Minutes of a meeting of the Council of the Princeton University Community held September 30, 2013 in Betts Auditorium of the School of Architecture. Present were Council members Ms. Banks, Mr. Brannon, Professor Braverman, Mr. Brown, Ms. Buff, Ms. Cherrey, Ms. Clifton, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Dressel, Ms. Dromboski, Ms. Du, Mr. Durkee, President Eisgruber (chair), Ms. Funk, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Johnston, Professor Kastner, Mr. Kugelmass, Provost Lee, Mr. Leifer, Ms. Libraro, Ms. Lv, Mr. McDonough, Professor Morel, Mr. Morrell, Mr. Okuda-Lim, Ms. Riihimaki, Mr. Riley, Mr. Robertson, Ms. Shahbender, Professor Starr, Ms. Taguchi, Professor Woolf, Ms. Wright, and Professor Wysocki; Ms. Halliday was secretary.

Order of Business; Committee Assignments

The President called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m., and after the roll call he thanked the members of the Council for their service. He turned first to opening of the year business. On recommendation from the council’s Executive Committee the Order of Business (Appendix A) and the standing committee assignments (Appendix B) were approved. The Council delegated authority to the Executive Committee to approve any additional committee assignments.

Question and Answer Session

The President noted that each Council meeting includes a question and answer session, and he encouraged members to submit questions in advance so that those who can best answer them can be present at the meeting. There were no questions.

President’s Listening Tour

President Eisgruber described a “listening tour” he is conducting this year on and off campus to learn about how Princeton is viewed by members of the University community, friends and leaders of higher education. While he has many visits planned in the coming weeks, he outlined some of the recurring questions and themes.

- How can access to Princeton be improved, especially ensuring that a Princeton education is available to all who qualify and not just those in the higher socio-economic categories.
- How can Princeton better communicate the value of its mission when higher education is viewed with skepticism throughout the country?
- How can the University leverage technology, especially to improve education on campus?
- How can entrepreneurship be integrated into the Princeton experience/education and become part of the mission of service to society?
- How can the freshman experience be improved to address difficulties of adapting to Princeton?
- How can support for science and technology be sustained at a time of diminished federal funding?
- Given the large investment the University makes in its students, how can the University ensure that after Princeton its students will fulfill the mission of service to others?
The President described the conversations he was having with freshmen in the Residential Colleges concerning Anthony Appiah’s book, *The Honor Code*. The book launched the “pre-read” program meant as an ice breaker and launching pad for further discussion, and he noted the open conversations with freshmen about honor in their own lives and what the University’s honor code means to them. Among the questions that he was asking others was when Princeton should expand the undergraduate student population. Princeton has regularly increased the number of students, and given the number of extraordinary applicants each year, the question of expansion arises regularly.

Discussion with the President focused on the possibility of expanding the undergraduate student body. It was acknowledged that data needs to be gathered and analyzed about necessary resources, ranging from the number of FTEs in departments to the number of beds available. The University decided to increase students in 2000 only after convincing evidence that the commitment to the highest quality education could be maintained and that the increase would not jeopardize the unique qualities of the Princeton experience. The same questions would have to be answered before any additional increase could be contemplated.

Members of the Council voiced their support of giving consideration to increasing international students and an international experience for all students. Being able to admit more international students was an attractive possibility. There was wide-ranging discussion about the possibility of opening a satellite campus in another country. The President noted that in his conversations on and off campus there was no enthusiasm for opening campuses abroad. There was general concern about the challenges of maintaining the kinds of close personal ties the University values and the difficulties of assuring quality. As recent experiences at other universities who have satellite campuses suggest, the core values of academic integrity and freedom to explore ideas and to communicate ideas may be threatened or undermined in other countries. In certain situations, in research partnerships for example, these hurdles can be overcome. But that is more difficult when the investment is a “bricks and mortar” relationship which cannot easily be dissolved. With respect to questions of financing an increase in size, the President noted that the endowment is now able to support current budge needs, but no one expects that endowments will grow at the previously historic high rates of the past. An increase in size would require donations, and reference was made to recent announcements by Yale and Stanford Universities about increasing their institutions and about the major donations that would help them achieve that goal.

**Ad Hoc Trustee Committee on Diversity**

The President introduced Professor and Chair of Psychology Deborah Prentice who co-chaired the Ad Hoc Trustee Committee on Diversity. The committee had recently submitted its report after 18 months of study (see [http://www.princeton.edu/reports/2013/diversity/report/](http://www.princeton.edu/reports/2013/diversity/report/)). Professor Prentice gave an overview of the report, the committee’s findings and recommendations. During the discussion Professor Prentice underscored the importance of centering efforts to increase diversity at the departmental level given the wide variety of opportunities and challenges that are department- or division- specific. There was discussion about the importance of the pipeline and building relationships with diverse populations early in their careers. The importance of creating a welcoming on-campus culture to attract a diverse community was underscored. An overall goal could be conceived as developing a community of graduate students, faculty, and senior staff which
would mirror the University’s diverse undergraduate population, and the diversity of the nation as a whole. But the difficulties of achieving that goal were noted among them the facts that a university’s demography at the non-student ranks changes slowly, and there is fierce competition among peer institutions to attract especially a diverse faculty.

In response to comments from faculty, Professor Prentice also outlined next steps. Referencing a program started by the Department of Molecular Biology in response to a mandate from the National Institutes of Health to increase diversity, she said that the immediate goal was to develop a few pilot projects like the one in Molecular Biology to test their effectiveness and to provide successful examples for other efforts.

The President thanked Professor Prentice and her committee for their work.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Halliday
Secretary