

**College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences  
Minutes of the Faculty Meeting  
April 17, 2013**

Dean Sapiro called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

Memorial Tribute

Professor Tasso Kaper (Chair, Mathematics & Statistics) spoke about the loss of Lu Lingzi (GRS '14), who had been successfully pursuing an MA with focus on statistics when she was one of three people killed in the April 15, 2013 bombing at the Boston Marathon.

Dean's Report

Dean Sapiro's report covered key seasonal topics: April Open House events for students admitted to the Class of 2017, the annual faculty merit review, and forthcoming discussion of proposals and priorities for the recruitment of new faculty. That discussion will occur, as usual, at the May meeting of the Council of CAS Chairs and Directors (CCD).

Discussion Agenda

1. Charge to All Departments and Programs: Developing Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans

Dean Sapiro explained the charge, as mandated by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) in connection with Boston University's accreditation. There is an analogy with what individual faculty members typically do in setting goals for acquisition of content and skills in our own courses, devising assignments accordingly, using students' work to assess how well each of them has met our course goals, and, together with course evaluations, etc., to determine the effectiveness of our teaching and make adjustments as warranted. The development of explicit program-level goals and plans for ongoing assessment will be completed (for all BA, Master's, and PhD programs) and forwarded to the Provost's Office in Fall 2013. A CAS-wide committee will be tasked with proposing goals and means of assessment for the common elements of the BA: foundational skills (writing, foreign language, mathematics) and general education (breadth of study across the humanities, computational, natural, and social sciences). Each department and degree-granting program will be responsible for developing a set of, perhaps, three learning outcomes and matching assessment plans that are specific to the majors they offer. A guidebook will be provided to all chairs and directors. This exercise is required; we will do it as efficiently as possible; if done well, it will be worthwhile and informative.

2. Quantitative and Computational Reasoning

Following on last spring's discussion of writing, the departments of Mathematics & Statistics and Computer Science opened a College-wide discussion aimed at determining what quantitative and computational competencies today's graduates need for successful careers and informed citizenship, and what baseline expectations should be met by all CAS students, regardless of major. A presentation by Professor Dick Hall (Mathematics & Statistics) and Professor Leo Reyzin (Computer Science) outlined current requirements (including their finding that 90% of current students enter CAS having already fulfilled the basic competency requirement in mathematics through standardized testing) and surveyed contexts in which quantitative and computational skills are currently taught, including innovative divisional studies courses. The presenters described one of their departments' essential roles as helping students to see *why* these skills are useful and important; they welcomed consultations with "client" and other departments

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not only to ensure that the quantitative needs of specific student populations are met, but, more fundamentally, to encourage greater understanding of cross-disciplinary connections.

Automatic Consent Agenda

All items on the Automatic Consent Agenda were approved without discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. In lieu of the usual post-meeting Sherry Hours, faculty members were invited to attend a Service of Healing, to be held 5:30 p.m., in Marsh Chapel.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Jackson, substituting for

Patricia Hills  
Professor of History of Art & Architecture and  
Secretary of the Faculty