



EMORY

LANEY
GRADUATE
SCHOOL

Dean's Address to the Graduate Faculty State of the Laney Graduate School

Lisa A. Tedesco
April 30, 2013

Thank you all for attending the 2013 Dean's Address and for participating in the process to articulate and more clearly define the important role of graduate faculty governance in the Laney Graduate School and at Emory University.

This is the seventh time I appear before you to deliver this address. Just last year, I opened by remarking on how the occasion had settled into a familiar ritual. And now here we are, at a very different occasion than any of the others!

* * *

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the thorough work and leadership of the Executive Council in grappling with faculty governance, proposing meaningful changes and updates to the faculty governance document, receiving feedback from across LGS and, finally, helping to bring all of this forward for a vote. Carlos, you have done an outstanding job in guiding this process. Jeff, Joe, Kimberly, Karen, Andreas, Lynne, Barry, and Patricia:¹ we are deeply indebted to you for the care and commitment with which you have approached this foundational document.

Faculty governance is a faculty matter, and the proposed bylaws you will be voting on are the work of your elected faculty representatives. I have of course been consulted, and the document has been circulated for comments among the deans of our partner schools as well as among senior leadership at the University. The decision about whether to adopt these bylaws rests with you and all of your colleagues. I look forward to learning the outcome of the graduate faculty vote on these timely and important revisions.

¹ Members of the 2012-13 LGS Executive Council were: Carlos Moreno (faculty chair), Patricia Cahill, Joseph Crespino, Andreas Fritz, Lynne Huffer, Kimberly Jacob Arriola, Barry Ryan, Jeffrey Staton and Karen Stolley.

* * *

I do not need to remind us that this address comes at the end of a difficult year. Some of our difficulties are the results of events beyond Emory's control, some are the results of decisions with consequences that are unwelcome to some in our community, and some have been described as self-inflicted wounds. As a result, Emory as an institution has faced its own shortcomings in very public ways, and many of us have spent much time engaged in deeply felt and sometimes painful conversations about the values reflected in Emory's actions, about our systems of governance, about diversity, about change, and about decisions needed to keep our future vital and vibrant.

Before I turn to addressing two issues that directly affect the Laney Graduate School, I want to say a word about the nature of our campus conversation. It has, at times, been pointed, blunt, and outspoken. With passionate convictions comes a level of engagement that can be both exhilarating and frustrating, and much of our public conversation is, for many of us, one that we feel in our gut. But to my eyes and ears, our conversation has remained within boundaries of civility and respect. We should take pride, together, in our ability to be a community where debate and protest can take place in vigorous and, yes, confrontational ways – but not descend to hurtful attacks and threats. Thank you.

* * *

In the interest of having an opportunity for conversation, I will deliver a brief version of my address. A fuller version will be available on our website, as usual. I want to discuss briefly two challenges: the circumstances that led to the current effort to clarify and revise LGS faculty governance, and the quite different challenge posed by the “sequester” of federal funding. Those two challenges take place in a broader context that includes a range of other issues. Despite the breadth of these challenges, we – the Laney Graduate School – are poised to meet them, and to move into the future with confidence and purpose.

* * *

We find ourselves voting for new bylaws because we are responding to the changes announced by Emory College last September. Many of the changes concerned Emory College of Arts and Sciences alone, like the closing of the departments of Physical Education and Visual Arts. All are to be phased in over several years, and none involve the termination of tenured faculty. But some involve programs where the Laney Graduate School and the College are partners, because graduate programs align with affected units in the College.

In the immediate term, graduate admission is suspended to programs in Economics, Educational Studies, the Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts, and Spanish, but all degrees stay active until the current students have completed the courses of study. In the longer term, graduate degrees in Educational Studies will no longer be offered. Graduate degrees in Economics and Spanish are expected to resume in the future, in new shapes, as the result of planning and redirection efforts now underway. And we expect the interdisciplinarity represented in the ILA to take place with different structural contours yet to be explored.

The changes announced in September also included the creation of five committees to explore a range of emerging directions and opportunities. The work of these committees is proceeding apace, as a recent article in the Emory Report makes clear.² The deliberations of these faculty committees are likely to have direct outcomes for graduate education, and we look forward to exploring the new opportunities that will be presented.

The changes in September took place in a broader context. Since 2008, every unit and school has needed to re-evaluate its priorities and the strategic allocation of resources in a context of heightened awareness of longer term sustainable resources. Many of you in this room were part of and remember the difficult discussions we had with programs during our 2008 annual program planning meetings as we evaluated where and how to invest in a time of diminishing resources. We deliberately absorbed a number of economic hits during that time, mainly through a significant reduction in the fall 2009 entering cohort. This allowed us to return sooner to a steady state and maintain our long-term trajectory of slow but steady growth.

