Over the last decade the Senior Administration and Board of Trustees are responsible for a series of strategic missteps that have resulted in significant, long-term harm to the College. In part, these unfortunate decisions are a consequence of insufficient faculty involvement in decision-making processes. The Faculty Policy Manual specifies (Section 1.5.C.1) that, as a consequence of both experience and training, the Faculty has primary responsibility for academic decisions made at the College.

The Academic Business Review currently being conducted has ramifications that could adversely affect the permanent viability of the College. Therefore, we appreciate President Drinan’s decision to hear faculty concerns in the initial stages of planning. However, it is crucial that the Faculty have the opportunity to provide broad, meaningful input into the final iterations of the Academic Business Review Proposals that will be deliberated upon by the Board of Trustees in February. Such input can only be obtained if the Faculty are given sufficient time to review the Steering Committee’s proposal(s).

Consequently, the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences should receive from the Academic Review Steering Committee, no later than January 8th, 2010, the detailed proposal it intends to send to the Board of Trustees including both a complete rationale and an evaluation of the implications of making and not making the proposed changes. Further, such a report should include any other options or alternatives that were seriously considered by the Steering Committee for inclusion in the proposal sent to the Board of Trustees. Success for the College at this juncture crucially depends on reaching a consensus about the features of any final Academic Business Review that are to be implemented.