Executive Summary

Planning at Duke: Arts and Sciences in the New Millennium

Like the directional guides on a compass, four fundamental points of reference frame and shape the Arts and Sciences Plan for the New Millennium. First is the understanding that we can grow effectively in new areas only by preserving and protecting the strengths that have brought us to where we are; second is the need to sustain the ongoing, healthy tension between committing resources to research and upholding our commitment to excellence in teaching; third is the reality that Arts and Sciences operates under budgetary constraints that limit severely our freedom of maneuver; and fourth is the compelling realization that faculty development, especially in the sciences, will not occur unless we make substantial new capital investments in buildings and infrastructure.

Internal and External Criteria

Within these parameters, Arts and Sciences seeks to move on an ever-upward trajectory and to track our institutional advancement based upon the following external and internal assessment criteria:

- Rankings, as described by the National Research Council and such popular publications as U.S. News and World Report: We have fared well over the past two decades in national rankings, moving from having only one A&S program in the top ten in the 80’s (Biology) to having seven today (Biology, English, French, Literature, Political Science, Religion, and Spanish), with other programs such as Public Policy, History, Psychology and Sociology on the cusp. But we are dissatisfied, internally, with the imbalance among departments and divisions and seek improvement, particularly in the sciences.
- Participation in cutting edge intellectual trends: Defining the frontiers of interdisciplinary research has long been Duke’s strong suit, particularly in such areas as cultural studies, university programs in ecology, genetics, and the environment, and centers such as Health Policy, Law and Management, and Demographic Studies. But we need to stay in the forefront of what is increasingly becoming the benchmark of a university’s creativity, namely interdisciplinary research and teaching.
- New markets and technologies: In an increasingly technological world, Duke has focused on developing databases and technical capacity for keeping up with fast-breaking new initiatives. A recent survey of technology at Duke praised Arts and Sciences for its up-to-date computer operations. But we are still behind in terms of developing collaborations on information sciences and services.
- Infrastructure: Despite the marvels of the Levine Science Research Center, the new Sanford Institute of Public Policy and the Free Electron
Laser Laboratory, Duke is far behind in developing the physical infrastructure necessary to attract the best students, and to recruit and retain the best faculty. This need for enhanced physical facilities is particularly crucial in the sciences.

- Maintaining excellence as an undergraduate college: From being a top 20 university for undergraduates twenty years ago, Duke has moved quickly into the top ten in the 90s. But we must do better in attracting the best undergraduates, in increasing our applicant pool among the most talented, and in improving our yield vis-à-vis our major competitors (Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Northwestern, Penn and Stanford).

- Diversity: Thirty-seven years ago, Duke had no black students, only a few international students, and almost no minority faculty. Today the student body is 31% students of color, the number of black Arts and Sciences faculty has more than doubled in the last five years, and the number of tenure track women faculty doubled in the past ten. We need to do more to internationalize our student body, increase the economic diversity of our undergraduates, and take advantage of the rich faculty resources provided by scholars of diverse backgrounds.

- Service to the community: From a time when Duke and Durham rarely spoke in friendly tones, we have reached a point of growing partnership, with 75% of our students performing community service, and faculty members increasingly involved in formal relationships with the community. We need to expand and extend such ties of support and partnership.

Arts and Sciences Initiatives

In light of these critical indicators, Arts and Sciences seeks to undertake the following initiatives, focusing on both faculty areas and undergraduate life. These initiatives are rank-ordered as Priority 1, 2, or 3.

In the Natural Sciences: Priority 1: a) using our strength in life sciences as a base, we propose to build a new cluster of excellence in genomics; and b) targeting resources in conjunction with Engineering, we propose to develop new programs in nanoscience and materials science. Priority 2: c) building on initiatives carried out under the two-step tuition plan of 1997-98, we plan to continue the growth of our already burgeoning program in brain science; and d) taking advantage of fast-breaking developments in computational biology and bioinformatics, we propose to create new networks of cooperation across departmental and school lines in information science and technology.

In the Arts and Humanities: Priority 1: a) taking advantage of the gains made in the 80s and early 90s, we intend to build on Duke’s reputation for strength in the study of cultures and their texts by enhancing departmental centers of excellence in English, Literature, Religion and Romance Studies; and b) we propose to use the newly created John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary and International Studies as an incubator for gathering the brightest minds in the humanities and interpretive social sciences to develop new programs that will both attract, and help to retain, distinguished faculty. Priority 2: c) using our track record of interdisciplinary innovation as a departure point, we plan to initiate new signature programs in such areas as
"Americas Studies" and "Atlantic Studies," making Duke’s name synonymous with exciting patterns of cooperation between the humanities and the interpretive social sciences. Priority 3:

d) focusing on an area where we have only begun to realize our potential, we propose to foster greater collaboration in the arts, including the consideration of new facilities in the performing arts, and an integrated arts curriculum.

