



HMS/HSDM Faculty Council

Faculty Council Minutes
December 11, 2024

Present: Aguayo-Mazzucato, Astley, Bauer, Becker, Chen, Cluett, Daley, D'Amore, Drachman, Fregni, Giannobile, Haberer, Harris, Henske, Huang, Katz, Mathis, Meyerson, Morton, A. Nazarian, R. Nazarian, Royce, Song, Struhl, Treister, Tsai, Wagers, Wu

Guests: Mr. Manning

Staff: Mss. Carter, Hecht, Ryan, Spearman

This Faculty Council meeting was held jointly with the Faculty of Medicine meeting, in person, at Harvard Medical School in the Joseph B. Martin Amphitheater. This document contains the list of Faculty Council members who attended the joint meeting for attendance tracking, the approval of the November 13, 2024 Faculty Council meeting minutes, and the Conversation with the Provost section of the meeting. The full Joint meeting minutes will be provided in advance of the May 14, 2025 Joint meeting when the Faculty of Medicine, including the Faculty Council, will be asked to approve the full joint meeting December 11, 2024 meeting minutes.

Dr. Lisa Henske, the chair of the Faculty Council (FC) and professor of medicine at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, welcomed everyone to the meeting at 4:00 pm and thanked them for their time. The joining of the two faculty meetings is a new format, bringing together more faculty to celebrate faculty achievements and allows a larger faculty audience to learn about certain programs and departments at HMS and HSDM. Dr. Henske added that there will be an opportunity to connect during the reception following the meeting and encouraged the newly appointed professors to consider joining the FC in the future.

Dr. Henske asked the Faculty Council members for and received approval for the November 13th FC meeting minutes.

Dean Daley welcomed attendees and expressed gratitude for being able to hold the December meeting in person once again. He thanked everyone for attending and extended his appreciation to both the members of the Faculty Council and the Faculty of Medicine for their patience and flexibility during the first combined meeting.

Dean Daley provided context about the Faculty of Medicine meetings, which had historically been gatherings of the entire faculty. He explained that all ladder faculty were invited to attend these meetings to share their opinions and concerns. These meetings serve as an opportunity to honor members of the faculty, including those promoted to full professor, recipients of teaching and service awards, and to memorialize faculty members who had passed away. He also noted that the Faculty Council had evolved from the Faculty of Medicine and carried on much of its important work. He remarked that it was fitting to bring the faculty together for this combined meeting.

Dean Daley transitioned into a fireside chat and introduced John Manning, the Provost of Harvard University, who has been on the faculty for 20 years. He added that they have become very close in the past 6 years. First, Dean Daley asked Provost Manning to address the question: What is a

provost? The audience laughed. Before answering the question, Provost Manning congratulated the new full professors and explained that he was happy to be here. He explained that the provost is the chief academic officer of the University, adding that at the core of the position is faculty appointments. At age 63, he is still leaning a ton each day, not just about the breadth and depth of the University but also the medical school. He stated, “you are never too old to have imposter syndrome”. He explained that his job first to support the academic mission and academic excellence at the University. Provost Manning said that there are also 33 interfaculty initiatives that report to him.

Dean Daley asked Provost Manning if he is getting any sleep. Provost Manning responded that he is sleeping and exercising, but he is not eating well. He asked Provost Manning to tell the faculty about what he is learning and what is surprising him. Provost Manning said that he is learning about the breadth and depth of Harvard and added that it is two things: enormous and excellent. He reiterated that the University is very far and wide and the excellence runs deep. He is learning about innovation and he mentioned the use of zebrafish in the Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology Fishman Lab. He added that learning about science and learning about humanities is interesting. Provost Manning added that he enjoys reading about poetry, art, science and healing. He explained that Harvard is an extraordinary university and added that it is a tough moment for all universities. Provost Manning said that he wakes up with a deep sense of optimism because of this community and explained that “Harvard’s best days are ahead of us.” He added that there is lots of work to do, but there is no university like Harvard in the world. Dean Daley explained that this university is the last place people go for hope.

