spell out the rationales for the principles, goals, and recommendations. At the end of the report, we summarize the vision of “Harvard as a University that Values Excellence in Teaching, Research, and Student Learning” that we developed as we worked on specific policy recommendations.

In the weeks to come, we look forward to discussing our findings, recommendations, and vision with individual colleagues, with the Faculty Council and other FAS committees, and with the Faculty as a whole.
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A COMPACT TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING AT HARVARD

Principles, Goals, and Recommendations for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To renew its commitment to excellence, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences must motivate and empower committed teachers as well as distinguished researchers, and actively encourage intelligent pedagogy as well as pathbreaking research. Devoted teachers abound at Harvard, yet their individual efforts are often not perceived as central to institutional priorities.

➢ Leadership matters: We call on the incoming President and FAS Dean to emphasize and support the improvement of teaching and assessment of learning, and visibly to reward the efforts asked of all faculty.

➢ Department chairs working with directors of studies must have the support necessary to plan curricula and orchestrate creative and equitable faculty contributions to concentrations, general education, and graduate programs.

➢ Tenured faculty should lead by example, requiring of themselves the same commitment to teaching that they ask of junior colleagues and graduate students who are at earlier stages of developing their capacities as scholars and teachers.

➢ Fostering learning is a shared responsibility; to be effective, teachers must actively engage with students and cooperate with colleagues to set clear curricular goals, improve teaching skills, assess what students actually learn, and experiment with pedagogical improvements.

➢ FAS must ensure equitable contributions to teaching and mentoring within and across departments, lest devoted teachers be weighed down with unequal loads.
GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Foster stronger collegial engagement and responsibility for effective teaching and learning.

1. FAS faculty should routinely share course materials and discuss the goals, methods, and effectiveness of instruction. Departments and divisions should institutionalize such discussions, and consider possibilities for colleagues to visit, learn from, and comment upon one another’s lectures, seminars, or research group sessions.

2. Through a “Dean’s Fund for Curricular Enrichment and Pedagogical Improvement,” FAS should support departmental speakers and workshops, Faculty-wide and divisional colloquia, and summer institutes, to develop and share pedagogical models and further collegial consideration of ways to design and enrich courses and improve major types of teaching and advising.

3. Because department chairs need enhanced resources as they work in concert with directors of undergraduate and graduate studies to improve course offerings, student mentoring, and the capacities of teachers, FAS should provide efficiently accessed information and offer multi-year grants through the Dean’s Fund.

Support pedagogical creativity and remove impediments to experimentation.

4. All members of the faculty, including those newly appointed, should have access to grants from the Dean’s Fund for course development, pedagogical experimentation, and other contributions to the enrichment of student learning. Support for the preparation of new materials plus research assistance or a month of summer salary should be available as suitable for specific projects. The results of projects, including appropriate assessments of improvements in student learning, should be shared and publicized.

5. To make available the latest research about student learning and ways to assess and improve pedagogical effectiveness, the Bok Center should offer expert consultations tailored to particular areas of learning to faculty members and departments requesting such information.

6. Faculty who experiment with new pedagogical approaches should be encouraged to go beyond online course evaluations, using additional means to assess student learning and adjust course practices.
7. FAS should make adjustments in scheduling and support to facilitate faculty-taught courses that combine presentations with discussions. Concurrently, the Graduate School and the College should explore pedagogically beneficial formats (beyond lecture courses with sections) to involve graduate students in teaching partnerships with faculty.

Regularly account for and assess all important aspects of teaching, advising, and efforts at pedagogical improvement.

8. An automated system for the annual faculty activity reports should make the submission of reports easier for individual faculty members and include opportunities for accounts of teaching goals and achievements, along with fuller information about each faculty member’s classes, advising and mentoring, work with graduate teaching fellows, and contributions to curricular development and pedagogical improvement.

9. Participation in the recently improved online system of course evaluation should be required for all faculty and students in courses above a minimum size. Departments and course heads should make creative use of the option to tailor new questions to assess what students report they have learned.

10. Working in cooperation with departments and course heads, the FAS should explore additional ways to assess student learning – including regularly asking for reactions while courses are in progress; gathering retrospective assessments from students and alumni/ae; and periodically conducting objective assessments of student gains in core competencies such as writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and the mastery of foreign languages.

Reward good teaching and contributions to pedagogical improvement at all career levels.

11. Annual salary reviews for tenured faculty should take teaching, advising, and efforts at pedagogical improvement fully and explicitly into account. In making yearly adjustments in consultation with department chairs, FAS deans should give major and equal weight to demonstrably strong or weak contributions in teaching and research. The reasons for adjustments should be explained in the salary letter sent annually to each faculty member.

12. Teaching records and promise should be thoroughly and consistently assessed when FAS faculty are appointed. Departments should obtain and review such evidence as: full summaries of previous courses and mentoring; characteristic examples of course syllabi or other instructional materials; and personal statements about teaching accomplishments, goals, and potential contributions to the Harvard curriculum. When possible, visits of candidates should include demonstrations of pedagogical skills important to specific areas of learning.
13. Summer orientation conferences for entering junior faculty in the humanities and social sciences should be improved and followed up during the academic year. Similar opportunities should be extended to junior faculty in engineering and the natural sciences, for whom orientations should also include sessions about managing work and encouraging learning in research groups or laboratories.

14. FAS departments should take a developmental approach to teaching by junior faculty. Junior colleagues should receive continuing advice from faculty mentors on how to develop an appropriate range of courses and teaching skills over the course of their appointments; and new course preparations should be phased in. For promotion reviews, junior faculty should prepare statements reflecting upon their accomplishments and goals in classroom instruction, advising, and pedagogical development – and senior colleagues should be prepared to offer an informed assessment of the full trajectory of the junior member’s teaching.

15. The training of PhD students should include a focus on pedagogy. The Task Force endorses the “Steps to Enhance Teaching Fellow Training” approved by the Graduate Policy Committee. These steps include improved English language screening and training; better definition of required training for new teachers as well as opportunities for advanced pedagogical training; guidelines for faculty course heads who work with teaching fellows; and the institution of automated dossiers for Harvard doctoral students to record teaching accomplishments and pedagogical training.

Make the enhanced FAS commitment to excellent teaching and enrichment of student learning visible within and beyond Harvard.

16. Make permanently visible the specific accomplishments as well as the names of winners of FAS-wide awards for excellence in teaching and advising.

17. Use regular articles in the Harvard Gazette and a new “Teaching Matters” website to better communicate pedagogical information and models of excellent teaching, advising, and pedagogical creativity to faculty, current and prospective students, and alumni/ae and friends of Harvard.

18. FAS should provide support and give credit to encourage faculty participation in professional conferences and national debates about teaching and the assessment of student learning. And FAS administrators should cooperate with their counterparts at other universities to share information about teaching, pedagogical improvements, and assessments of student learning.
The Challenge We Face

Renowned in their fields of research, most scholars in Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences are also creative and devoted teachers. Faculty take great pride in delivering compelling lectures and orchestrating seminars. More than a quarter of graduate teaching fellows receive very high course evaluation scores from the undergraduates they help to teach. Leading members of the faculty devote time and thought to improving courses and curricula. By the hundreds, senior and junior faculty – including the Nobel Prize winners among us – advise freshmen, guide senior honors theses and doctoral dissertations, and meet regularly with undergraduates, graduate students, and teaching fellows in small groups focused on research, learning, or the performance of shared instructional responsibilities.

These truths about the devotion of the University’s scholars to the pedagogical side of their calling emerges not only from statistics but also from the “buzz” of daily conversations in and near Harvard Yard. Undergraduates tell of guidance from memorable teachers, while faculty and graduate teaching fellows speak of student achievements with intense pride. Even faculty who leave Harvard report enjoying the chance to teach our wonderful undergraduates. Many older faculty recount life-long ties to graduates of the College and the Graduate School – former students who have gone on to make a difference in so many walks of life. Harvard teachers intuitively understand that no other university holds a higher potential for rewarding teaching, because so many promising students come to study here.
So why would anyone think there is any problem about the role of teaching in scholarly careers in the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)? The problem lies, for the most part, not in individual values but in what the institution seems to prioritize and reward in its official, publicly visible routines. In principle, FAS expects all faculty members to do what many in fact do: devote comparable time during the academic year to teaching and research, and teach undergraduates as well as graduate students. But in institutional practice cutting-edge academic research is what FAS celebrates and most consistently rewards. A similar situation certainly prevails at other leading research universities, yet the gap between precept and practice may be especially worrisome at Harvard, given that we recruit accomplished research “soloists” who do not always make the most harmonious music together. The ways we appoint and promote faculty; our modes of training graduate students; the stories we feature in Harvard’s publications and on its websites; and our discussions of scholarly ideas – all focus overwhelmingly on individual, professionally certified breakthroughs in academic research.

This makes sense in many ways, for Harvard has one of the very best and most productive research faculties in the world. Yet in the course of so valuing individual research accomplishments, we have tended to leave the intellectually informed development of teaching and the assessment of student learning to the side. We do not enmesh in our daily discourse among faculty and graduate students – nor in our institutional rewards and civic culture – the idea that teaching, like research, can be continually improved in exciting ways. Unlike the situation for scholarly research within and beyond Harvard, good approaches worked out by individual teachers are not regularly communicated to others; and the development of graduate students and
younger faculty does not convey the message that teaching and pedagogical improvement are also central to scholarly careers.

Understood simply as a matter of individual talent, choice, or valor, commitment to teaching loses visibility and becomes less consistent. Students, faculty, and departments are left to wonder if resources and rewards will flow to those who devote extra time to teaching and efforts at improvement. Basic instructional duties tend, inexorably, to tilt toward the younger and less powerful members of the community – or to become the appreciated but somewhat marginalized province of senior faculty perceived as inherently talented or especially caring instructors. Concluding in turn that many faculty are not really interested in them, too many of our undergraduates take a passive stance toward the classroom and turn their passions toward extracurricular pursuits.

In this situation, younger and older members of the FAS teaching community echo a counterproductive message about “what really matters around here” – even if they personally would prefer an institutional climate that more prominently features, rewards, and socially supports the pedagogical side of excellent scholarship. “So often I hear, ‘Don’t waste time on teaching, do your own work,’” wrote an experienced but frustrated graduate teaching fellow on a survey conducted in the spring of 2006. Another survey respondent agreed that “in my department, teaching is de-emphasized to an extreme.... There is no training or guidance.... and there’s a silent understanding that you should put as little time into it as possible.” A third PhD student, a scientist who won the prestigious Levenson Teaching Prize, confesses that “one of the biggest disappointments of my academic career has been hearing speeches from university presidents about how important teaching is, and on the other side see hiring decisions
be made almost solely on publications and grant records.... I see how in my own career I earn high praise (and more money) for every paper or academic achievement, while every teaching achievement earns a warning of how I should not wander off research.”

Teaching is something she feels she is “doing on my own time,” agrees a prize-winning junior faculty member. “In my six years at Harvard,” elaborates another award-winning junior colleague, “I have never been given the impression that my teaching is taken into account in promotion decisions. In the letter I received following my four year review, mention of my teaching abilities was either absent or buried. In a follow-up meeting with my department chair, where I was told what I needed to do to have a shot at tenure, teaching was not mentioned. When I served on a junior search committee in which we considered (and eventually hired) several candidates who were assistant professors elsewhere, teaching was never mentioned.... And in six years of informal discussions and hallway gossip about tenure with junior colleagues, teaching never comes up.”

Senior faculty, meanwhile, worry about what message to convey to junior colleagues building records for tenure consideration. “If chairs are to advise junior faculty to work hard on their teaching,” explains one senior colleague, “they must feel confident they are not giving bad advice, that such advice will not diminish the junior faculty member’s chance of receiving tenure.” “There are still pockets of the University where winning the Levenson award for teaching as a junior faculty member is considered the kiss of death with respect to promotion,” observes a second senior colleague. Yet another faculty member, a department chair and prize-winning teacher, notes that in his attendance at ad hoc (i.e., final-stage) tenure proceedings
during three Harvard presidencies, teaching was often not mentioned at all – and if mentioned, there was a simple, binary view: Teaching is either “up to snuff” or “not up to snuff,” but the “snuff level” is unclear, and only very rarely is a faculty member’s teaching considered “not up to snuff.”

Such worries persist despite improvements in the level of attention given to teaching qualifications in tenure reviews. Every tenure case that arrives in University Hall is accompanied by a separate letter from the department chair detailing the candidate’s qualifications and promise as a teacher, and recently the guidelines for supporting evidence have been clarified. Empirical investigation shows that, over the past decade, Harvard junior faculty who win FAS-wide teaching prizes are not less likely than others to achieve tenure – in fact, the tendency in the natural sciences and social sciences is for certified teaching excellence to be positively associated with achievement of tenure. Subtle trends, however, may not be as important as widespread perceptions, especially when issues of institutional culture and socially perceived rewards are at stake.

Why Now?