Even with sound planning, we were not and are not immune to the budgetary fates of our partners. The economic climate change that began in 2008 has continued to affect all of us. For many years, Emory was able to support new directions by growing. It is now clear that this is not a sustainable model. New initiatives come with costs, and moving in new directions will often need to be balanced by leaving other things behind. Such changes are difficult, and the choices are often painful. But the alternative is stagnation and atrophy across the board.

Emory College engaged in a lengthy and extensive planning process in order to make difficult decisions about future directions, and announced those decisions this past September. Dean Forman has presented the rationale for these decisions, before the College faculty meeting and in many other contexts, and he has outlined a path for the College that we believe furthers the University's mission and vision.

Decision making about the allocation of LGS resources rests with the Laney Graduate School, but we must be and are responsive to our University partners. When partners seek to shift their engagement with doctoral education, we must respond with our own assessment of the way forward. The Laney Graduate School was a partner in these decisions. We contributed information and perspective, and brought to the table our own data and experiences.

Looking back, it was not clear what role the Executive Council should play in the decision to suspend admissions to the four programs. Now, because of the good work of the 2012-13 Executive Council, and in response to justified faculty concern, we have the opportunity to adopt a faculty governance structure that is much clearer and more assertive. It moves us in a productive direction, and it is a credit to the elected graduate faculty leadership that positive action has emerged from a difficult moment.

* * *

The challenges posed by the September changes are essentially internal, about how we articulate future directions in an era of constrained choices, and manage the conflicting views that will always accompany change. Many of our colleagues, and in fact Emory as a whole, face another

² http://news.emory.edu/stories/2013/04/er_ECAS_five_committees/campus.html

set of challenges: the federal budget sequester, which is significantly reducing the funding that supports research and graduate education in many areas.

We all probably know by now that the sequester has a profound and direct impact on a number of federal agencies that support education and research at universities like Emory. Agencies like the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy have all been forced to cut budgets for this fiscal year, with immediate impact on research funding. It is not easy to know just what the impact will be, but in a recent memo Wright Caughman, our Executive Vice President for Health Affairs, estimated that Emory Health Sciences may lose a total of \$25 million in funding for research, Medicare, and graduate medical education in the current fiscal year alone, with more to come in FY 14. The cuts themselves are a significant blow, but on top of that comes a cloud of uncertainty about how and when this essentially political situation will be resolved, and what the outcomes will be for these and other federal agencies.

These funding reductions directly impact the work of many of our colleagues in fields where investigator or PI funding supports graduate education. Reduced funding means that the calculus of grant submissions and success is changing: to maintain a good chance of success, investigators must submit more grants, and in a more constrained environment even very strong proposals will sometimes not get funded.

Facing these reductions and uncertainties, investigators worry about long term planning and how the sequester will impact the number of graduate students or postdoctoral trainees they can support. More broadly, a great number of faculty investigators are, in a sense, managers of small businesses. Their grant funding sustains labs, postdocs, grad students, administrative staff, technicians and more. Some of our investigator colleagues already are making difficult choices that will be painful to live through about staffing and future directions for labs and research.

Many colleagues tell us they have never worked harder, and have never found it more difficult to balance the actual research with the effort to sustain funding.

While the impact of the sequester may be felt first, and most clearly, in areas that draw significant support from PI funding, it will reverberate throughout the university. It will affect staff positions and facilities, and it will be felt in central budgets that rely in part on the indirect costs recovery paid to Emory out of grant funds. While other academic areas of the Laney Graduate School rely less directly on federal grant funding, particularly to support graduate student stipends, over time the impact may be profound – think, for example, of the many graduate students in the humanities and social sciences who rely on federal funding to conduct research for their dissertations.

Looking at our overall situation, recall the numbers we presented at last year's address: from 2003 to 2011, we essentially remained the same size in terms of students in non-PI funded areas, but in PI-funded areas we grew larger by one third. A new environment in federal support for investigators will force us to consider our growth in different ways, at least in the shorter term. There will be recovery, and I am optimistic that we will see new opportunities and new solutions on the federal funding front. But in the short term, we need to weather a real storm.

In the near term, we are active on three fronts. First, we are paying careful attention to what funding agencies are saying about their short term and longer term prospects. The sequester and the post-sequester funding levels that will follow it are developing political issues, and we need to stay informed about their direction, and to join others to influence them as we can.

