

Gentlemen:

As the December 2010 meeting of the Alumni Council approaches, I want to remind you that I'm here as your message-bearer to the Council, the administration, the trustees, and the College at large.

I'm given to understand that, in the past, some people may have been skeptical of the Council's effectiveness, thinking that perhaps the College viewed listening to alums as somewhat more of an obligation than an opportunity. Whether that feeling existed or not, there sometimes wasn't a lot of input. However, I am convinced that President Kim and the Trustees genuinely want alumni comment -- be it praise, suggestions, questions, or gripes -- on all manner of issues facing Dartmouth.

I know that the Alumni Relations office and the leadership of the Alumni Council are equally desirous of your views -- so much so that they've asked that I forward to them *all* the comments I receive from you. I have politely informed them -- I'm sure you can picture this -- that I work for you, not them, so I will do with your comments and questions what *you* want. Pass them on verbatim and for attribution, summarized and not for attribution, any combination thereof, or not at all but simply for my information about your sense of things. Your choice.

The two areas in which I'll have the best opportunity for input and influence are my committee assignments, which are Academic Affairs and Honorary Degrees. Apparently our advancing age does carry some priveleges -- these two committees were at the top of my request list, and I'm really enthusiastic about being on each.

You can read about the mission and activities of each committee in detail under the Association of Alumni/Alumni Council heading in the "Alumni" section of www.dartmouth.edu. The short form of each is thus:

-- Academic Affairs is the principal communications link between the faculty and the Alumni Council and alumni. "Alumni are kept informed of the curriculum and other elements of the Dartmouth academic experience, a platform is created for alumni to communicate with the faculty, and ways are explored for the faculty to benefit from the background and experiences of alumni and for the alumni to access faculty scholarship and other academic resources of the College."

-- Honorary Degrees typically submits to the administration three to five names of alumni worthy of consideration for an honorary degree from the College. "To be nominated, an individual must have attained intellectual distinction at national and international levels, reached professional achievement of the highest order, or made contributions of genuine significance in areas of public service or Dartmouth College involvement. The Honorary Degrees Committee is tasked with identifying and researching living undergraduate school alumni of this caliber and nominating the best among them."

That's it -- thanks for reading. Please email or call with whatever's on your mind re things Dartmouth, especially if it falls within the purview of these two committees. For those of you, like me, who would dearly love a return to winning football ways -- working on it, and apparently pretty effectively. Beat Harvard!

Gerry Bell

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