Report from the “Academics and Professional Development Committee”

By Oliver Bunn

1. Review of the Academics Section of the Compass

   • We have made good progress in rewriting the Academics section of the Compass, along the lines of the changes mentioned in the previous report.
   • One important overall change has been a more neutral tone to the section.
   • We still have to create a new section on Support, including Title IX-related information, Mental Health, Security etc.

2. Language Teaching

   • Jan van Treeck, our committee’s Teaching Advocate, aims at collecting data about the teaching load of graduate students involved with language courses and about language teaching at Yale in general.
   • There have only been very minor changes to the questionnaire that have come out of the conversation of the Steering Committee with the Dean’s Office about this effort.
   • Language teaching will also make up a substantial part of the agenda in our committee’s conversation with the Center for Language Studies in two weeks (Wednesday, April 11, at noon).
   • If you have any questions about the committee’s effort related to language teaching or would like to remain informed about the survey and the collected data, please contact jan.vantreeck@yale.edu.
   • Contact oliver.bunn@yale.edu if you would like to attend the conversation with the Center for Language Studies.

3. Leadership Program

   • Ksenia and I have met with Dean Wilczynski from the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences to talk about the school’s leadership program.
   • Program is endowed by a gift to the school.
   • The program does not only enhance students’ professional development by enabling them to take career-relevant courses, e.g. at the School of Management, but also establishes ties for the students with various leading offices on campus.
   • One of our main goals was to inquire about the scalability of the program. The underlying idea was a similar program open to all graduate students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
4. Yale Development Office

- Ksenia and I have also met with Wes Poling, who is in charge of the section of the Yale Development Office that deals with alumni from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
- We tried to get a better understanding of the Yale Development Office's procedure to secure contributions from alumni for specific causes, such as a potential leadership program at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
- The main lesson was that the Development Office does not proactively contact alumni to secure funding for individual small- to intermediate-size programs.
- The office focuses its efforts on bigger contributions. However, it keeps small- to intermediate-size programs in mind when having individual conversations with alumni about the potential usage of their contributions.

5. Coffee Voucher Program

- There are only a few last minor administrative hurdles that need to be cleared before the program can be launched.
- The program should be ready to go by the next General Assembly meeting.