Michael D. Smith announced the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Committee on Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures to lead this work within FAS. Its chair, professor of history Alison Johnson, also serves on Hyman's prevention task force.

All that work may be the easy part. The task force is likely to recommend broader education for students and training for administrators, with an eye toward changes in campus culture. The mix of young people exploring relationships, sometimes accompanied by access to alcohol, in a new setting away from home, has never been free of emotional complications, nor wholly guided by rationality, mature experience, or rules in a student handbook.

Lest anyone involved forget that Harvard, too, is a worldly community (even apart from matters of sexual conduct), Dean Smith had the unhappy duty of informing the faculty on April 1 that three undergraduates had been expelled earlier in the year for violating rules on physical violence (in all three instances), plus diverse infractions concerning drugs, alcohol, and firearms (in two of the cases). The challenge in addressing sexual assault is that the University is populated by imperfect human beings, not angels.

Spring, Fevered

Amid the Divest Harvard protestors’ late-April blockade of the president’s office (see page 22) and the debate about sexual assault (see page 23), other issues roiled the end of the semester; several are summarized here.

A College Honor Code

Following four years of research and outreach by its committee on academic integrity—a period punctuated by the 2012-2013 investigation of the largest recent case of suspected misconduct on an examination, and punishment of dozens of undergraduates—the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) on May 6 enacted an honor code for undergraduates.

“To strengthen the dedication to academic integrity,” the College adopted a code described as follows:

Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work with integrity—that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgment of the contributions of others to our ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one’s own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.

“Commitment” to the code, which takes effect in the fall of 2015, is to be demonstrated through an “affirmation of integrity,” the specifics of which will be recommended by the dean of Harvard College and ultimately considered by the full faculty for inclusion in the Handbook for Students. Language circulated to the faculty in March included this language for the affirmation: “I attest to the honesty of my academic work and affirm that it conforms to the standards of the Harvard College Honor Code.” Cases concerning possible violations will be adjudicated by a new Honor Board, not the existing Administrative Board; members will include undergraduates, resident deans, professors, administrators, and graduate students; the dean or his designee will serve as chair.

Adoption was never in doubt, and the measure passed overwhelmingly, but the faculty debate aired several criticisms. Some professors objected to the appropriateness of administering an oath or affirmation to the Harvard community, or part of it. Others questioned the efficacy of such procedures for promoting appropriate academic behavior, and pointed to broader measures shaping the campus culture. And there were, generally, concerns about an asymmetrical process that seems to single out student conduct without explicitly emphasizing professors’ reciprocal obligations to the students whom they teach.

Rakesh Khurana, who becomes dean of Harvard College on July 1, will be responsible for implementation; he participated in the committee’s work. For details about the code, its background, and the debate, see http://harvardmag.com/honor-14.

Separately, in a sort of coda to the honor-code debate and the 2012-2013 academic-misconduct case, two central figures in that grueling investigation announced that they are leaving Harvard. John L. “Jay” Ellison, secretary of the Administrative Board since 2005, will become dean of students at the University of Chicago. Adams House resident dean Sharon L. Howell—an outspoken critic of searches of resident deans’ e-mail account headings after it appeared that Ad Board information about the investigation had been passed to news media—is moving to Northfield Mount Hermon School. (See below on the new communications-privacy policy.)

E-privacy Policy Approved

The Harvard Corporation in late March approved a new, University-wide policy on access to electronic communications. The
Renewing the Coop

The Harvard Coop, a retailing fixture for 132 years, is changing with the times. Although it will remain a membership-based cooperative, its longtime annual rebate distributions will be supplanted by a 10 percent discount at the time of sale, beginning with purchases (in-store or online) made July 1. Thus, paid-up members will receive their final rebate checks this autumn, for the fiscal year ending June 30; henceforth, once current membership is validated at the register or during online checkout, patrons will realize their savings at once.

Coop president Jerry Murphy ’73, M.B.A. ’77, said that its board of directors had examined operations during the past few years, taking stock of changes in book retailing and of the expectations and wants of Harvard and MIT students, who are an important, year-round customer cohort, and of other members. Focus groups and other analyses of alumni and students showed, he said, that many students don’t figure the rebate into their purchasing decisions and that most preferred immediate savings.

The discount—which will apply across the Coop’s offerings, including trade books, texts, and insignia merchandise—in fact exceeds recent rebate rates (of late, an average of 8.5 percent or more of a patron’s purchases). Furthermore, it will apply atop other promotions (for example, on best-selling books offered at a 30 percent discount, members will realize an additional 10 percent off the reduced price).