The Task Force on Teaching and Career Development began work on September 5, 2006. With encouragement from President Derek Bok, nine tenured members of the FAS faculty were charged by Dean Jeremy Knowles to “consider what the Faculty of Arts and Sciences does – and what it can do better – to support and reward a commitment to the steady improvement of teaching.” As Dean Knowles
further explained in his September 4 letter to FAS faculty, “I have... asked the Task
Force to examine several matters: how the FAS currently evaluates teaching and
contributions to curricular development; what role teaching plays in the training of
our graduate students and in our decisions to hire and promote faculty; and what we
do to aid and encourage pedagogical innovation and excellence on a continuing basis.”

For many reasons, 2006-07 is a good year for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
to re-think institutional practices surrounding teaching and pedagogical
improvement. This is a pivotal moment of leadership transition, with Harvard on the
verge of welcoming a new President who will, in turn, appoint several new deans,
including the next Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Interregnums can be
moments of anxiety or stasis, yet they can also bring rare opportunities for members
of an institution to reflect and consider reforms that strengthen the fundamental
institutional mission.

At the University’s helm this year as Interim President is Derek Bok, a
revered leader of Harvard and well-known advocate for the improvement of teaching
and learning in universities and colleges. As the various streams of revision of the
Harvard College curriculum come together, FAS faculty face the challenge of
mounting new or revamped courses, while improving the training of teaching fellows
and enriching undergraduate instruction in writing, quantitative analysis, foreign
languages, and other key areas. In a number of parts of the curriculum, especially in
the natural sciences, faculty are devising new ways to engage undergraduates in
hands-on research projects. And both Harvard College and the Graduate School are
improving approaches to advising and mentoring our students.
Harvard faculty are looking to renew their commitment to excellent teaching and enhancement of student learning at a time of intensified public concern and national scrutiny of higher education. A national commission sponsored by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings issued a report in July 2006, calling upon colleges and universities to do a much more thorough job of measuring what students actually learn. Although experts do not find it easy to pinpoint changes in student skills and knowledge, there are growing bodies of research and practice that can help faculty members actively engage students in ways that promote understanding and mastery, rather than passive (in)attention. Harvard has the expertise and resources to provide leadership in this area.

“Most successful organizations today,” Derek Bok writes in his 2005 book Our Underachieving Colleges, “are trying hard to become effective ‘learning organizations’ that engage in an ongoing process of improvement by constantly evaluating their performance, identifying problems, trying various remedies, measuring their success, discarding those that do not work, and incorporating those that do” (p.316). The Faculty of Arts and Sciences will want to instantiate exactly this spirit as it works its way toward a revitalized undergraduate curriculum and improvements in the pedagogical preparation of graduate students. By more effectively combining world-class research with the vigorous pursuit of pedagogical improvement and excellence in teaching, the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences can enrich student learning, make the lives of faculty teachers more interesting and enjoyable, and distinguish itself even further in the ranks of leading research universities.
How the Task Force Has Deliberated

The Task Force on Teaching and Career Development has gathered ideas from faculty, graduate teaching fellows, and undergraduates; marshaled research reports and recommendations from FAS offices; and considered practices at sister universities as well as at other Harvard Schools. Because we could only gather information over a six-month period (starting in July 2006), we have surely not discovered all the evidence or absorbed all of the good ideas we might have by proceeding at a more leisurely pace. Yet over the course of ten well-prepared meetings convened between September and December 2006, we learned and heard more than enough to provide a rich menu of recommendations to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

From the start of its deliberations, the Task Force discussed values as well as the practical details of institutional rewards and routines. We did not just hold one philosophical discussion and then set core values aside; we returned to the big picture again and again, letting our understanding of principles come into view as we examined mundane realities and practical policy options. Again and again, we pulled up from the details to rework a statement about “Harvard as a University that Values Excellence in Teaching, Research, and Student Learning.” Below, we conclude our report with this statement, which we believe can be used by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to communicate shared values and understandings about excellence in teaching among ourselves as well as with current and prospective students and faculty, alumni/ae and friends, and the general public.

Because this Task Force did its work during the fall semester of the regular academic year, we could consult along the way with many faculty, students,
alumni/ae, and staff members. Attachment A lists the FAS groups and other Harvard constituencies with which members of the Task Force formally met to get ideas and feedback. These include the FAS Faculty Council; the Educational Policy Committee; and the Graduate Policy Committee. We also sat down with a number of undergraduates (some from Phi Beta Kappa and others from the Standing Committee on Pedagogical Improvement); participated in a meeting of House Masters; and convened four sessions bringing together dozens of FAS teachers who have been awarded Harvard College Professorships or other FAS-wide prizes in recognition of their excellence as classroom instructors and advisors to undergraduate and graduate students. We made brief presentations and engaged in lively dialogue with the Harvard Board of Overseers; the Board of Incorporators of *Harvard Magazine*; the Harvard Committee on University Resources; and the Graduate School Alumni Association. As summarized in Attachment D, we also reviewed thoughtful reports and data from the Office of Budgets, Financial Planning and Institutional Research, the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, and various FAS offices, and received valuable ideas and advice from deans and colleagues at a number of other universities and Harvard Schools.

We want to underline the especially important role played in our deliberations by the chairs and key instructional leaders from six FAS departments: English and Classics in the humanities; History of Science and Psychology in the social sciences; and Physics and Molecular and Cellular Biology in the natural sciences. From the start the Task Force was mindful that much of what happens in teaching and curricular formation plays out in highly varied disciplinary and departmental settings. Although we are familiar with policies and practices in the twelve FAS
departments with which we hold primary or joint appointments, we also wanted to learn in detail about departments beyond our own. In the few months available to us, we could not meet with every department and instructional program in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and we needed closer engagement with faculty leaders on the front lines of undergraduate and graduate instruction than we felt we could get from broad statistical overviews or from the vantage point of University Hall offices. We hit upon the tactic of asking department chairs and directors of undergraduate and graduate studies in these six departments (all but one of which are not the home departments of Task Force members) to form “partnerships” with us. Responding generously to our request, the colleagues listed in Attachment B answered a detailed questionnaire on departmental practices and perspectives, and also met with Task Force members to tell us about the challenges each department faces, comment upon our nascent proposals, and enrich the agenda of issues we considered.

Interaction with leaders from the six partner departments was extraordinarily enlightening to the Task Force, and ideas from these colleagues – sometimes the very words they used – are quoted at appropriate points in our report. As well, many other colleagues and students who spoke with us in meetings or emails will see their observations and ideas anonymously deployed. Our information-gathering and deliberations since last September have drawn profoundly upon the concerns and insights of many throughout the Faculty.
Principles and Goals for a Proposed Compact

In order to bolster the civic culture surrounding the pursuit of excellence in teaching and student learning in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, members of the Task Force believe that administrators, faculty, students, and supportive staff need to work together to further the following aims:

- Foster stronger collegial engagement and responsibility for effective teaching and learning.
- Support pedagogical creativity and remove impediments to experimentation.
- Regularly account for and assess all important aspects of teaching, advising, and efforts at pedagogical improvement.
- Reward good teaching and contributions to pedagogical improvement at all career levels.
- Make the enhanced FAS commitment to excellent teaching and enrichment of student learning visible within and beyond Harvard.

We use the term “compact” advisedly. *The Faculty of Arts and Sciences cannot significantly improve its teaching culture without sustained, voluntary, and mutually reinforcing commitments from all components of the community.* “Compact” conveys exactly the seriousness of purpose, mutuality, and sustained voluntary dedication that we have in mind. And it makes it clear that we are not offering a laundry list or bazaar of disconnected proposals, out of which each constituency can choose only those that bring it advantage, while ignoring its own responsibilities or shifting costs to others. “Good teaching” is a goal to which faculty and administrators easily pay lip service, without putting effort and money where their mouths are. Task forces come and go, as do recommendations to “improve teaching.” Our group has been inspired
by reports and recommendations prepared at other universities and by ideas advanced years ago at Harvard. But we have also seen how easy it is for proposed reforms to be sidelined, improperly implemented, or ignored altogether.

University administrators all too readily make public proclamations about teaching and impose requirements on faculty and departments, without in turn providing strong leadership or committing sufficient resources. Should this happen in FAS in response to our report, new burdens could fall on the most conscientious teachers and high-performing departments, without empowering them or delivering new resources and rewards to further their efforts and spread exemplary practices. That is why we urge the incoming President and Dean of the Faculty not only to endorse the goals of this report, but also to commit resources and make choices that support and reward faculty and departments who further excellent teaching and intelligent pedagogy at Harvard. Administrators at the departmental level and above will also need to support enhanced teacher training, improved assessments of learning, and experiments with pedagogical and curricular improvements. We hope that the FAS can move forward this year with important reforms, including making resources available to departments and faculty for course development and the improvement of pedagogy. But the greater accountability this compact recommends for all FAS faculty can be instituted only as incoming University and FAS leaders make clear their own ongoing commitment to reward and support excellent teaching.

Another pitfall would be to demand more of graduate students and junior faculty, without asking for comparable efforts and accountability from senior, tenured faculty in FAS. To avoid this, key sections of our report start with what should be
asked and expected of tenured faculty, before moving to proposals about the training and careers of junior members of the community.

Finally, the Task Force has been mindful throughout its deliberations that it would be better to build upon and improve existing ideals and routines of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, rather than to propose entirely new ideals or the establishment of additional offices, committees, or administrative routines. At the level of ideals, there is no need to propose any radically new vision of scholarly careers at Harvard. We reaffirm the longstanding commitment of FAS to train, appoint, and support excellent scholars who commit themselves to both teaching and research – and we applaud FAS’s expectation that every ladder faculty member will teach undergraduates as well as graduate students. Harvard is a wonderful instance of a distinctive type of scholarly institution: the research university linked to a selective undergraduate college and graduate school. In our time, many institutions specialize in parts of the mission that the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences aims to hold together through the efforts of a core ladder faculty. At one extreme, research institutes are proliferating, where scholars can be “free” of teaching undergraduates or even PhD students. And, of course, liberal arts colleges persist as a vital part of American higher education, places where faculty are principally committed to undergraduate instruction. We in FAS continue to believe that leading, world-class scholars can and will commit themselves equally to doing superb research and contributing in steadily improving ways to the education and mentoring of college and graduate students at all stages of learning. Our Task Force applauds this dual commitment, complex as it may be to realize it in practice. We direct our recommendations, therefore, to ladder faculty and academic administrators. And we
urge that faculty appointments and advancement to tenure at Harvard continue to go to persons who demonstrate strong attainment – and the promise of continuing excellence – in both teaching and research. Although we recognize that, in practice, some tenure slots will go to colleagues who are rigorously assessed as stellar in one realm and clearly strong in the other, we do not believe that FAS should move toward a dual tenure-track system in which some ladder faculty are appointed and tenured for research alone, and others are appointed and tenured for teaching alone.

As for organizational elaboration, our Task Force has operated with the presumption that we should adapt existing departments and programs, committees, support offices, and forms of accountability, improving their capacities to contribute to teaching excellence and pedagogical improvement at Harvard. We do not recommend the permanent institutionalization of our own group, because FAS already has the Standing Committee on Pedagogical Improvement and other responsible faculty bodies, including the Educational Policy Committee; the Graduate Policy Committee; the Committees on Undergraduate Education and Graduate Education. The Faculty also has a Dean, Divisional Deans, and Deans of the College and the Graduate School, who must act as a team to promote the goals we set out here; and it has instructional support services that can be better coordinated and focused under strong academic leadership. Lastly, FAS already requires annual reports from individual faculty and departments, and there are established procedures for preparing case statements about faculty we want to appoint or promote. Rather than create whole new routines, the Task Force calls for these existing modes of accountability to be enriched and made more consistent, efficient, and useful.
Before proceeding, a few words should be said about two things our report does not do. First, our report does not analyze the extensive instructional contributions of preceptors, teaching assistants, lecturers, and other off-ladder teachers in FAS. In the short space of time available to us, we could not accurately map the activities of these teachers, nor do justice to important questions about how to better define their roles, support their efforts, and foster their careers. These questions remain for others to consider, and we hope this will happen soon. Our Task Force has focused on ladder faculty and PhD students, because they are the FAS scholars expected to develop teaching and advanced research in tandem – and because ladder faculty provide the core of institutional leadership in FAS.

We recognize, secondly, that some colleagues might expect recommendations of specific pedagogical methods or prescriptions about the kinds of courses all faculty should teach or all departments should mount. All of us believe in active engagement between faculty and students, and we offer recommendations about institutional practices and supports that will help individual faculty members, departments, and the entire FAS become more pedagogically creative, shifting the focus from continuing inherited instructional routines toward assessing and improving our efforts to enhance what students actually learn. Yet we do not try to prescribe specific teaching methods or dictate that everyone should teach the same types of courses. Faculty-taught seminars and research groups; large lecture courses with well-prepared teaching fellows; and mixed lecture-discussion courses – all can be taught in a variety of pedagogically effective ways and make valuable contributions to the rich panoply of the Harvard curriculum. Whether we are thinking of departments, divisions, or teaching faculty with different skills, one size does not fit all. There are valid
pragmatic and intellectual reasons for pedagogical variation and different menus of
course offerings. As we invigorate our curriculum and commit ourselves to
experimentation with improved techniques, the challenge we in FAS face is to work
with what is valuable in our decentralized pluralism while, at the same time,
ensuring equitable contributions and improving effectiveness across the board.