Second, we are working with the programs most directly affected, helping to make sure that resources to support current students are present. This means being deliberate about taking on new students in appropriate numbers and with due attention to uncertainties, and ensuring that we have bridge funding mechanisms and other ways of supporting investigators who may experience gaps or delays in their grant funding levels. With PI funded students, as with all of our students, our commitment to fund their training at Emory is made to the individual students, and it is our obligation and intention to fulfill those commitments. Individual faculty members, program leadership, and we in the Laney Graduate School, will work together to ensure that we are able to carry those commitments through a time of uncertainty.

Finally, we are considering how this may impact existing student funding sources in LGS, such as advanced student fellowships. Typically, students who are supported by extramural federal funding do not apply for many of these, in part because the fellowships don't always fit the students' standard training trajectories. This may change in the next few years.

* * *

These two sets of difficulties have one thing in common: they bring home to us the reality of making decisions under constrained resources while also seeking to seize opportunities and explore new directions. Many of us have experienced Emory's relatively fortunate recent past, when new initiatives have been funded by growing revenue, and it has seemed like we can both continue to do all that we do, and, at the same time, start doing new things.

In earlier addresses, I have said that this era is coming to an end. The recent changes in the College are an example of the choices needed to seize new opportunities and respond to changes in the context of higher education. With the sequester – and likely with some, more permanent budget arrangements that will succeed it – we will be facing a similar situation in other areas. We will not be able to pursue new directions and opportunities only by adding more grant funding. Instead, in all our areas, we will need to deliberately examine how we combine redirecting current resources with modest growth to enable us to do new things. And, we will need to more deliberately seek, over the longer term, new sources for revenues. We must confront the difficult choices of *what we will not do*. That challenge will only benefit from fully committed faculty engagement.

The proposed new bylaws, discussed earlier, will make one important difference in all of this. They articulate a robust role for the Executive Council – the elected representatives of the graduate faculty – as an important source of faculty reflection and recommendation about such difficult decisions. This will not be a panacea, and it will not guarantee that such decisions will be painless and uncontroversial. But that role will enhance and revitalize faculty participation, bringing us all to the table as a community that cares deeply about graduate education at Emory.

* * *

Even during this challenging year, we are rising to the occasion and making progress on developing programming that addresses 21st century challenges and builds 21st century skills.

We are focused on providing our students with 21st century skills.

- The Laney Graduate School is pleased to support the Digital Scholarship Commons, which offers faculty members and graduate students the space, expertise and assistance needed to develop innovative multidisciplinary projects that integrates new technologies into their work.
- We recently hosted a virtual conference with Dr. Bruce Weinberg, who co-chaired the modeling sub-committee of the NIH Biomedical Workforce Working Group. The report recommended ways to increase the diversity in the STEM workforce and to better prepare graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to participate in a broad-based and rapidly evolving economy.
- In-house, we are conducting an initial review of our TATTO program and are poised to rethink our training. We must take into account the changing professional experience of our students who are increasingly teaching in a wide range of environments, from community colleges to online courses, and need a broader range of skills.

We are also keenly aware of the need to prepare our students for 21st century job markets, which means helping them explore careers beyond the academy.

- We have established ongoing programming such as the *Pathways Beyond the Professoriate* speaker series and an alumni mentoring program.
- We sponsor campus events that encourage students to open their minds to professional possibilities where their graduate work and experience will situate them as leaders.
- We offer online programming such as The Versatile PhD, to help “demystify” non-academic careers and provide a forum for gathering information about and discussing a wide range of professional pathways.

This work also involves a culture change of sorts, for many of us, which entails affirming students who come to us and talk about career tracks that would carry them away from the academy and into spaces where we have not imagined.

Thriving in the 21st century also means affirming diversity and understanding changing demographics. We know that a diverse student body, as well as a diverse faculty body, enriches the entire university, our community and broader society. We will continue efforts to increase the educational benefits of diversity and step up our efforts to chart the best path forward for realizing even great diversity and inclusion at Emory. We will look to you to help inform us of the realities you face on the ground and the kind of support you need.

We are working to provide us and you with information and perspectives to help.

- We partnered with the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese to convene a seminar on *Emory and the Future of Hispanic/Latino Higher Education*.
- We hosted Northwestern University's Dr. Richard McGee, recipient of a NIH Director's Pathfinder Award to Promote Diversity in the Scientific Workforce, for several presentations on diversity and mentoring.
- In partnership with the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference and the Halle Institute for Global Learning, we hosted Dr. Claude Steele of Stanford University for a presentation on *How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*.
- And in partnership with the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence, the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference and the Department of Sociology, we hosted Dr. Marta Tienda of Princeton for an event titled *Why Minorities Fall Behind: Institutional and Ethnic Variations in Graduate Enrollment*.