Murphy said that although it is possible some products may be excluded from the discount in the future, the only such category now is fully digital text materials, for which pricing is evolving in the educational-publishing industry. To date, such materials account for a minuscule share of Coop volume; as such publishing evolves, it is even conceivable, of course, that university registrars’ course-management systems or other entities will become the source for distributing e-teaching materials, taking them outside the conventional retailing system.

To receive the somewhat greater, and instant, discount, patrons must be current in their Coop membership, and able to provide verifiable evidence at the point of sale. To make things simpler for students, the Coop allows them to select their student ID number as their membership number: one less credential to carry.
of a larger course. And faculty members are clearly discussing shorter for-credit options that might take advantage of the extended January break, or opportunities for separating and mixing and matching labs from the courses with which they are now associated.

Any such formats would require faculty review and approval—but the discussion is clearly under way at Harvard, and much more comprehensively at MIT, whose president commissioned a report in which faculty advocated “unbundling of education” and achieving “greater modularity in the MIT undergraduate curriculum, from a top-down approach that decomposes existing courses into modules to a bottom-up approach that re-engineers a curriculum by identifying the core concepts and associated modules that underlie them or build upon them,” with the aim of “providing greater flexibility for students to customize their degree programs.” These issues are explored fully at http://harvardmagazine.com/credit-14.

Gender-neutral Housing
Almost in passing, the amendments to the language in the Handbook for Students—which were adopted routinely at the May 6 FAS meeting—turn the pilot program on gender-neutral housing (initiated at the request of transgender students) into a regular possibility, subject to a review procedure. Thus, “Rising sophomore, juniors, and seniors may request to form mixed-gender rooming groups.” All occupants must voluntarily agree to the arrangement, and requests are “addressed and managed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all circumstances, including space constraints.”

University People

Scholars at the Summit
The National Academy of Sciences has elected 11 professors to membership. From Harvard Medical School come: Bruce P. Bean, Winthrop professor of neurobiology; Emery N. Brown, Zapol professor of anesthesiology; Timothy J. Mitchison, Sabagh professor of systems biology; Vamsi K. Mootha, professor of systems biology and of medicine; and Martin R. Pollak, professor of medicine. New members from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences include: Daniel Eisenstein, professor of astronomy; Drew Fudenberg, Abbe professor of economics; Lawrence F. Katz, Allison professor of economics; Jeff W. Lichtman, Knowles professor of molecular and cellular biology and Ramon y Cajal professor of arts and sciences; Andrew W. Murray, Smith professor of molecular genetics; and Subir Sachdev, professor of physics. To learn more about their work, and about the 11 alumni from other institutions who were also elected, visit http://harvardmagazine.com/nas-14.

Classroom Champions
The Faculty of Arts and Sciences conferred Harvard College Professorships (its highest honor for distinguished undergraduate teaching and advising, consisting of a five-year title plus incremental research funding) on five faculty members: Mahzarin Banaji, Cabot professor of social ethics (a psychologist); David Cutler, Eckstein professor of applied economics; Hopi Hoekstra, professor of organic and evolutionary biology and molecular and cellular biology; Melissa McCormick, professor of Japanese art and culture; and Greg Morrisett, Cutting professor of computer science. For background information on each, and details on other teaching and advising honors, see http://harvardmag.com/faculty-14.

Pulitzer Portrait
Megan Marshall ’77, RI ’07, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for biography, for Margaret Fuller: A New American Life. Among the finalists for this year’s prizes were: Bernbaum professor of literature Leo Damrosch (biography, for Jonathan Swift: His Life and His World); Rebecca Davis O’Brien ’06 (local reporting, for coverage of heroin in the northern New Jersey suburbs; O’Brien was one of this magazine’s Ledecky Undergraduate Fellows in the 2003-2004 academic year); and John Adams ’69, A.M. ’72, D.Mus. ’12 (music, for The Gospel According to the Other Mary).

Radcliffe’s Roster
Eleven faculty affiliates are among the Radcliffe Institute’s 50 fellows for the 2014-2015 academic year: Ann Blair, Lea professor of history; Matthew B. Boyle, professor of philosophy; Noam D. Elkies, professor of mathematics; Nancy E. Hill, professor of education; Lakshminarayanan Mahadevan, England de Valpine professor of applied mathematics, of organismic and evolutionary biology, and of physics (the subject of the magazine’s March-April 2008 cover story, “The Physics of the Familiar”); Erez Manela, professor of history; Alexander Rehding, Peabody professor of music (whose work on rethinking the humanities curriculum is featured in “Toward Cultural Citizenship,” May-June, page 35); Kathryn A. Sikkink, Ryan Family professor of human rights policy; Carol S. Steiker, Friendly professor of law;