We now turn to explaining our major goals and spelling out the specific steps
we recommend to pursue each goal. In the following sections, we will usually not
repeat the wording of the 18 action recommendations listed in the synopsis at the
front of this report, but will, instead, concentrate on the facts that led us toward each
numbered recommendation and on the details and examples that explicate what we
have in mind.

**Goal: Foster Stronger Collegial Engagement**
and Responsibility for Effective Teaching and Learning

As scholars, all of us take it for granted that we will share ideas and work in
progress with fellow scholars for purposes of critique and improvement – and we know
that the results of our scholarship will be published for broader communities to assess
and build upon. So much of what makes academic and university life stimulating, not
to mention pleasurable, comes from discussions of research in progress, attendance at
scholarly lectures, and conversations about books and articles. But like their
counterparts elsewhere, Harvard faculty approach teaching more individualistically,
often in solitude.
“Everyone’s courses are regarded as their own affair,” reports one of our partner departments, describing a typical situation. Not one of the partner departments we engaged (nor any of those represented on the Task Force) has instituted any regular system in which faculty colleagues visit one another’s classes in order to learn and comment. At present, FAS faculty cannot even get automatic access to one another’s course websites; and syllabi and other materials prepared for courses are often treated as private and proprietary, rather than shared among colleagues for mutual comment and cumulative benefit. In this Harvard faculty are typical of scholars across many research universities. “The way we treat teaching removes it from the community of scholars,” observes the president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Lee S. Shulman, in his book on *Teaching as Community Property* (pp.140-41). “We close the classroom door and experience pedagogical solitude, whereas in our life as scholars, we are members of active communities: communities of conversation, communities of evaluation, communities in which we gather with others in our invisible colleges to exchange our findings, our methods, and our excuses.”

Not only do FAS faculty usually treat courses as “separate kingdoms”; we tacitly assume that good teachers are born, not made – which has the paradoxical effect of letting us off the hook and discouraging efforts at assessment and improvement. From time to time, Harvard may feature a few big courses or marquee teachers in publications and videos. But what does this have to do with the rest of us? We may tell ourselves that we do not have the same in-born talents, so we can go about our business. In extreme cases, an especially poorly performing graduate teaching fellow, junior faculty member, or (very occasionally) tenured faculty member
may be “towed to the garage” of the Bok Center for a remedial “tune up.” But it is not
taken for granted in FAS culture that teachers within and across departments need to
discuss and assess the goals, techniques, materials, and results of teaching – still less
that teaching is, in part, a set of skills that can be learned, and that effectiveness in
fostering student learning can be pursued through continual, career-long efforts
stimulated by peer review and community support.

Many colleagues have urged the Task Force to propose ideas and deployments
of resources to make teaching more of a “shared responsibility” (as one Harvard
College Professor put it). Indeed, the various meetings with faculty colleagues that
our Task Force convened during the fall semester proved to be so engaging and
informative for all concerned that we have been buoyed in our supposition that there
is a pent-up desire among FAS faculty to share ideas about teaching. Drawing on
many good ideas we heard, our first two recommendations speak about actions to
further collegial engagement that can be taken by departments and instructional
programs, as well as across divisions and FAS as a whole.

As proposed in recommendation number 1, FAS departments can begin to
overcome pedagogical solitude by weaving more collegial engagement about teaching
into ongoing routines (here and throughout the report, we use the word “department”
as a short-hand to include, as well, instructional programs outside of disciplinary
departments or spanning department boundaries). As matters now stand, most
departmental meetings and meetings of committees that supervise undergraduate or
graduate instruction focus on adjusting formal requirements or deciding which
students have met what requirements (or who can get “exceptions” to requirements).
Seldom do we include in recurrent meetings of departments, curricular committees, or
sections of large departments any discussion of the goals and content of courses, still less their pedagogical methods of effectiveness in promoting student learning. A focus on how best to mentor advisees or structure extracurricular engagement with students is rarer still.

An easy place to start promoting collegial engagement, therefore, is to work discussions of teaching and pedagogy into regular faculty meetings (as a few departments already do, at least occasionally). Topics will vary by discipline and types of instruction, yet some possibilities include: discussion of teaching practices used by various colleagues in similar kinds of courses; sharing of syllabi and teaching approaches for key foundation courses; discussion of how course sequences promote progression within a concentration; and discussion of how critical thinking, effective writing and oral expression, or other fundamental skills can be fostered. From time to time, a colleague who has experimented with pedagogical improvements – for example, incorporating case-problems into lecture courses; or running labs or hands-on field work – might explain what she did, why, and what she has learned about its effectiveness. And to mention another idea from a colleague in one of our partner departments, departmental faculty might gather for a workshop or retreat that includes an outside expert summarizing current pedagogical knowledge, or a scholar invited from another university to talk about how he or she goes about meeting a particular kind of pedagogical challenge known to be important in the field as a whole. In Classics, it might be the challenge of teaching students to read Latin at sight, while in parts of Government, it might be how to excite students about exploring real-world issues with a particular type of formal model.
Peer consultations in which faculty visit one another’s classes are another step we urge departments to consider. As a senior colleague who is also a House Master explains, “we need to develop a culture in which it seems normal for colleagues to come in and visit a class, and ideally sit down afterwards for discussion” of how effectively pedagogical goals were met. At the Harvard Business School, there are well developed norms and procedures for structuring peer visits by one faculty member to the class of another, including: an advance meeting to discuss the goals of the course and the place of the particular class session within it; the actual visit on a mutually agreed day, in which the observations of the visiting colleague are prompted by an established protocol; and a get-together afterwards to share reflections on what happened in the classroom, what worked, and what might improve.

The advantage of the Business School’s well-institutionalized system of peer consultations is that it fosters, over time, a culture of reflection on instructional goals and pedagogical methods. But the FAS is not the Business School, and our departments need to find their own ways. The Task Force urges a spirit of experimentation, where departments consider versions of peer observation suited to particular circumstances and aspirations. Possibilities include:

- Team teaching in which both faculty instructors are regularly present and reflect together throughout the semester on teaching practices, goals, and achievements.
- “Circles” of teaching colleagues who share a mode of instruction or an overall commitment to learning in a particular area of study, and who agree to orchestrate round-robin visits and consultations.
- Mutual visits back and forth between senior and junior faculty (within or across department lines).
Visits exchanged by colleagues in two departments – for example, two small language and literature departments – perhaps followed by a joint meeting after a year or so to assess what everyone has learned from the exchanges.

Senior faculty visits to junior colleagues’ classes, along the model of the Business School, where a different set of two senior faculty visit each junior colleague’s classes each year. Over the years, each assistant or associate professor will have engaged in this kind of developmental discussion with many different senior colleagues; and when promotion reviews arrive, senior members will have a rich trajectory of observations to draw upon to assess how their junior colleague has progressed as a teacher over the course of his or her appointment.

Enriched collegial conversations about teaching need not be arranged only within or through departments. In recommendation number 2, the Task Force proposes that FAS use significant new resources from a “Dean’s Fund for Curricular Enrichment and Pedagogical Improvement” to support and feature such occasions as FAS-wide lectures or panels on major goals or methods of teaching; recurrent events about teaching convened by the Divisional Deans; and special workshops or summer institutes to help groups of faculty design and enrich courses and improve major types of teaching and advising. Particular departments should also be able to use these resources to cover the costs of special pedagogical workshops or retreats, especially when they include visiting experts or exemplary teachers from other institutions.

Implementation of ongoing curricular changes will offer many opportunities over the coming years to support individual course heads and faculty groups who are devising new types of courses, or discovering improved ways to achieve general goals (such as making courses writing intensive, or incorporating quantitative reasoning into courses with various subject foci). As innovation or enrichment grants go to faculty who plan to develop offerings, why leave each instructor in solitude?

Compensated with appropriate honoraria, faculty developing similar sets of courses,
or tackling similar pedagogical challenges, might participate in workshops or summer institutes where they devote the equivalent of several days learning about relevant pedagogical literatures and models and sharing course plans with one another.

For example, for many years Cornell University has sponsored one possible variant of this approach – paying faculty to attend a summer institute in which they, alongside graduate teaching fellows, experiment with methods of writing-intensive instruction while teaching in the summer school a course they will later offer during the regular academic year. While this model may be too complex and time-consuming for many Harvard faculty, other kinds of multiple-day workshops (convened during a summer week, or over a period of several months a half day at a time) might enrich the preparation of various kinds of courses. To give some further examples, workshops might be supported by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for faculty aiming to mount new or enriched general education courses; for neighboring concentrations aiming to develop symbiotically related concentrations and secondary fields; for sets of faculty planning to mount thematically related electives from various departments; and for sets of faculty tackling similar pedagogical challenges (hands-on science; language training; improving student writing) in regular departmental courses.

Recommendation number 3, the final one in this section, addresses how department leaders can play a stronger role handling the full array of contributions teaching faculty need to make beyond and within concentrations. Many colleagues have pointed out to us that departmental chairs and leaders of undergraduate and graduate instruction are facing many more demands from University Hall and the various committees involved in the curriculum review, but they often do not have the authority or information needed to coordinate faculty contributions to teaching and
advising within and beyond their concentrations. Chairs need better information to allow coherent planning, along with easily tapped resources that can be used to support faculty who contribute constructively to the realization of departmental plans.

The Task Force specifically recommends that FAS devise new, automated and coordinated systems of information management to enable chairs and directors of studies to obtain real-time overviews of all aspects of their faculty’s work as course instructors and advisors – within concentrations; in neighboring departments; and in general education, freshman seminars, and advising. The data all exist somewhere, chairs tell us, but they never arrive at the same time as requests from University Hall. Information is distributed among many separate offices, requiring countless hours to track it down and collate. What is more, when individual faculty submit activity reports each March, the reports are not automated, so chairs have to collect and process hard copies, often in non-standard formats, in order to prepare for consultations with the deans. Not only should the annual reporting process be automated for individual faculty (see our discussion of this issue below); the results should be available in appropriately collated form to departmental chairs and instructional leaders. This step would do much to help departments take full account of multiple contributions to teaching and advising, so as to work toward greater equity among faculty in the distribution of duties.

Enhanced funding can also help departments tackle curricular and pedagogical challenges. The Task Force strongly recommends that a significant portion of new funding from the Dean’s Fund for Curricular Enrichment and Pedagogical
Improvement flow through departmental chairs working in concert with directors of undergraduate and graduate studies.

Departmental leaders can easily feel besieged as they cope with new challenges of streamlining concentration offerings; ensuring a supply of electives and courses suitable for students pursuing secondary fields; and mounting new courses for one or more categories of general education. Many have told us that, in the “weak chair” system typical in FAS, they do not feel they have the authority or the resources to facilitate cooperation. Chairs and heads of graduate and undergraduate instruction need (they have told us) clear backing, orientation, and advice from the deans; and they also need significant resources to allocate to cooperative colleagues, especially when asking faculty to mount new or redesigned curricular endeavors. We agree that department leaders should not have to persuade colleagues to pitch in, only to have to tell them, as individuals, to go through additional bureaucratic procedures to obtain necessary funding.

FAS should invite department chairs and directors of studies to devise plans for course development and pedagogical improvement and should provide support for implementing these plans. How would their department/program use resources to support course enrichment and the creation of new courses, improve advising, enhance the pedagogical training of graduate students, and enrich pedagogical discussions and assessments? Plans should indicate how the undertakings will be followed through and assessed over a two to three-year span. The Task Force endorses grants for departments from the Dean’s Fund, because we believe that the leverage and authority of departmental leaders needs to be reinforced, not picked apart, as FAS moves forward to implement multiple interrelated efforts to teach and advise.
undergraduates more effectively. As vital participants in the collective work of teaching, departments must mesh undergraduate and graduate course offerings, encourage faculty to assess and innovate, and ensure proper training and deployment of graduate teaching fellows as undergraduate offerings shift. To create the necessary complementarities, department leaders must mobilize broad collegial cooperation – and FAS can smooth the way by ensuring that significant funding flows through their hands.

**Goal: Support Pedagogical Creativity and Remove Impediments to Experimentation**

Because Harvard is a well-endowed institution with superbly qualified and highly motivated students, FAS faculty are in an ideal position to be creative and experimental in their approach to instruction in the classroom and beyond. The Task Force urges FAS to maximize this potential for scholars at every career stage.