Next, Dean Daley thanked Provost Manning for rolling up his sleeves and learning about the medical school since he came into the role. Dean Daley said that he deeply appreciates Provost Manning’s commitment to the HMS mission and that he will be a great partner going forward. Provost Manning said that learning about the medical school and the work happening here has been one of the more inspiring parts of his job.

Then, Dean Daley and Provost Manning reinforced the importance of building community at Harvard and discussed interfaculty initiatives. Provost Manning explained that many of the interfaculty initiatives involve people from all over the university, for example the Harvard Global Health Institute (HGHI). HGHI is an interfaculty initiative that facilitates collaboration across the Harvard community and partners worldwide to advance global health equity. Provost Manning said that different interfaculty initiatives, like the HGHI, bring faculty together and create opportunities for faculty to learn from one another. Dean Daley and Provost Manning also touched on remote work, noting that a lot of collaboration happens during random encounters when you are in the same physical space.

Next, Dean Daley asked Provost Manning to speak about institutional voice. Dean Daley mentioned that Harvard is a leader in so many ways and that it is impossible to separate voice from HMS. Dean Daley said that he would love to help our community to think about institutional voice and asked Provost Manning to provide the audience with his sense of institutional voice. Provost Manning said

that he has thought about this a lot and he explained that as a leader, it can be challenging to figure out the precise position of the community on contentious issues. He also highlighted the Institutional Voice Working Group and the Opening Inquiry Working Group, both of which have uncovered a prevalent anxiety among individuals about expressing their thoughts on controversial topics. Provost Manning specifically noted that the Institutional Voice Working Group found that when institutional leaders speak out, it often conveys the impression that the institution itself is taking a definitive stance, which can discourage open debate and discussion. Provost Manning's goal is to shift this dynamic by softening the prominence of leadership voices and amplifying the perspectives of faculty. Dean Daley added that at times leaders have a responsibility to speak out on topics that concern the mission, such as admissions, teaching and the importance of research. Provost Manning agreed with this sentiment.

Following the discussion of institutional voice, Dean Daley asked Provost Manning to speak about how to make sure we are promoting civil discourse. Provost Manning touched on the need for the respectful clash of ideas. He said you can't do the best work in an echo chamber or a bubble. He added that an important legacy should be creating an environment where people can talk productively and generously about difficult topics. Provost Manning added that our current student body is different than 10 years ago. He said that students today are less adept at engaging with one another, less comfortable with hearing new ideas and less comfortable with disagreement. Provost Manning went on to say that students now spend more time interacting through social media and do not nurture skills of having civil discourse. He concluded by saying that the art of generous listening can be taught and that we need to cultivate empathy.

Next, Dean Daley and Provost Manning delved into a conversation about the Inclusion and Belonging Task Force which works towards cultivating an environment at HMS where everyone feels like they are a part of the community. Dean Daley reminded the audience of the power and necessity of "generous listening" when it comes to inclusion initiatives. Another point that Dean Daley and Provost Manning touched on was the concept of leaving your politics at the door and to replace judgement with empathy when it comes to patient care, which is a core part of the HMS curriculum. Dean Daley added that HMS is integrating respect and public discourse into the curriculum.

Then Dean Daley and Provost Manning touched on politics and the separation of powers. Provost Manning shared his optimism and explained that due to the structure of the constitution, monumental changes to our country move slowly. Provost Manning said, since its inception, our government, bifurcated into the federal and state sectors, was designed to regulate change. While it may be difficult to push good initiatives forward, Provost Manning reminded the audience that the government that Madison and Hamilton laid out over 200 years ago, also makes it hard to do bad things. Dean Daley thanked Provost Manning for his reassurance and for participating in the fire-side chat. Provost Manning congratulated the new professors.

This concludes the Faculty Council portion of the joint meeting. Final approved minutes of the full December 11, 2024 Joint Meeting will be available following the May 14, 2025 joint meeting.