In the Social Sciences: Priority 1: a) using Duke’s expertise in social policy as a foundation, we plan to create a major new program in Genome Science Policy, Law and Ethics to assess the policy and ethical dimensions of the genome revolution. Priority 2: b) we propose to build and strengthen existing centers of strength in health policy, and child and family policy, making these internationally recognized sources of expertise on these critical social issues; and c) in cooperation with our colleagues in Engineering, Law, and Business, we plan to support a new university-wide Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Priority 3: d) we intend to develop further clusters of excellence in the areas of globalization of political processes, political economy, human growth and development, and race and gender studies; and e) to maximize the synergies between those social scientists who work in areas of census data, demographics, migration, and political psychology, we propose development of a Social Science Research Institute.

The Undergraduate College

In addition to these strategic initiatives, we intend to solidify Duke’s reputation as a top ten undergraduate institution. We have placed priority on supporting the full implementation of Curriculum 2000 and we seek to make enhancements in our admissions and financial aid policies. With regard to the latter, we propose: a) to increase the intellectual "yeast" of our undergraduate student body by introducing an "intellectual vitality" criterion into the admissions process, seeking to recognize the inventors, composers, or artists who might otherwise not win admission because of their failure to score well on existing criteria such as participation in extra-curricular activities; b) to increase the economic diversity of our student body, we propose to launch an ambitious new recruitment process that targets inner city magnet schools and poor rural areas and seeks to make Duke a viable and attractive option for less-well off but intellectually talented students; c) we propose a series of escalating targets for the applicant pool and for our yield in matriculants, focusing not just on aggregate numbers, but success in attracting more students in those areas we have identified as most critical; d) to enhance equity, we propose a series of financial aid reforms that will enable aided students to take summer school classes, participate in required internships, and receive summer earnings credit without suffering any disadvantage, and to receive greater financial support for book purchases, housing and food; and e) to enhance diversity, we plan to initiate a program of financial aid for international students in need, thereby making Duke a more attractive place for all students, whatever their background.

The Physical Infrastructure

To compete for the best students and recruit and retain the best faculty, we
must have an appropriate physical infrastructure, and new building initiatives are imperative. Priority 1: a) we propose a major new science building initiative, including both a comprehensive research and teaching building for the life sciences and chemistry ($30 million, see budgetary details), and major renovations of undergraduate teaching labs in Gross Chemistry and the Biological Sciences Building ($10 million, see budgetary details); and b) as a pivotal step toward creating a new Center for Genome Policy, Law and Ethics and to expand and enrich our social policy initiatives and research in the social sciences, we propose to construct a new wing onto the Sanford Institute that will bring together in synergistic relationship scholars working at the cutting edge of public policy and interdisciplinarity ($10 million, see budgetary details).

Priority 2: c) to strengthen our existing programs in the arts, we recommend exploring new facilities to both enhance drama, and create a performing arts center.

Budgetary Implications

We estimate the overall cost of these initiatives to be approximately $120 million, with resources to be equally divided between fundraising ventures associated with the capital campaign, Arts and Sciences strategic initiative funds, and central administration initiative funds.

To maximize the possibility of pursuing these initiatives, we identify a series of possibilities for disinvestment, although we recognize that savings from disinvestment can hardly pay for the proposals presented here. We also recognize the need for reallocating some faculty positions, while maintaining our commitment to provide the best undergraduate education we can through Curriculum 2000, our new writing program, and our insistence on every faculty member having a fair and equitable teaching load.

Benchmarks for Success

We believe we will have achieved our goals if the following benchmarks are met:

- Duke retains its current reputation as a top ten undergraduate institution, and moves to the forefront of our peer group.
- We succeed in retaining our excellent standing as a premiere institution for study of the humanities.
- We establish a signature program in Genomics, known for the quality of the science we do, as well as the depth of the policy analysis we offer.
- We develop growing recognition for our expertise in nanoscience and nanotechnology, brain science, and information science.
- We move at least one more social science department into the top ten to join Political Science.
- We become known as the place to go for expert advice on Health Policy, and Child and Family Policy.

- Our reputation for interdisciplinary cooperation, across school and departmental lines, continues to grow.

- Our undergraduate population becomes ever stronger in its intellectual composition, and our students rank a Duke undergraduate experience as worthwhile both for the respect it offers to diversity and different cultural lifestyles, and in the quality of social and intellectual life it embodies.