

gested that communication within FAS fell short, and that many colleagues did not feel comfortable expressing themselves in such formal settings. Introducing the May 7 conversation, she said the “shared sense” that communication needed improvement arose both from faculty members’ crowded schedules and e-mail in-boxes and from “significant changes in higher education, the nation, the world, and Harvard.” The latter included some items from her memo: decisions about HarvardX and the online education partnership with MIT, edX; the prospective move of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) to Allston; and the forthcoming capital campaign.

As background:

- Faculty members uncertain about HarvardX and edX (the development and deployment of “massive open online courses,” MOOCs, that disseminate classes worldwide electronically)—and their costs and implications for teaching and such matters

as who controls credit for online education—have raised concerns in prior faculty meetings (see “Online Education Accelerates,” March-April, page 50 and <http://harvardmag.com/edx-growth>, and this issue, “Online Overdrive,” page 50.)

- At the February 5 faculty meeting where President Drew Faust and Provost Alan Garber outlined the relocation of SEAS to Allston, several SEAS area deans rose to object that the decision was presented on short notice, and to express their then-unaddressed reservations about the prospective move (see <http://harvardmag.com/seas-13>).

- Although a large University capital campaign is under way (see “Campaign Chatter,” May-June, page 50), many—perhaps most—FAS members seem to have little sense of its aims and impact on research and teaching, beyond the known goals of funding financial aid and renovating the undergraduate Houses.

- Other recent issues disquieting faculty



Evelyn Hammonds

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members include the centralization of library services, under the provost’s direction; the provost’s spring 2012 announcement that financial-planning services for professors were being discontinued (see “Faculty Finance Frustrations,” July-August 2012, page 48); and throughout this academic year, the investigation of undergraduate academic misconduct, and the administrative probing of resident deans’ e-mail accounts, with the initial approval of FAS dean Michael D. Smith and University general counsel Robert Iuliano—and, subsequently, by Harvard College dean Evelyn M. Hammonds, without Smith’s knowledge or consent (see “E-mail Update,” below). The announcement on the Tuesday of Commencement week that Hammonds would step down at year end proved a kind of punctuation mark for this controversy.

Longer-serving faculty members remember the trauma—focused on discussions within FAS—that surrounded the administration of Lawrence H. Summers, his abrupt dismissal of an FAS dean, and the early end of his own presidency, in 2006. That was followed by the financial

## E-mail Update

**During** the April 2 disclosure that the e-mail accounts of a resident dean were investigated multiple times in connection with an Administrative Board review of students’ academic misconduct (see “E-mail Imbroglia,” May-June, page 46), President Drew Faust told the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) that the University appeared to have “highly inadequate” policies and processes in place for treating electronic communications properly.

She therefore retained attorney Michael B. Keating, LL.B. ’65, to review the facts and report on whether the situation is fully understood; *The Harvard Crimson* subsequently disclosed that his report will be delivered to a committee comprising Faust and Corporation members Lawrence S. Bacow, William F. Lee, and Theodore V. Wells Jr. According to a statement issued by Lee:

In addition to discussing his findings with the Corporation committee, [Mr. Keating] will prepare a written report, with appropriate regard for confidentiality, that will be shared with the Harvard community. He aims to finish his work by June 30.

Separately, Faust set up a University task force to establish policies and guidelines on e-mail privacy, chaired by Green professor of public law David J. Barron. That group began meeting on May 6; it expects to make recommendations for Corporation action by the end of the coming fall term. It operates under this charter from Faust:

The task force will consider and recommend appropriate

policies regarding access to, and confidentiality of, electronic communications that rely on university information systems. It will consult with faculty, staff, and students in order to obtain a full understanding of the perspectives of each group.

In undertaking its work, the task force will inform itself about policies now in place at Harvard and other relevant institutions and solicit perspectives and advice on best practices.

The task force will consider whether and to what extent Harvard’s policies should be University-wide or specific to certain parts of the University or particular institutional roles and responsibilities.

The task force will be expected to focus on recommending policies for the future that are both principled and practicable and that account for the reasonable expectations of individuals, the legitimate interests of the University, and associated issues of notice and process....

Barron’s task force includes administrative, associate, and executive deans from the schools of divinity, public health, and medicine, and a dozen professors from diverse faculties (the complete list appears at <http://harvardmag.com/privacy-13>). It will be supported by vice presidents Marilyn Hausmann (human resources), Robert Iuliano (University general counsel), Anne Margulies (chief information officer), and Leah Rosovsky (strategy and programs).