Building upon the discussion of resources above, our **recommendation number 4** calls for significant new support to be made available to faculty members who undertake promising projects in curricular enrichment and pedagogical improvement. Faculty newly appointed to Harvard may want to adapt old courses or launch new ones; and colleagues already here may also need summer time or research assistance, and perhaps funding for new instructional materials. Appropriate packages of support will vary according to the undertaking and the situation of the faculty member. Yet resources should be easy for creative colleagues to obtain – in
return for a short application to the Dean’s Fund and a commitment to assess and share the results of the project.

Better coordination of pedagogical support services in FAS can also help faculty innovators obtain the expert advice they need about instructional techniques and technologies. Faculty members need to know where to go for expert help with instructional technologies and other supports. Strong, well-coordinated academic leadership is needed to enhance, guide, and make visible the full array of pedagogically relevant services, including those available through Instructional Computing, the Writing Center, and other offices, as well as the Bok Center.

As recommendation number 5 suggests, new expertise as well as services-as-usual will be necessary if we are to maximize pedagogical creativity in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Efforts by FAS members to improve teaching and learning should be informed by the latest pedagogical research – yet faculty in most FAS disciplines lack the time or expertise to master specialized literatures about student learning and the assessment of teaching.

In operation since 1978, the Bok Center has developed excellent programs offering basic training and orientation to new teachers; and it uses videotape consultations, advice to course heads, and advanced workshops to upgrade the skills of teaching fellows and faculty in many ways. The Task Force heard much praise for these services, and it urges the Bok Center to continue them. Efforts to knit ongoing Bok Center services to departmental efforts should also proceed apace – for example, through partnerships to mount disciplinary pedagogical seminars for graduate students, and through extension of the Lead Teaching Fellow network to all instructional programs.
The Bok Center should also expand its efforts, and add new expertise, in a second major area, to provide consultations on pedagogical research and its implications. The Center should not just be “a place you go” to get training or remedial help, as many FAS colleagues told us they see it now. It should also offer to departments and faculty groups up-to-date presentations of current research about student learning and ways to assess and improve pedagogy. Such advice will be most useful if it is tailored to the needs of broad sets of disciplines or areas, such as literature departments, or laboratory science fields, or quantitative social sciences, or ethnographic fields. Perhaps such services should be expanded through a distinct division within the Bok Center. At the same time, however, FAS academic deans and the leadership of the Bok Center need to maintain discipline and focus. The Bok Center cannot become – and should not be asked to become – all things pedagogical to every possible constituency in FAS. Additional important tasks – such as sponsoring original pedagogical research, the mounting of major data-collection efforts, and the provision of advice to undergraduates – are best left to others. The Bok Center can be most useful as a consultant to – and collaborator with – faculty groups looking for distilled knowledge to help them assess student learning and improve teaching.

Beyond asking for support and services, many faculty have told the Task Force that existing institutional routines can, unintendedly, stand in the way of pedagogical creativity. Not just in the instances we are about to mention, but more generally as we move forward, FAS faculty and administrators should always be on the lookout for the unintended effects of our inherited routines. We should be prepared to supplement and modify routines where appropriate, keeping the eye on the fundamental goal of improving student mastery of ideas, skills, and values.
For example, when teachers implement new pedagogical approaches (such as asking students to discover and discuss key concepts through hands-on experimentation in a science course), the initial period can be tricky. Student expectations have to change, and the teacher who is experimenting with a new pedagogical approach needs to assess its impact and adjust along the way. The Task Force wants the spirit of trial-and-error and adjustment to flourish in FAS classrooms, unconstrained by faculty fears that a new approach in the classroom might initially result in a depressed overall “effectiveness” score on the online course evaluation form. As suggested in recommendation number 6, when new approaches are undertaken, we believe that faculty experimenters should use multiple methods to assess learning and make corrections. Standard course evaluations should still be collected when pedagogical experiments are under way, with the course heads making good use of the newly available option to write specially tailored questions to ask students respondents about their perceptions of the innovative approach and gains from it. Beyond the standard evaluations, faculty experimenters should devise and report additional modes of subjective and objective evaluation. During the annual reporting/review process, course heads who are experimenting with something new should describe what they are trying and how they are assessing it; and department chairs and deans should give credit for experimentation and adjustment.

In recommendation number 7, we urge flexibility in FAS course formats and scheduling. In our view, too many teachers feel restricted to the time-worn model of the sizeable lecture course – where faculty pronounce from the podium and graduate teaching fellows engage undergraduates in discussions and provide personal
feedback. Such courses are obviously necessary for certain instructional purposes, and they can be very well done, especially when faculty use participatory techniques in the lecture hall and graduate teaching fellows are well trained and mentored. But this format should not be a pedagogical dead-end – a trap for faculty who feel they must fit into pre-ordained time slots or create cookie-cutter sections simply to sustain financial support for PhD students. It should become much easier to schedule classes lasting an hour and a half, where a faculty instructor combines discussions with lectures and personally grades undergraduate work. A faculty member who chooses to do all of this in a class attracting 20 or more undergraduates should be able to get at least part of the funding that would have been spent on a teaching fellow to use for another, more suitable kind of pedagogical support.

Furthermore, many faculty and graduate students have urged that the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and Harvard College look for creative ways for graduate students to develop teaching skills and work in partnership with faculty to engage undergraduates, moving beyond the section-leader role. The undergraduate curriculum review calls for a higher proportion of small or medium-sized faculty-taught courses to become typical fare in the general education program as well as other parts of the College curriculum. There may be reduced demand for section leaders in some fields, even as new opportunities open for graduate students to work in writing-intensive seminars; to run workshops in concentrations where certain standard skills need to be mastered; to assist faculty in mentoring students in laboratory experiments; and to do other pedagogically important things. Graduate students will also find new opportunities to form partnerships with faculty members in projects to enrich courses and curricula and assess student learning.
Another possibility would be to revive an experiment conducted some years ago. An undergraduate seminar or lecture/discussion course enrolling 15 to 25 students might be co-taught by a faculty member and a graduate student. Both would be involved in all aspects of designing and conducting the course; and both would evaluate undergraduate work. The Task Force endorses the exploration of such formats – which could encourage pedagogical creativity, enrich teacher training, and prove stimulating to faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates alike. But the faculty member and the graduate student would both need to be involved in all aspects of the course. For example (as can already happen in a large lecture course), a graduate student co-teaching a seminar-discussion class might appropriately prepare and deliver a lecture or manage a case discussion. Yet this should happen in the presence of and with the support of the faculty partner.

Goal: Regularly Account for and Assess All Important Aspects of Teaching, Advising, and Efforts at Pedagogical Improvement

For a Faculty that wants to function as a “learning organization,” nothing is more important than regularly collected, widely shared, and user-friendly information. Individuals, departments, and FAS as a whole must be able to track contributions to teaching and pedagogy and assess their results. Collegial exchanges and peer consultations of the type recommended in the previous section are one way in which we can learn more about teaching and learning, yet they are only one leg of the stool. The other two legs are faculty self-assessments and evaluations from students. Recommendations in this section of our report speak to ways in which FAS
can improve the content and usefulness of existing annual faculty reports and student
course evaluations – and also work toward supplementing these with new
assessments of student learning.

In recommendation number 8, we focus on the annual activity reports that
each FAS faculty member submits early in the spring semester to the department
chair and University Hall. In a most interesting and informative exercise, the Task
Force collected the formats for annual faculty activity reporting from eleven other
research universities: Brown, Chicago, Columbia, Barnard, Berkeley, Dartmouth,
Michigan, Northwestern, Princeton, Stanford, and Yale. From this, we have learned
that the current Harvard-FAS reporting format is technologically outdated and overly
focused on a few quantitative indicators, including lists of courses and their
enrollments and “the total number of term-time days” spent on “external consulting.”
In all key areas of faculty endeavor – teaching, research, and citizenship – many other
leading research universities have on-line forms that mix qualitative comments and
lists; and several ask colleagues to briefly describe their most important achievements
during the previous year in each realm. Many of our sister research universities,
moreover, ask about a richer menu of contributions to teaching and advising,
including contributions to curricular development, course enrichment, and
pedagogical innovations. Some ask for brief statements of teaching goals as well.

The Task Force believes that annual activities reports in FAS can be
streamlined and made much easier to prepare and more useful for individual faculty
members, while at the same time generating richer information to support curricular
planning and inform the annual salary-setting process (see more on this below). We
call for the development of an on-line form to which faculty can refer over the course
of the year (for example, adding the names of undergraduate advisees and PhD students as new relationships are formed, rather than looking them up at the last minute). We ask that course numbers, titles, and undergraduate and graduate enrollments be automatically “pre-populated” on the reporting forms, subject to comment by the faculty member (who might add, for example, “my seminar also had six auditors”). FAS faculty are already asked to provide lists of undergraduate and graduate advisees and, here too, there may be possibilities for “pre-population” (for example, with lists of freshman advisees or graduate student advisees). We believe that postdocs should also be listed, because faculty do an important job in mentoring their development, especially in the sciences. And there should be a place where faculty can indicate students to whom they devote extra attention (e.g., mentoring an undergraduate laboratory assistant, or giving extra help to a student struggling with a senior thesis). Beyond this, there should be clear places on the automated annual report forms for a faculty member to include contributions he or she has made during the past year to departmental or FAS curricular reforms; to creating or enriching courses or other learning experiences; and to the assessment of student learning and experimentation with new pedagogies.

These automated activity reports can be “stacked” in an electronic file for each faculty member, to which he or she can refer for an overview of multiple years of activities (e.g., when filling out a grant application, or preparing a teaching statement for a promotion review). To support planning by chairs and directors of studies, appropriate protocols can aggregate the facts about teaching and advising from all departmental faculty. With richer, more complete and efficiently accessed overviews of everyone’s contributions, departments – along with the divisions and FAS as a
whole – can do a better job of ensuring that teaching loads are equitable. Similarly, with fuller information (beyond class enrollments and summary course evaluation scores), the FAS deans can support and reward all important contributions to teaching, advising, and pedagogical improvement. Still, as noted above, the Task Force believes that commitments from the incoming FAS Dean to use enriched annual reports to support departments and reward good faculty teaching should be made clear before the new routines recommended here are instituted.

In recommendation numbers 9 and 10, we move on to issues surrounding course evaluations and other modes of assessing student reactions and student learning. Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force has heard from many colleagues about the on-line evaluations filled out by students near the end of the semester (formerly known as CUE forms, and now called “course evaluations forms,” because they include both graduate and undergraduate courses). Many feel that student course evaluations are at best incomplete and imperfect ways to assess the quality and impact of faculty teaching. We agree with this assessment, which is why, throughout this report, we call for the enrichment of modes of accounting for and assessing contributions to teaching, advising, and pedagogical improvement.

Nevertheless, we believe that the new automated course evaluation form, carefully revised by multiple faculty and student committees, is an improvement over previous course evaluation forms and should continue to be used as one important tool for assessing and improving teaching at Harvard.

Research presented to the Task Force shows that student evaluations tend, for the most part, to be valid indicators of a variety of important aspects of classroom activity. However, the information these forms produce could be reported in more
nuanced and useful ways. We should not just look at the “overall effectiveness” scores, but at other measures of student learning and faculty engagement with students. More systematic use should be made of the qualitative comments offered by students, which can be aggregated to make them easier for course heads to survey. And quantitative scores could be reported to individual instructors in “benchmarked” ways – displaying, for example, comparisons to similar types of courses in the department or division.

A key improvement in the new, automated course evaluation system is that it allows departments or course heads to devise their own questions. This will allow ever more creative and nuanced efforts to collect student reports about learning as well as instructor performance. The Task Force urges course heads and departments to make regular use of such tailored questions to explore student perceptions of gains in learning – and suggests that FAS find ways to spread models for such questions and report what answers tell us about pedagogical effectiveness. End-of-semester course evaluations should be regularly reviewed and improved. As faculty in FAS shift from teaching in standard formats toward searching for new ways to engage students, we must use course evaluations to tell us as much as possible about how students say they have engaged the learning process, and what they feel they are gaining in terms of specific skills and understandings.

*Automated course evaluations work best if they are universally applicable, because all courses are in the system and all students register their assessments.* Not only are improvements in a system like this easier to devise and enact if all faculty and students are in the system, allowing even a minority of faculty course heads to “opt out” undercuts the validity of the course evaluation system for the majority, and
creates costly and entirely unnecessary administrative overhead, diverting resources better used for other purposes. In recommendation number 9, therefore, the Task Force urges that all FAS courses over a certain minimum enrollment should automatically be evaluated. The Task Force also believes that FAS should consider ways to require all enrolled students to fill in online evaluations before they receive final course grades. This would ensure the inclusion of students with middle-of-the-road views, not just those with more extreme reactions. And it may be preferable for students to submit course evaluations after, rather than before, they complete exams and papers.

Even with all of the improvements we can make, however, course evaluations tap immediate student reactions to courses at one snapshot moment – and not the only appropriate moment. Clearly, we need additional input from our students: during the semester, to assist in making mid-course improvements, and in more retrospective and reflective ways, to see what seems important and constructive well after the fact.