Earlier this month, the Laney Graduate School's biomedical, biological and natural science doctoral programs, the Center for Science Education, and the School of Medicine Office of Postdoctoral Education, convened the first STEM Research and Career Symposium where we welcomed more than 100 undergraduate and graduate students from outside Emory as well as about 25 of their mentors and program directors. More than 80% of attendees were from underrepresented groups, and it was a resounding success. This initiative was also supported by the Office of the Provost.

Twenty-first century challenges also involve grappling with internationalization, a key piece to advancing our diversity. We are fortunate in the Laney Graduate School to have many international students, but we are facing increasing competition from other university systems. We are pleased to have dedicated faculty engagement. Dr. Roy Sutliff has been key to our recruiting efforts in Asia, and I look forward to working with new Vice Provost for International Affairs Dr. Philip Wainwright.

It may be time to consider an emphasis not on *more* students, but on ways to international *exchange*. We see this in European universities, which have managed a level of coordination that makes exchanges relatively easy to achieve. We also have a working model: the joint Biomedical Engineering program that we offer with Georgia Tech and Peking University. Students have advisors at the home campus, a co-advisor at the secondary campus, and will spend at least one year taking classes and participating in research in the co-advisor's lab on the secondary campus. In fact, this spring we are celebrating our first graduate of this pathbreaking program. These models require faculty to faculty, program to program and institution to institution engagement. They are a kind of internationalization we need to explore and that we are discussing in international conversations such as last year's Council of Graduate Schools Global Summit, which I attended and that was focused on Graduate Education for Global Career Pathways.

This description was just a brief look at some of our new and maturing initiatives this year. A more complete listing and links to information about them can be found in the appendix, following this presentation.

* * *

The challenges we face are indeed daunting. I believe we are making progress and I believe this year – even some of the difficult and painful moments of this year – represents progress for the Laney Graduate School. I'd like to talk to you about one more thing we need: engagement and advocacy to promote the value of graduate education, both nationally and within the greater community of Emory.

When I came here, former Provost Earl Lewis asked me to raise the presence of Emory in the context of national organizations and efforts involving graduate education. I have spent considerable energy pursuing that task. This December, I will complete my term as past-chair of the board of the Council of Graduate Schools, in June, I complete my year as chair of the GRE Board, and this year, I am president-elect of the AAU Association of Graduate Schools. These national service opportunities have taught me a great deal about graduate education, the broad missions of higher education in the United States and beyond, and the unique responsibilities and roles we have at research universities.

Most importantly, serving in these posts has been a tremendous education about the importance of advocating for graduate education in the policy processes at both the state and the national levels. It is easy for those of us involved with graduate education, research and scholarship to take for granted the value of these activities and how they contribute to our communities on a wide range of levels. But if we allow that familiarity to breed complacency, we make a dangerous mistake. Instead, we must learn to continually engage with policy and decision makers to impress on them the many and important contributions we make.

Right now, through the Council of Graduate Schools, I and many other deans are working hard to convince Congress that the effects of the sequester undermine graduate education and are potentially harmful to the United States. In the most recent semi-annual visit to “the Hill,” which took place just last week, many of us felt that we were getting a new level of attention and willingness to listen – even from lawmakers who would generally oppose such government spending.

We brought home to them the looming threat of increases in student loan interest rates. In the current reauthorization process there are proposals to double the interest rate on federally guaranteed loans from 3.4% to 6.8%. We presented our case against this increase to members of the Georgia delegation, and advocated for the reauthorization of the COMPETES program and the Higher Education Act. We also made a case for improving visa and immigration policies to allow experts in various research areas to more easily visit the U.S., and to increase the numbers of visas for research engagement and for graduate students.

Advocacy at that level is slow and sometimes frustrating work, and it can feel distant from pressing matters on campus. But we should not let that deter us. It is *essential* work. We in graduate education depend intimately on a large array of federal policies, and there are no more persuasive advocates for – and educators about – our value and contributions than we ourselves. It is essential for us at Emory, as a large, research-intensive AAU university, to contribute our voice and experience to this effort.

We also need to bring this advocacy home to our extended Emory community. I'm sure you recall that this year, Emory successfully completed a major campaign – despite the fact that it took place in the context of the 2008 downturn and the ensuing “climate change” in our economy. You may not be aware that the Laney Graduate School exceeded our campaign goal by 30%, one of the widest margins of any unit.