When members of the Task Force met with undergraduates to get their ideas for improving teaching, a recurrent piece of advice was for professors and teaching fellows to allow students to provide feedback as the class is underway, so that problems can be corrected right away and so that students know their instructors care about what they are learning. Many courses in FAS already seek such midstream feedback about student comprehension and experience of course practices. One-minute questionnaires or “clickers” can be used session by session, allowing teachers to explain muddled concepts later in the lecture or at the start of the very next class. Brief, anonymous midterm evaluations can give professors and teaching fellows ideas
for improving the second half of the course. As teaching becomes more collegial at Harvard, the Task Force expects that immediate assessment techniques such as these will spread and be enriched. There are many simple things that teachers can do to make an immediate difference.

One Harvard College Professor offered another intriguing idea for term-time reflection and assessment. In large, basic courses, could we perhaps appoint a “course ethnographer” to attend sections and also speak with individual students as the course progresses? This would offer another kind of midstream information, and might allow a fuller understanding of what is working, or not, for subgroups of students with different levels of prior preparation and various learning styles. The role of “course ethnographer” could be one that graduate students are trained to do, allowing them to contribute to the development of pedagogical insights and knowledge in particular fields.

Moving beyond the single course, the Task Force urges FAS to experiment with longer-term assessments of courses and learning experiences at Harvard. “Sometimes teaching is best assessed in retrospect, rather than in a hurried moment at the end of a semester,” writes a Harvard College professor in an email to the Task Force. He and other faculty urge the more creative use of questions on senior exit surveys, such as questions about memorable or especially valuable courses or interactions with teachers at Harvard. Other possibilities include using questions on the annual surveys filled in by graduate students enrolled in GSAS, and finding ways to survey alumni/ae of the College or GSAS about things they learned at Harvard that have proved especially valuable to them in their later careers. FAS should make better use of the surveys it already mounts and find ways to involve its graduating
and graduated students in our efforts to become a more effective “learning organization.”

A further frontier is objective measurement of student learning. The Task Force believes that both FAS and departments should look for better and more nuanced ways to measure, before and after, crucial aspects of student mastery – especially writing, numeracy, language skills, and critical thinking. The Institutional Research team at Harvard may have a role to play in helping FAS and its departments do more in this realm, but it is also important for departmental faculty themselves to think of creative ideas. Perhaps, entering concentrators and exiting concentrators (or samples of them) can be compared on some brief exercises, measuring core skills or understandings of basic concepts. Looking for valid and efficient assessment tools should be part of what departments do in their newly funded plans for curricular enrichment, as well as what faculty do with enrichment grants. Ideas and resources to support assessment should be part of what the Bok Center and the Dean’s Fund are prepared to deliver to departments and faculty members who want to attempt pedagogical improvements and evaluate their impact.

**Goal: Reward Good Teaching and Contributions to Pedagogical Improvement at All Career Levels**

It is all well and good for a task force to urge the aforementioned improvements in our pedagogical efforts and routines for reporting and assessing teaching and learning – but will any of this matter to the career prospects of doctoral scholars, junior faculty, and tenured members of FAS? Skepticism about the
relevance of teaching to career prospects pervades all ranks at Harvard. As indicated
in the vivid comments quoted in the introduction to this report, graduate students
and junior and senior FAS faculty alike doubt that teaching counts for much in hiring
and advancement; and some actually fear that career prospects will suffer if much
effort is spent on teaching. On the more hopeful side, the Task Force heard from
many colleagues who would like to see shifts in rewards and perceptions of “what
counts” in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. In this key section of our report,
therefore, we propose ways for FAS more consistently to consider and reward teaching
achievements and promise at every juncture in scholarly careers. In the spirit of the
new compact we propose, our policy recommendations start at the top, with annual
salary adjustments for tenured faculty, before addressing training and career
development for junior faculty and PhD students.

*Annual Salary Adjustments for Tenured Faculty*

Tenured faculty may work at Harvard for decades, and we take it for granted
that they will publish major research contributions throughout their careers.
Virtually all do just that – and most are also continuously creative teachers,
periodically launching new courses, mentoring generation after generation of
students, and helping to lead curricular development in the Faculty. Pride and
intrinsic satisfaction underpin the pursuit of excellence across the board. Beyond that,
in the realm of published research, tenured faculty know that outstanding
achievements lead to upward adjustments in salary. But they are not confident that
investments in teaching will bring comparable salary improvements. Some of the
reasons for this are not easy to change inside Harvard, for they have to do with
national and international markets for star researchers. Deans certainly must respond to outside competition; yet they also maintain broad norms of equity and adjust salaries for all faculty as a result of the yearly activities reviews. As specified in recommendation number 11, the Task Force would like to see more balance and clarity about teaching in this aspect of material rewards to tenured faculty.

While junior faculty salaries progress on set scales, for tenured faculty annual activity reports are used by the deans, after consultation with department chairs, to adjust salaries through assessment of contributions to teaching, research, and citizenship. In general, the process works well, and chairs and deans certainly put conscientious effort into it. Nevertheless, the Task Force has been told that, especially where teaching is concerned, the assessments on which annual salary adjustments are based can be incomplete and thin. When the chair of a large department meets with an assistant dean to go over senior faculty performance, “we may not get further than F in the alphabet” for detailed assessments, as one such chair put it (in a comment not unlike many we heard offering perceptions of the salary adjustment process in recent years). More worrisome, the only data consistently visible to chairs and deans have been course enrollments and overall CUE effectiveness scores. Obviously, this does not capture other crucial contributions to excellent teaching and advising – still less creative contributions to course enrichment, assessment of student learning, or pedagogical improvement.

No wonder faculty believe that teaching counts for little in the setting of salaries. In the past, according to a study commissioned by the Task Force, even senior faculty who have won FAS-wide awards for excellent teaching and advising have not, with any statistically discernable regularity, received above-median
adjustments in their base salaries in the year of the award or the next year. Faculty teachers honored by five-year appointments as “Harvard College Professors” do receive immediate bonuses. Laudable as this may be, it is no substitute for a permanent upward adjustment in the base salary trajectory for excellent teachers, of the sort that faculty can count on if they make major contributions to research.

The Task Force believes that salary levels should remain confidential, negotiated between the Dean and each tenured member. As for yearly changes, in the future, as in the past, typical percentage adjustments in FAS faculty salaries will presumably vary from year to year, depending on national and institutional economic circumstances. Most colleagues, in most years, will get adjustments close to the average. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that the teaching contributions of tenured faculty should be more fully and consistently assessed in annual reviews, and that teaching contributions should be weighed roughly equally with research achievements in recurrent adjustments. For about half of the overall adjustment made in his or her salary in a given year, therefore, an excellent teacher should get a percentage change significantly higher than a demonstrably inattentive or poor teacher. The enriched annual reporting of all contributions to teaching and advising recommended above will support more consistent and meaningful assessments by the chairs and deans. Furthermore, we recommend greater clarity and feedback to department chairs and individual faculty. Chairs should learn from University Hall how their assessments of teaching, research, and citizenship have been weighed. And the annual salary letter sent personally by the Dean to each tenured faculty member should note the reasons for adjustments attributable, respectively, to accomplishments in teaching and research.
Particularly for younger tenured faculty, following our recommendation could lead to significant enhancements in the lifetime salaries of those who make outstanding contributions to teaching at Harvard, as the consequences of even small base salary adjustments play out over many years. In addition, following our recommendation would ensure, in given years, appropriate bumps upward in salaries for colleagues who take time to make extra contributions to curricular and pedagogical improvements. This is as it should be, we believe, if Harvard truly expects tenured faculty to excel and contribute over the course of their careers to both teaching and research. Importantly, regular feedback from the Dean to both faculty and chairs will signal in concrete and visible terms the value FAS places on both forms of scholarship, teaching and research.

Documentation of Teaching in Faculty Appointments and Promotions

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has taken steps since the early 1990s to document teaching performance and promise in the appointment and promotion of faculty. This is especially true for new tenure appointments, for which the case presented by a department to University Hall must include a separate letter from the chair of the department explaining the teaching accomplishments of the candidate. Evidence about teaching – such as student evaluation scores, lists of advisees, and perhaps descriptions or syllabi from courses – is also routinely included in the tenure file. Because shifts toward fuller documentation have occurred at the same time that FAS has moved toward defining junior faculty as on a “tenure track,” the effect has been to elevate the importance of teaching skills and performance in the Harvard tenure process.
Despite improvements, FAS still has a considerable way to go in consistently measuring and weighing teaching for the faculty it appoints and promotes. The Task Force reviewed the types of teaching documentation provided in all appointment files forwarded by FAS departments to University Hall during academic year 2005-06. As expected, there is virtually no discussion of teaching in formal case statements for new junior faculty hires. For tenure cases the situation is better, but very uneven. Documentation of teaching is more thorough in the case files for proposed internal promotions to tenure than in external nominations. And cases in the humanities and social sciences are more thoroughly documented than cases in the natural sciences. Overall, the specific types of evidence forwarded by departments to University Hall, even for internal promotions, rarely go beyond lists of courses and (perhaps) advisees, along with summary scores and unanalyzed piles of comments from student course evaluations. Many trees die to provide little systematic information.

Here and there, excellent examples of “best practices” appeared in the dozens of 2005-06 tenure files we reviewed, suggesting ways forward. Some departments reported asking visiting candidates to make teaching presentations or meet with students; and some collected extra assessments from students or colleagues familiar with candidates’ teaching records. In some cases of new tenure appointments or promotions from within, candidates prepared personal Teaching Statements (to parallel the Research Statements typically found in appointment files). Such statements, three to five pages in length, review the objectives and modalities of past teaching and advising; summarize the goals and types of courses the candidate has developed; and report on special efforts to prepare curricular materials or introduce
pedagogical innovations. Teaching Statements may also include plans for future contributions to the Harvard curriculum.

Can we obtain evidence of this sort about scholars – especially natural scientists – who are recruited to tenured positions at Harvard after spending the previous stages of their careers at research institutes? This is an important question to ask, because the FAS is embarked on considerable incremental expansion in the sciences – and, at the same time, aims to enrich science training and “hands on” learning for undergraduate concentrators as well as PhD students. We need to appoint stellar scientists who care about excellence in teaching as well as research. Unquestionably, we in FAS will need to remain flexible about what it takes to attract outstanding tenure candidates from the outside: sometimes the candidates we want to consider do not visit, do not submit materials, and may not even know they are being considered in the early stages of the appointment process. Yet much more can be done to document pedagogical skills and teaching promise than we have done in the past (especially after a departmental vote and before a case proceeds through University Hall to an ad hoc committee). The Task Force has been inspired to see some tenure files about outside, institute-based scientists. In a few thoroughly documented pages, some of them have usefully summarized previous work mentoring postdocs in research institutes and indicated research materials developed to facilitate group learning. Even when they do not come from other universities, moreover, outside candidates for appointment at Harvard can outline how they expect to contribute to our graduate and undergraduate curricula.

As summarized in recommendation number 12, the Task Force urges departments and FAS deans to work toward more thorough and consistent
documentation of teaching skills and plans at every level of the appointment process, from new junior hires through promotion reviews to tenure cases. Whenever possible, departments should collect and review such evidence as: complete, chronologically arrayed summaries of previous undergraduate and graduate courses and mentoring; representative examples of course syllabi or other instructional materials; and personal statements about teaching accomplishments, goals, and potential contributions to the Harvard curriculum. Furthermore, the Task Force urges that, where possible, visits of candidates include demonstrations of important teaching skills. Demonstrations will vary by field and need not be overly elaborate – a brief presentation of a difficult text, concept, or modeling exercise might suffice. Including such presentations in job visits, and inviting undergraduate and graduate students to attend along with faculty, could enrich the evidence available to search committees and convey a strong message about the importance Harvard attaches to skilled pedagogy.

In addition to appearing in promotion reviews for assistant to associate professor, and associate professor to tenure, all of these kinds of evidence should become routine in the consideration of new assistant professors (who can be asked to include in their applications evidence about teaching, advising and mentoring, and pedagogical training from their years as PhD students or postdocs). In external tenure cases, we will need to maintain flexibility along the lines discussed above. But we in FAS can still do much better if we become serious and imaginative in our efforts to weigh promise in teaching along with research.
The Development of Junior Faculty as Teachers

Earlier in this report, the Task Force urged that grants for course development and pedagogical innovation be available to all faculty – and this should certainly include new junior and senior colleagues who are just arriving in Cambridge to take up faculty posts in FAS. New junior faculty, especially, need to design new courses, prepare materials for the first time, and (perhaps) hire graduate students to assist them, not only as teaching fellows during the semester but before new courses are launched.

Another important way to get junior faculty careers at Harvard off to a good start has already been seeded by a gift from alumnus Richard Menschel. Over the past three years, FAS has mounted a summer orientation program for entering junior faculty (details of which can be found on the Bok Center website). Junior colleagues are paid to attend a week-long conference with sessions jointly designed and monitored by the Bok Center and the Divisional Deans. New colleagues get to know one another and are introduced to basic pointers about developing course syllabi, giving compelling lectures, conducting seminar discussions, and accessing pedagogical support services at Harvard. They do “microteaching” exercises to practice and comment upon one another’s teaching skills, and they learn about where to go in FAS to get further guidance and advice on teaching and on career planning. This program was originally targeted to entering junior faculty in the humanities, and has recently been extended to entering social scientists.

In recommendation number 13, the Task Force urges the permanent institutionalization of orientation conferences for junior faculty entering the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. This opportunity should also be extended to junior colleagues in
engineering and the natural sciences, for whom we should add sessions on how to manage laboratories, grants, and research groups, while ensuring learning by students and postdocs in such settings. Summer orientation conferences can include some sessions common across divisions, and others tailored to particular types of teaching and research. Summer conferences can be streamlined, and junior colleagues who take time to attend them should continue to receive honoraria and expense reimbursements. Perhaps summer orientations should be offered twice each year, to accommodate as many entering faculty as possible. Even so, there will be some who cannot come to Cambridge in the summer before arrival at Harvard, and they can either attend the following summer or do workshops during the academic year.

In addition, the Task Force is convinced that summer orientation conferences for junior faculty should be followed up during the initial academic year of teaching. All junior faculty should be urged to do individual videotape sessions with the Bok Center. And there should be a midyear follow-up workshop (perhaps a day in January) to foster further collegial exchanges. Midyear sessions could also be enriched by the attendance of departmental faculty in each division, especially senior colleagues who are involved in mentoring junior faculty teachers in the various disciplines. This step would further the integration of Bok Center and departmentally based activities in teacher training – an approach the Task Force urges across the board.

More broadly, as outlined in recommendation number 14, the Task Force calls upon all FAS departments, with appropriate resources and administrative support, to undertake a self-consciously developmental approach to teaching by junior faculty. As a new junior faculty member is introduced to Harvard, he or she should
receive advice about teaching options and goals from department chairs and other faculty in charge of instructional programs and junior faculty mentoring. During summer orientation sessions, junior faculty will see examples of excellent Teaching Statements used in past FAS promotion reviews. This will give them an idea of the kinds of trajectories they will eventually need to document and explain.

Much more remains to be done in departmental and disciplinary contexts. Junior colleagues should not be left on their own to guess which courses to develop; still less should they be tossed into types of teaching others do not want to do. Taking into account aptitudes and interests, each junior colleague should have the opportunity to develop and give repeatedly a few good courses, ideally of various sizes and formats and at different levels of the curriculum, so that when he or she comes up for promotion, a trajectory of improvement and varied experience and mastery will be evident. Courses of broad interest should be part of the menu, not just overly specialized offerings.

To encourage quality teaching and steady improvement by junior faculty, they should not be overburdened. The Task Force urges that new junior colleagues be asked to undertake new course preparations in measured steps so that multiple new course preparations are not required right at the start. In addition, the Task Force believes that in the instance where a junior faculty member teaches a large lecture course, he or she should be able to get double course credit in return for doing the following ensemble of tasks: regular lectures, weekly pedagogical sessions with graduate teaching fellows, and personal teaching and grading in at least one undergraduate section (or laboratory). Departments may want to follow this same rule of thumb to give extra credit to senior faculty who lead and participate in all
aspects of large lecture courses; but it is important to start by giving extra credit first to assistant professors who make such multiple efforts.

The final step the Task Force asks departments to contemplate harks back to our earlier discussion of peer visits and classroom consultations. As senior colleagues help junior faculty to enhance their teaching skills, the tenured members in each department need to develop an overview of the trajectory of each junior faculty member’s efforts. One way to do this might be to institutionalize one or two visits/consultations each year, in which a different senior colleague visits a junior colleague’s class. Regular visits over many years are better, in the view of the Task Force, than a last-minute set of visits during the year of the promotion review. Visits over the years can naturally have a more developmental focus – allowing the junior colleague to hear advice about how to improve – and can put senior faculty in a better position to assess the development of teaching (has it improved?) when it comes time to make a case for promotion. Of course, in some departments or fields, this approach may not make sense, especially if junior colleagues regularly team-teach with senior colleagues.

Training in Teaching and Pedagogically Relevant Skills for Harvard PhD Students

While guiding the scholarly development and helping to launch the careers of PhD students in the various disciplines, FAS faculty also work with graduate teaching fellows to teach and advise undergraduates. Teaching helps to support PhD students (typically in the third year and beyond, but in any case after the first year); and participation in teaching is understood as a vital part of the scholarly preparation we offer to doctoral students. Harvard University already makes strong efforts to

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train and prepare graduate students to teach undergraduates. This happens now through summer orientation programs sponsored by the Graduate School for entering students whose native language is not English; through fall and winter orientation conferences, special workshops, and videotape sessions for graduate teaching fellows offered by the Bok Center; and through graduate seminars covering disciplinary teaching methods regularly mounted by many FAS departments (such as Psychology, Statistics, and Sociology). Furthermore, graduate students at Harvard need – and increasingly receive – training in pedagogically relevant professional skills beyond methods for conducting undergraduate discussion sections. Especially in the natural sciences, teaching and learning often occur in laboratory or research groups that may bring together faculty, postdocs, PhD students, and advanced undergraduates in interrelated work projects. As recommended in 2005 by the Task Force on Women in Science and Engineering, students in all of Harvard’s PhD programs in the natural sciences and engineering need to know how best to advance learning and do professional evaluations in such settings.

Over the past year, the Graduate Policy Committee (consisting of senior faculty from FAS and inter-School PhD programs in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences) has reviewed and worked to update and improve teacher and pedagogical training for Harvard PhD students. The Task Force endorses the new “Steps to Enhance Teaching Fellow Training” recently adopted by the GPC and included as Attachment C to this report. A comprehensive approach to enhancing and making more visible the training and achievements of Harvard PhD students as teachers, advisors, and laboratory mentors, the GPC plan includes the following interrelated elements:
- Improved screening and (where appropriate) further language training for all new Harvard PhD students whose native language is not English.

- Full implementation of a longstanding requirement that all graduate students who begin to teach Harvard undergraduates participate in practice sessions and receive basic teacher training from the Bok Center, their department, or – ideally – from both working in tandem.

- Creation of a universal, automated system of “Teaching and Professional Development Dossiers” to keep a record of teaching jobs and accomplishments and pedagogical training for all PhD students who study at Harvard and go on national job markets.

- Preparation for dissemination each semester of a one-page set of guidelines – “Teaching Together: Guidelines for Professors and Teaching Fellows” – summarizing the norms that should guide this relationship and underscoring the need for faculty course heads to meet regularly with teaching fellows and guide the development of their pedagogical skills.

Members of the Task Force are aware that PhD students are not the only ones who work with FAS faculty in research and teaching. Many graduate students studying for terminal MA degrees are also under our charge, as are postdoctoral researchers who help to manage research groups and do much mentoring and even classroom instruction. The steps that have been mandated by the Graduate Policy Committee apply, at present, only to PhD students. But many of the services and types of training that the GPC aims to make universal and consistent for PhD students can also be extended to MA students and postdoctoral research associates. As this becomes possible, the Task Force urges that it be done. The quality of undergraduate education, and the full impact of our efforts to promote learning and enhance both the pedagogical and research sides of scholarly careers, will benefit as such extensions occur.
**Goal: Make the Enhanced FAS Commitment to Excellent Teaching and Enrichment of Student Learning Visible within and beyond Harvard**

Our final action recommendations are based on the simple truth that accomplishments and models must be made visible and readily communicated if they are to have enduring impact. As all of us in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences do more to foster a “learning organization” approach to teaching and pedagogy, we need to proclaim our efforts to ourselves and others.

As things now stand, although the faculty members and graduate teaching fellows who win prestigious FAS-wide prizes for excellence in classroom teaching and student advising are announced each spring at a Faculty Meeting and invited to attend the Honorands’ Dinner in June, their specific accomplishments are nowhere described. And their names come and go in an instant. When this Task Force set out to update the list of FAS teaching award winners, it took weeks to assemble the names from scattered sources, and those names came for the most part without citations summarizing the achievements. It took even longer for the Task Force to pull together the descriptions of the terms and procedures for each FAS-wide teaching award. Obviously, we at Harvard cannot do an adequate job of honoring the outstanding teachers and advisors in our midst – and still less hope to communicate their example and ideas to others – if we do not make outstanding teachers and what they do much more visible to the community. When we read articles about star researchers, we also see summaries of their discoveries or scholarly breakthroughs. The same should be true for highly honored teachers, as we say in recommendation number 16.
Recurrent articles in the Harvard Gazette are a useful way to communicate the accomplishments of excellent teachers – and such articles could also, from time to time, discuss pedagogical experiments and innovative efforts at the assessment of student learning. Beyond this, as also indicated in recommendation number 17, the Task Force would like to see a new “Teaching Matters” website for FAS at Harvard, parallel to the “Research Matters” link on the Harvard University website that offers descriptions of outstanding scholarly breakthroughs. We envisage the “Teaching Matters” site as a way to make creativity in teaching and pedagogical experimentation much more visible within and beyond FAS. The website can feature – and archive – stories about creative teachers, and also be a “one stop” location for faculty to find information about teaching resources. As we envisage the website, it might start out under the sponsorship of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, but should also offer links to information about teaching and pedagogical innovations in the other Harvard Schools.

Finally, in recommendation number 18 we acknowledge that Harvard faculty and administrators are closely enmeshed in broader networks that include other colleges and universities, professional associations, and foundations and government agencies that support scholarship and teaching. Efforts to think creatively about teaching and student learning have been gathering momentum across many of these key institutions for more than fifteen years. Professional associations often sponsor conferences and sessions on teaching and learning. Federal granting agencies are requiring closer attention to undergraduate and graduate training. Leading foundations are also active, including the Pew Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and even some primarily
research-oriented foundations (such as the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which makes awards to research faculty to empower them to “work more closely with undergraduates at their home institutions and provide other institutions with innovative models for transmitting the excitement and value of scientific research to undergraduate education”). In many small but telling ways, Harvard can join this trend and help to reinforce concern about teaching and learning within broader professional and institutional networks. FAS should make visible the contributions of faculty to externally sponsored endeavors to improve pedagogy, and should encourage, support, and give credit for the presentations of talks and papers about teaching, learning, and pedagogy in professional settings – just as we currently do these things to encourage Harvard faculty to make regular professional presentations of other aspects of their scholarly work.

As each university moves to make its own excellent teachers and contributors to improved pedagogy more visible – and also moves to invite accomplished teachers from the outside to engage in seminars and presentations – excellence in teaching and pedagogy will gradually become more nationally and internationally visible, as research excellence and productivity already are. Harvard can regularly share ideas and models for pedagogical innovation and the assessment of student learning with other institutions. Beyond this, however, university administrators should cooperate more fully to ensure that communication of teaching records and evaluations is routine across institutions as well as within them. No university would think of hiring a new faculty member without a complete rendition on a vita and in an accompanying file of his or her record of scholarly appointments, research publications, grants and awards, and future scholarly plans. But as things stand
now, it can often be very difficult to obtain comparable information about teaching, advising, and research mentorship. This needs to change -- not just through greater steps to document teaching performance and plans within each university, but, equally, through efforts to ease the transparent, routine flow of information about teaching across universities. Universities must work together to make excellence in teaching a career asset, and FAS administrators as well as faculty can certainly take many steps to promote this transformation.

A Call to Action

We have completed our presentation of the principles, major goals, and action recommendations the Task Force recommends as a new compact for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. This spring, members of the FAS community – especially ladder faculty members and academic administrators – need to consider what we propose and offer suggestions for improvement. The ideas outlined here are a call to community commitment, and also a plan for action by the Dean, the FAS as a whole, and departments and individual faculty. As members of the FAS discuss these ideas, we need to ponder whether most of us are prepared to commit ourselves to carry them through, even as we call upon incoming administrators to commit the necessary resources and leadership to back up our efforts.

A report of this sort is not the place for details about administration or budgets. But there should be no doubt that enhanced resources and more effective administration will be required if the Faculty of Arts and Sciences is to reward excellence in teaching and advising more consistently, and steadily improve pedagogy
and student learning in the ways we urge here. The new Dean’s Fund for Curricular
Enrichment and Pedagogical Improvement will require generous and long-term
funding, if it is to make an impact on the goals and capacities of departments and
individual faculty members. Many kinds of instructional services and teacher
training and pedagogical consulting services in the FAS will need to be expanded –
and must be better organized and more thoroughly meshed with departmental efforts.
From the President and deans to department chairs, academic leadership must be
strengthened to make incentives for good teaching and pedagogical innovation a
reality, and in order to upgrade, support, and coordinate the various services that
support and enhance the pedagogical commitments of faculty and departments. We
cannot continue with a situation in which the academic affairs side of the College
administration is diminished, and service offices are left on their own to meet growing
demands for support and knowledge. Furthermore, information management must
become much stronger, more efficient, and focused on the user needs of faculty
members and departments. Unquestionably, FAS will need new resources and skills
to facilitate reporting and curricular planning in the ways we have specified.