We are proud that we exceeded our goal, and we are very proud of the way we have created an effective and forward looking fund-raising process in the Laney Graduate School. Graduate education is one of the hardest areas in university development, and at Emory our historical record has been particularly weak. But it must also be acknowledged that our campaign goal was low – \$10 million – and of course much of the money raised was expendable funds rather than endowment.

It is time to advocate for a more ambitious goal, one that will provide graduate education at Emory, and the Laney Graduate School, with a new level of stability for the future. It is time to advocate for including, as a central goal of Emory's next campaign, a substantial endowment for the Laney Graduate School.

I am fond of making the point that we are truly a graduate school of the university. Our students are tangible presences in all of Emory schools except Oxford, and even modestly in the Law School. Our faculty members – nearly 1,000 of you – have tenure homes in every part of the university, and in a few places that are close extramural collaborating sites, like the CDC and Georgia Tech. Vital, vibrant, graduate education extends its influence throughout Emory. And as a corollary, the *financial strength and stability* of the graduate school, is an asset for all of Emory.

This is the argument I will make, to leadership at Emory and to our colleagues in Development, to funding agencies and philanthropists, to trustees and to my fellow deans. In a unique way, a strong financial foundation for the Laney Graduate School benefits all of Emory by ensuring the stability and vitality of a purposeful presence of graduate education. We are a superior investment!

* * *

I hope you will join me in this advocacy. I do what I do because I believe passionately that graduate education is an extraordinary endeavor that helps us understand the world and, corny as it sounds, make it a better place. At the core of graduate education are you, the faculty, and your graduate students. In the end, all our efforts to secure a strong and purposeful presence of graduate education across the university is all about what happens in your laboratories, seminar rooms, offices and studies.

This is one of the times of the year when I review dissertations. Even in busy, difficult, distracting times, it always happens that dissertations grab me and make me spend much more time than I really should with them. Every time I find myself immersed in an extraordinary work of research and scholarship, I am reminded that what we have the privilege to do together is truly remarkable.

Even in difficult times, quite especially in difficult times, it continues to be a privilege to be an advocate and a leader on your behalf.

Appendix – LGS Programming and Events and National Reports and Initiatives

LGS Professional Development Programming

- [Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity \(TATTO\)](#)
- [Networking and Mentoring Programming](#) – includes information about Pathways Beyond the Professoriate, the Alumni-Mentor Program and Networking Events
- [Grant Writing Program](#)
- [Three-Minute Thesis Competition \(3MT\)](#)
- [Professional Development Support Funds](#)
- [The Versatile PhD](#)
- [MentorNET](#) – e-Mentoring for diversity in engineering and science
- [Program for Scholarly Integrity](#)
- [English Language Support Program](#)

LGS Special Initiatives and Programming

- [STEM Research and Career Symposium](#)
- [Contemporary Pedagogies and Professional Preparation for Graduate Students](#)
- [Mellon Foundation Graduate Teaching Fellowship](#)
- [Digital Scholarship Commons \(DiSC\)](#) – Located in the Research Commons of the Woodruff Library, DiSC is supported by LGS in partnership with the Robert W. Woodruff Library and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
- [Modeling Effective Research Ethics Education in Graduate and International Collaborations](#) – grant received in Fall 2012

LGS Special Events/Seminars on Diversity and/or Mentoring

- Emory and the Future of Hispanic/Latinos Higher Education ([Academic Learning Communities](#), Fall 2012)
- Postbaccalaureate Research and Education Programs: What Students are Seeking Before the PhD (Dr. Richard McGee, October 18, 2012)
- Mentors, Coaches and the Sociology of Science: A New Approach to the Development of Young Scientists (Dr. Richard McGee, October 18, 2012)
- The NIH Directors Pathfinder Awards to Promote Diversity in the Scientific Workforce: A Coaching Model Translating Theory To Practice (Dr. Richard McGee, October 19, 2012)
- How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do (Dr. Claude Steele, November 13, 2012)
- Why Minorities Fall Behind: Institutional and Ethnic Variations in Graduate Enrollment (Dr. Mart Tienda, January 17, 2013)

National Reports and Initiatives

- [NIH Biomedical Research Workforce Report](#) and [NIH Implementation Plan](#)
- [Diversity in the Biomedical Research Workforce Working Group Report](#)
- [Pathways Through Graduate School and Into Careers](#)

- [Council of Graduate Schools Global Summit 2012 – From Brain Drain to Brain Circulation: Graduate Education for Global Career Pathways](#)