In the final analysis, though, at a powerful and rich institution like Harvard, it
will come down to value commitments and understandings of our fundamental
institutional mission – what we really care about in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.
Money and administrative expertise will be found if we are determined to find them.

In our deliberations over the past several months, the nine of us, hailing from
diverse fields in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences, have enjoyed a
precious opportunity to work together to deepen our understanding of Harvard as a
university that values excellence in teaching and student learning along with
excellence in academic research. From serious and exhilarating conversations with so many of our faculty colleagues, our Task Force has become convinced that most of us on the FAS faculty do care about continually enriching and improving the education we offer to our fine undergraduate and graduate students. What we need is to be clearer to ourselves – and among ourselves – about our fundamental values and goals. We conclude by sharing the value statement we have developed, and by asking all of the scholars in the FAS community to ponder whether we see ourselves, together, in this vision. If so, what are we going to do about it?
HARVARD AS A UNIVERSITY THAT VALUES EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND STUDENT LEARNING

As a community of learning and discovery with outstanding faculty and students, Harvard University strives for excellence in education as well as research across all fields and disciplines. Educational excellence demands sustained commitments from faculty, administrators, staff, and students. The following values and principles inform our individual efforts and institutional practices.

Each member of the Harvard faculty contributes to teaching as part of the advancement of scholarship. Unlike the members of more specialized institutions that emphasize either research or undergraduate instruction, scholars in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard create and publish new knowledge and simultaneously guide undergraduates, graduate students, and younger colleagues toward learning and mastery within and beyond their specializations. At every rank – from doctoral students, to junior and tenured faculty, including those holding named chairs and university professorships – Harvard scholars are committed to teaching, advising, and mentoring students, including beginning and advanced undergraduates.

Cutting-edge research and excellent teaching invigorate one another at Harvard. Working at a leading research university entrusted with guiding the learning of highly motivated and well-prepared students, Harvard faculty can and do involve undergraduates as well as graduate students in hands-on research in their various fields. Faculty look for ways to share research findings with broad audiences of students and other learners; and in framing aspects of their inquiries and research presentations, they take inspiration from the questions and fresh perspectives of students. Additionally, Harvard scholars at all career stages can draw upon the latest pedagogical research in order to inform and improve their teaching.

Harvard aims to foster and reward all aspects of good teaching, and aspires to support sustained efforts at pedagogical improvement. Learning
happens in lectures, laboratories, tutorials, museums, field trips, and seminars, and is also encouraged when faculty personally advise and mentor students and engage with them in residential Houses, study groups, and extracurricular settings. Committed teachers relate to students in multiple ways, evoking ideas, skills and values with intelligence and passion. They also reflect on what students learn and discover ways to improve instruction and advising for students at all levels of achievement. The multiple ways in which excellent teachers contribute to the university’s educational mission must be recognized, fostered, and rewarded. To this end, Harvard must offer a robust set of programs for both basic training and the enrichment of teaching skills. Individual instructors must be able to report the various ways in which they contribute to teaching, advising, and pedagogical improvement. And administrators must give visible support and consistent rewards for all constructive contributions to learning.

**Education is a shared responsibility, requiring collective purpose and cooperation as well as individual faculty effort.** One challenge Harvard faculty and teaching fellows face is to meld diverse skills and preferences in order to fashion excellent and steadily improving environments for learning by students of varied backgrounds, interests, and levels of achievement and skill. Supported by deans and administrative staff, department chairs and other colleagues charged with guiding undergraduate and graduate instruction have the responsibility to set educational goals, orchestrate teaching assignments, plan curricula, and encourage teacher training and efforts at pedagogical improvement. Not only does each department carry out instruction in its own field, it also contributes to general education and elective learning by non-specialists. Even as individual faculty pursue excellence in particular research fields, cooperation with department chairs and other colleagues leading instructional programs is expected. Those leaders should, in turn, have ready access to the information, resources, and decanal support needed to encourage and shape contributions to the curriculum within their programs and across the College and Graduate School. Equitable contributions must be made by all, lest devoted teachers be weighed down with unequal loads.
A university that values education encourages experimentation and efforts to improve student learning by teachers at every career stage – and this is an area where Harvard can improve and move to the forefront. Scholars and apprentice scholars ranging from graduate students to the most senior of tenured professors understand that research skills must be steadily sharpened to create research that is regularly shared with peers for purposes of critique and improvement. A similar sense should prevail on the pedagogical side. Teaching fellows and faculty should master available research on how students learn. They should experiment with improvements in teaching, and then assess the results for student learning. They should retain and spread practices that work, while abandoning those that are unhelpful. For teachers, improvement involves sharing ideas and commenting upon the pedagogical efforts of peers. For administrators and support staff, a commitment to improvement means recognizing and supporting faculty efforts at pedagogical assessment and experimentation. It is not enough and can even be misleading only to tally enrollments or global course evaluation scores. Students, meanwhile, must place learning ahead of mere performance, and be open to tackling new challenges in classrooms, laboratories, and field sites.

Enhancing the career value of teaching in higher education requires changes in academic professions and across many universities and colleges – changes that Harvard’s faculty, graduate students, and administrators can all help to realize. With experience and training in teaching as well as research, Harvard PhDs can help to shape pedagogy and institutional norms in many places throughout their careers. By contributing to curricular and pedagogical efforts through professional societies and research bodies, Harvard faculty can further a new vision of teaching and scholarship that spans institutional boundaries. Harvard administrators, too, can work with their counterparts at other universities to make excellent teaching more visible, to spread awareness of pedagogical research, to further peer mentoring of teaching as well as research, and to share evaluations of teaching in appointment decisions.
ATTACHMENTS

A. Groups Consulted by Members of the Task Force

B. Partner Departments

C. Steps to Enhance Teaching Fellow Training
   (from the Graduate Policy Committee)

D. Reports and Research Materials
Attachment A.

GROUPS CONSULTED BY MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

Faculty, Students, and Staff in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Faculty Council

Educational Policy Committee

Graduate Policy Committee

Standing Committee on Pedagogical Improvement

Harvard College Dean’s Senior Staff

Harvard College House Masters

FAS Caucus of Chairs

Division of Engineering and Applied Sciences (faculty meeting)

FAS Task Force on General Education

Graduate Student Council

Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning: Director and Senior Staff

Harvard College Professors:


Winners of other FAS Teaching and Advising Prizes:

Max Bazerman, Eileen Chow, Luis Cifuentes, James Engell, Morton Ernebjerg, Brett Flehinger, Gonzalo Giribet, Bertrand Halperin, Robin Kelsey, Steven Levitsky, David Liu, Matthew Nock, Eric
Rentschler, Jennifer Roberts, Werner Sollors, Doris Sommer, Salil Vadhan, and James Wilkinson

Harvard College Students:
From Phi Beta Kappa: Joshua Billings ’07, Alexandra Harwin ’07, and Y. Jeanette Park ’07. From the Committee on Pedagogical Improvement: Jared Pearlman ’08, Ryan Peterson ’08, and William Ruben ’10

Other Harvard Constituencies

Harvard University Board of Overseers

FAS Task Force on Academic Resources

Graduate School Alumni/ae Council

Harvard Business School (Janice Hammond, Valerie Porciello, Willis Emmons, and Amy Edmondson)

Board of Incorporators of Harvard Magazine
PARTNER DEPARTMENTS

Listed below are department leaders who prepared reports and/or met with members of the Task Force. Following this list are the initial questions posed by the Task Force to the partner departments.

Department of the Classics

Jan Ziolkowski, Chair
Richard Thomas, former Chair
Christopher Krebs, Director of Undergraduate Studies
Kathleen Coleman, Director of Graduate Studies
Ivy Livingston, Preceptor

Department of English and American Literature and Language

James Engell, Chair
Daniel Donoghue, Director of Undergraduate Studies
Nicholas Watson, Director of Graduate Studies
Inga Peterson, Undergraduate Program Administrator
Gwen Urdang-Brown, Coordinator of Graduate Studies

Department of the History of Science

Anne Harrington, Chair
Steven Shapin, Director of Undergraduate Studies
Katharine Park, Director of Graduate Studies
Judith LaJoie, Director of Administration
Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology

Andrew Murray, Chair
Robert Lue, Executive Director of Undergraduate Education in Molecular and Cellular Biology
John Dowling, Director of Undergraduate Studies (Neurobiology)
Richard Losick, Head Tutor (Molecular and Cellular Biology) and Co-Head Tutor (Biochemical Sciences)
Erin O’Shea, Director of Undergraduate Studies (Chemical and Physical Biology)
Markus Meister, Director of Graduate Studies

Department of Physics

John Huth, Chair
Howard Georgi, Director of Undergraduate Studies
David Morin, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies
Melissa Franklin, Director of Graduate Studies

Department of Psychology

Stephen Kosslyn, Chair
Susan Carey, Director of Graduate Studies
Ken Nakayama, former Director of Graduate Studies
Celia Raia, Graduate Program Administrator
Elizabeth Lambert, Director of Administrative Services
Exemplary Accomplishments—Make Sure we Get the Details!

As you work your way through this set of questions, please decide on a few examples of pedagogical achievements or exemplary departmental practices that you and your colleagues would like our Task Force to feature when it writes its report and makes presentations to audiences interested in the pedagogical creativity of the Harvard FAS faculty. Make sure we hear from you about those key examples, described with a bit of vivid detail (such as Professor X revamped her course to include hands-on examples or experiences, or developed lab experiences or a website or archive of researchable materials; or our department revised its tutorials in a creative way; or our department instituted new systems of training or mentoring, etc.)

Allocation of Teaching Duties

Who decides which courses are taught by whom each year?

Does your department have clear rules about the amounts and types of teaching to be done by junior and senior colleagues, faculty in different situations, etc? What are the formal rules – and what informal understandings are widely shared?

How are various types of obligations covered and accounted for: undergraduate versus graduate courses; senior thesis advising; graduate mentoring and dissertation advising; commitments to freshman advising and the Freshman Seminar Program, and commitments to General Education?

Do you run workshops for undergraduate senior thesis writers? For graduate students? If so, how do these fit into course loads?

Do you keep a record of which faculty and graduate students advise particular senior theses?

What are your department’s policies/practices about team teaching by faculty?

Departmental Support for Teaching and the Improvement of Teaching

What administrative and staff arrangements does your department have to support teaching?
Does your department require all graduate teaching fellows to receive training? What type of training? Provided by the department and/or the Bok Center? Is the training required before the first teaching job?

Does your department participate in the Lead Teaching Fellow program run through the Bok Center? Comments?

Does your department participate in other extra- or trans-departmental arrangements to support and/or improve teaching?

Does your department – or parts of it – hold regular discussions among faculty about curricular issues, and strategies for improving pedagogy?

Do you have any system in place for regular senior faculty mentoring of junior faculty teaching?

Do you organize peer visits by faculty to one another’s classrooms? If so, for what purpose(s): informal advice, formal evaluations?

Do faculty in your department regularly exchange syllabi and discuss course objectives, designs, and pedagogical techniques?

Honoring and Rewarding Excellence in Teaching

Does your department give one or more prizes to honor excellence in graduate or undergraduate teaching? (Please describe the prize, who decides, and by what procedures.)

Does your department hold ceremonial occasions during which teaching and advising by faculty or graduate teaching fellows are honored and made visible?

Do you honor and make visible among colleagues key improvements in the curriculum or in course design or instructional methods?

During the annual salary review process, does the chair of your department gather and present to the deans systematic information about teaching-related efforts and accomplishments?

Documenting Teaching Quality and Improvements in Hiring and Promotions

What kinds of evidence – such as undergraduate evaluation scores, course syllabi, student letters, peer observations – does your department gather in order to weigh teaching achievements and potential in hiring and promotion decisions – for new junior hires, new senior hires, promotions to associate professor, promotions to tenure?
Do you use benchmarks when you consider evidence about teaching? (For example, do you compare the level of CUE scores among faculty for a particular type of course? Do you look at a series of scores over time for one faculty member teaching a given course?)

**Interactions with the Administration and University Offices about Teaching**

Do you understand clearly what University Hall (Divisional Dean, Academic Deans, Dean of FAS) expect you to document about teaching when you present appointment cases of various types for administrative review? What improvements would you like to see?

Are there changes you would suggest that might appropriately improve consideration of teaching quality and pedagogical improvement in key reward systems and decisions about appointments?

What improvements would you like to see in the ways Harvard provides services in support of pedagogical improvement?

**DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER ISSUES OR PRACTICES YOU WOULD LIKE TO DRAW TO OUR ATTENTION? ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR MATTERS THE TASK FORCE SHOULD STUDY?**
Attachment C.

STEPS TO ENHANCE TEACHING FELLOW TRAINING
(adopted by the Graduate Policy Committee, January 2007)

Since the mid-1990s, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has called upon departments and instructional programs to ensure that first-time graduate teaching fellows at Harvard are screened for English-language competency, oriented on issues of proper professional conduct, and trained in basic teaching skills before or concurrent with the start of employment. Guidelines adopted by the Faculty Council and disseminated by Dean Knowles in May 1994 set these standards, and also called for observation and appraisal of teaching fellows during their first semester of work.

Over the years, instructional departments working in conjunction with the Bok Center, the College, and the Graduate School have made considerable progress in meeting these standards – but full implementation has not occurred. Each year, the Office of Academic Programs collects reports from departments on the types of training they require or recommend for teaching fellows. As of 2006, departmental requirements vary considerably, and the extent to which paper requirements are actually met by teaching fellows and course heads is unknown. Although a high proportion of all Harvard teaching fellows perform very strongly (as measured by their student evaluation scores), undergraduates continue to complain about the uneven qualifications and English facility of some teaching fellows.

In order to ensure quality instruction of Harvard undergraduates and more consistency in the preparation of graduate students before they become eligible to serve as teaching fellows in the second or third year of graduate study, the Graduate Policy Committee mandates the following steps:

- All students entering GSAS whose native language is not English should be screened for spoken and written English competency as they enter Harvard; and GSAS, the Bok Center, and all graduate programs should cooperate to ensure these screenings. Whether or not they think they are likely to teach undergraduates in the future, every GSAS student who needs further work to enhance spoken or written English should take appropriate courses during the first year of graduate study and/or the surrounding summers. English competency is important for all graduate students in their own studies. What is more, graduate students cannot always anticipate whether or when they will be recruited to teach undergraduates. Starting in their second year, graduate students are sometimes asked at the last minute to help mount undergraduate courses, and they must be prepared well before this happens.

- GSAS and the College should update information on training requirements for teaching fellows as they now stand in various departments and instructional programs, and take steps to ensure that all first-time graduate teachers complete the Bok Center fall or winter orientation sessions or their equivalent in the form of a departmental pedagogical seminar. In turn, the Bok Center and the
departments should ensure that the training as graduate students begin to teach includes information on:

- effective ways to conduct discussion sessions (or, if appropriate, laboratory groups or language sessions);
- effective ways to grade and evaluate students;
- norms of professional conduct;
- effective ways to handle diversity;
- tips for dealing with typical classroom problems;
- key points from the latest research about how students learn and how effective pedagogy can maximize student engagement and mastery.

The basic training completed by all first-time teaching fellows should also include “micro-teaching” exercises to allow practice and immediate feedback. All of these elements of basic training should be included in the regular fall and winter Bok Center conferences. In addition, such elements may be offered in departmental seminars for teaching fellows and in term-time workshops (open to students who cannot attend the Bok Center conference).

- All graduate teaching fellows should be encouraged to do videotape consultations during their first year of teaching. The completion of such a consultation should be recorded in the student’s record.

- All teaching fellows should be regularly informed of opportunities to continue to upgrade their pedagogical skills and knowledge – by attending workshops recurrently offered through the Bok Center and/or in their departments, or by participating in pedagogical sessions at disciplinary professional associations. Bok Center workshops will focus on such topics as course design and syllabus construction; effective lecturing; uses of new technologies; and uses of case study methods and other approaches to active learning.

- Working with the Office of Career Services, GSAS should establish a universal, automated system of “Teaching and Professional Development Dossiers” to track the teaching positions held, and the basic and advanced training workshops or courses completed by each PhD student at Harvard.

- Each semester, all teaching fellows and faculty course heads should receive a copy of “Teaching Together: Guidelines for Professors and Teaching Fellows.” This outlines the norms that course heads should follow in their relationships with teaching fellows, and recommends practices that will enhance the professional development of graduate student teachers, as they learn on the job under the guidance of faculty mentors.
Teaching and Professional Development Dossiers
For Harvard PhD Students

In a recent survey, graduate student teaching fellows at Harvard indicated that they would like their work to be professionalized and made more visible and institutionally valued. Improved relationships with faculty mentors and enhanced opportunities to develop and display teaching skills are part of what it will take to realize this goal. The creation by GSAS of universally maintained dossiers can be an additional tool. Teaching and Professional Development Dossiers are ongoing, computerized records, covering the types of teaching positions each student has held. They also include information about training experiences, evaluations, and accomplishments. Dossiers can be used inside Harvard when students seeking positions as section leaders, lab assistants, or tutors want to share their records with faculty who may decide to hire them. In addition, dossiers (or appropriate parts of them) can be used when new PhDs go on the job market.

Across the United States, many colleges and universities now require potential new assistant professors to document their teaching experience and training. GSAS can enhance the job market prospects of our graduate students by helping them compile dossiers while they are here. And Harvard University can contribute to nation-wide changes in attention to teaching skills by launching our new PhDs with documented records in teaching and pedagogical training as well as in research.

Implementation:

- GSAS is working with the College and the Office of Career Services to set up electronic “Teaching and Professional Development Dossiers” for each PhD student – coordinated where appropriate with existing job dossiers. Teaching dossiers may be most actively used by graduate students who actually teach undergraduates, but they should also be available to graduate students who enroll in pedagogical and professional training workshops about evaluation, teaching and learning in lab settings, and so forth.

- The following types of information will be included in (or linked to) dossiers:
  -- (Optional) statement by the PhD student reflecting on his or her teaching and pedagogical training record, and outlining teaching goals for the future;
  -- record of any Harvard courses in which the graduate student has served as a teaching fellow or Head TF; and indication of employment in other roles such as Lead Teaching Fellow for a department.
  -- course evaluation scores for all teaching performances;
-- list of individual student advisees (for example: lab mentees or senior thesis students and their topics);

-- list of any awards or citations for excellence in teaching;

-- record and brief descriptions of all pedagogical training conferences or workshops a student has completed through the Bok Center, or in his/her department, or at other settings at Harvard or beyond;

-- Optional: any course-related materials the student would like to display, such as syllabi, website designs, sample handouts, etc.

-- Optional: confidential letters of evaluation from faculty course heads or from students who have worked with a graduate teaching fellow;

-- Optional: videotape of a teaching performance.

• Potential employers inside and outside Harvard will be notified that the university maintains universal dossiers to record accomplishments in teaching and professional training. However, no PhD student will be required to send any parts of the dossier outside of Harvard; and he or she may elect to send some parts, but not others, according to employer needs. Inside the university, the student will be able to decide whether to release any information beyond the list of courses he or she has previously taught and the course evaluation scores for those performances.
Teaching Together: Guidelines for Professors and Teaching Fellows

Faculty course heads form partnerships with teaching fellows for the benefit of the students they teach. These partnerships help faculty members design and mount effective courses, and give teaching fellows opportunities to develop vital professional skills. Faculty course heads model effective pedagogy and concern for student learning, while guiding and supervising the work of the teaching fellows. Allocations of duties vary according to the type, level, and size of the class, and also depend on individual strengths and varied styles of teaching. Nevertheless, certain basic principles should guide the relationship between teaching fellows and faculty course heads.

Defining expectations. Before the start of classes, faculty course heads and teaching fellows should discuss overall course goals and spell out mutual responsibilities. Standard duties for teaching fellows include attending lectures; conducting weekly sections; grading assignments; and holding regular office hours for students. Beyond this, faculty members, head teaching fellows, and other teaching fellows share such responsibilities as organizing sections and setting their meeting times and places; designing section topics and course assignments; determining the content of exams and papers, and grading them; maintaining course grade records; maintaining the course web site; and distributing hard copy or electronic materials for lectures. The division of duties should be clear – including during the reading and exam periods – and faculty should take care to set expectations for the duties of each teaching fellow in line with the time for which he or she is paid.

Maintaining contact. Once classes have begun, faculty course heads and teaching fellows should meet regularly to discuss progress and course practices. Weekly sessions are often appropriate, and support is available from the Instructional Lunch Fund. Topics may include comparing notes on sections just held and previewing the content of upcoming sections; formulating exams or term paper topics; and discussing suggestions or questions raised by students with teaching fellows. Unless class size makes it impractical, the faculty course head should make an effort during the semester to visit at least one section led by each teaching fellow, offering feedback after the visit.

Retaining responsibility. Course heads are responsible for the proper evaluation of student work. Teaching fellows may grade and provide feedback on student work, but the course head should ensure the consistency of grading through careful discussion with teaching fellows and, where appropriate, by reading examples of student work. Course heads are also responsible for designing and delivering lectures. As an educational experience, a teaching fellow may be asked to give part or all of a lecture – and the course head should attend the lecture and provide comments to the teaching fellow.

Fostering professional development. Faculty should assist their teaching fellows in developing pedagogical skills. To this end, course heads should be available to discuss instructional challenges that teaching fellows may encounter throughout the semester, and should encourage teaching fellows to take advantage of videotaping and other resources available through the Bok Center. Ideally, after course evaluations are completed, the course head should prepare a written evaluation of each teaching fellow’s work and discuss achievements and areas for improvement.
Attachment D.

REPORTS AND RESEARCH MATERIALS

From the Institutional Research Team of the Office of Budgets, Financial Planning and Institutional Research

“CUE Guide Ratings,” by Kristin Knox, Aili Palmunen Lewis, and Nina Zipser (10/19/06)

“Course Evaluation Literature Review,” by Aili Palmunen Lewis, Kristin Knox, Barbara Portner, and Nina Zipser (10/19/06)

Confidential reports on teaching and teaching prizes in issues of salary and promotions, by Barbara Portner, Kristin Knox, and Nina Zipser (10/18/06); and by Aili Palmunen Lewis, Kristin Knox, and Nina Zipser (11/1/06)

From the Institutional Research Team and the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning

“Effectiveness of Teaching Fellow Training,” by Barbara Portner, Erin Driver-Linn, and Nina Zipser (9/22/06)

“Current and Recommended Uses of Course Evaluations,” by Erin Driver-Linn, Dawn Brancati, Barbara Portner, and Nina Zipser (10/18/06)

From the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning

“Proposal to Expand the Lead Teaching Fellows Program in 2006-2007,” by Cassandra Volpe Horii and Erin Driver-Linn (7/24/06)

“Lead Teaching Fellows Program: Overview, Assessment, and Outcomes,” by Cassandra Volpe Horii and Erin Driver-Linn (7/24/06)

“Participant Evaluation: Menschel Teacher-Training Program for Junior Faculty 2006,” by Bok Center for Teaching and Learning (8/10/06)

“Teaching Fellow Survey Spring 2006: Result Summary,” by Erin Driver-Linn (10/6/06)

“The Bok Center’s Role in Preparing Teachers and Improving Teaching and Learning,” by Jim Wilkinson and Bok Center Staff (11/22/06)

“Department Teaching Profiles,” by Bok Center for Teaching and Learning
From Other Harvard University or FAS Committees and Offices

Report from the Task Force on Women in Science and Engineering (May 2005)

Curricular Renewal in Harvard College (January 2006)

Preliminary Report of the Task Force on General Education (October 2006)

Enhancing Science and Engineering at Harvard. Report of the University Planning Committee for Science and Engineering (October 2006)

“Teaching Portfolios,” by Constance Buchanan (10/19/90)

“Report on Harvard Writing Project Services for the Standing Committee on Writing and Speaking,” by James Herron (11/7/06)

“Summary of Harvard Writing Project Activities, AY 2004/05 through AY 2005/06,” by Harvard Writing Project

Harvard College Senior Survey form and COFHE survey form

“Teaching Resources,” from 2006-2007 Information for Faculty Offering Instruction in Arts and Sciences

Websites for FAS Instructional Computing Group; Language Resource Center; Bureau of Study Counsel; and Bok Center for Teaching and Learning

FAS Documentation Guidelines and teaching documentation in 2005-06 case files for appointments to assistant professor, associate professor, and tenured professor

Description of FAS Faculty Prizes for Teaching and Advising, by Andrea Shen (11/2/06)

Proposal for a new “Teaching Matters” Website, by Andrea Shen (11/2/06)

From Other Harvard Schools

Materials on peer consultations, annual reports, and case teaching from Harvard Business School (provided by Dean Janice Hammond)

Sample teaching reviews from Harvard Law School (provided by Professor Martha Minow)

Materials on assessment from Harvard Graduate School of Education (provided by Professor Richard Light)
“Peer Review of Faculty Teaching: Introduction, Concept, and Approaches,” by Maria Blanco, Harvard Graduate School of Education (October 2006)

From Other Universities


Selected descriptions of annual activity reports, appointment procedures and/or programs to support pedagogy or honor good teaching from:

Barnard College
Boston University
Brown University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Northwestern University
Princeton University
Smith College
Stanford University
University of California, Berkeley
University of Chicago
University of Michigan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of New Hampshire
University of Notre Dame
Virginia Tech University
Yale University

Selected Publications


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Finally, we owe a special debt to Derek Bok, whose keen interest in the issues addressed by this Task Force during his year as Interim Harvard President has been, and will continue to be, critical to any success our efforts may enjoy.