COMMITTEE ON CLASS AND LABOR

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2 January 2013
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Genesis of the Work
The Committee on Class and Labor has its roots in conversations that began at Emory University in the spring of 2010, when students began raising awareness of their concerns about contract labor on campus. A number of faculty members also sought to deepen the community’s interest in these matters. These conversations and activities led to the creation of this committee.

Provost Earl Lewis and Executive Vice President Mike Mandl met with the members of the Committee on Class and Labor on February 3, 2011, to present the committee’s charge (see Appendix A for committee membership and charge). Provost Lewis and Executive Vice President Mandl noted that this could be the first in several phases of looking at distinct labor segments (first the nonacademic work force, or staff; later, tenure-track and nontenure-track faculty; and still later, students). In broad terms the committee’s charge has been to investigate thoroughly the ways in which class and status affect working relationships and the treatment of only the first category of workers on campus—those who are staff, whether they are employed by Emory or by contractors and other outside service providers.

Goals
The committee carried out its charge with several overarching goals in mind:
1. Understand the nature of class as this concept plays out on a university campus, particularly in terms of the nonacademic work force (referred to in this report as “staff members” or “staff,” except where it is useful to distinguish between managerial and nonmanagerial staff, or between hourly and salaried staff).
2. Recommend steps toward reducing the power of class to interfere with work and toward increasing work satisfaction and productivity at Emory.
3. Identify ways the university could foster a culture of education, professional advancement, and personal growth for all employees, regardless of their status or class.
4. Propose ways to think about how the university contracts for ongoing services by major contractors and regularly assesses the working conditions of contract labor on campus.
Major Findings

Nature of Class

In the United States, a belief in individualism and universal opportunity leads many Americans to downplay (or even deny) the impact of class-based social stratification. Nevertheless, most people easily ascribe and act on social rankings. At Emory the phenomenon of class exists, and its influence has been described by some members of our community. At the same time, many members of the campus community appear unaware of the dynamics of class and might benefit from the university’s more intentional treatment of class as a matter of policy and practice.

Status, which often derives from class, is signaled on campus in part by working arrangements, including control over one’s time and space. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, working in a cubicle instead of an office, using a time clock instead of monitoring one’s own time, or parking across campus instead of near one’s place of work.

Status also is signaled by the degree of respect given and received. Respect—defined as treating people with dignity, fair treatment, compassion, collegiality, responsibility, and accountability—is perceived by many to be exercised differently in different parts of the campus and different levels of management.

Moreover, status is inherent in institutions like universities, which are built on hierarchies, many of which are historically conditioned and difficult to change. Nevertheless, many members of the Emory community believe that change is desirable and possible.

Our committee employs the term “class” rather than “status,” because “class” more clearly connects rankings within the university to social orderings in the broader society. This connection is particularly relevant when trying to consider class in conjunction with race, ethnicity, and gender. While Emory has had initiatives focused on race/ethnicity and gender in the campus community, there has been no comparable initiative concerning class.

The challenge is to find ways to honor positive dimensions of class differences—such as increased diversity of experience and background—while minimizing their inappropriate and unjust impact on the quality of our work life together. We believe
that it is unlikely that class as a marker and shaper of social status can be eliminated in our society or on our campus, and therefore we believe that our proper goal should be to become mindful of and reflective about class and its impact on all aspects of campus life. We believe that it is imperative to take note of class in order to minimize its inappropriate and unjust impact on the quality of our work life together. We also believe that addressing issues of class will inevitably lead to greater work satisfaction on campus. To that end, we present our findings and recommendations in the hope that they will help the Emory community live out its values more fully and successfully.

**Class and Workplace Satisfaction**

Emory employees generally express satisfaction about their work, though of course individual perceptions vary. Emory’s compensation and benefits for staff jobs are fairly competitive in the market, although staff surveyed expressed high satisfaction with the benefits offered by Emory (78 percent were satisfied) but much less satisfaction with compensation (43 percent were satisfied).

The idea that “Emory keeps asking more for less” emerged frequently in surveys and focus groups. Staff members are concerned about increased workload and responsibility without accompanying increases in salary.

Most troubling, a perception exists that policies—for instance, about leave time, access to professional development, and clocking in and out—are applied inconsistently from unit to unit, depending on supervisors’ preferences and staff members’ status.

**Culture of Education, Professional Advancement, and Personal Growth**

In general, Emory offers outstanding opportunities for self-improvement, but staff often are unaware of them and express frustration that some types of much-needed learning (such as classes in computer skills and language skills) are not available on campus.

The greatest frustration seems to be that the university’s relatively flat organization makes it difficult for staff to achieve greater levels of responsibility (and compensation) within units, often requiring a move across the university or outside it for career advancement.
As an educational institution, Emory lacks a clear philosophy on staff development to match its clear vision statement. Staff members and their supervisors are not held accountable for planning a path of professional/personal development or knowing what resources are available to that end.

**Contract Labor**

Emory’s current contracted, or “contingent,” labor force amounts to about 10 percent of the university’s total nonacademic workforce—3.7 percent if healthcare employees are included. “Major contractors” are companies that assign at least ten employees to our campus and are present continuously to perform key services. Currently there are six major contractors, which together employ approximately 80 managers and more than 700 nonmanagerial staff. Since contractors may be better equipped and experienced than the university to provide certain services, there is general agreement that making use of such major contractors offers a potentially legitimate route to cutting costs and efficiently using limited resources.

At the same time, there is a developing consensus that employing contractors raises important issues. For instance, there are questions about community. How and to what extent are individuals who are linked to the university through another employer considered part of the community? How and to what degree do they belong? Who has a voice and rights of membership at Emory? Who does not?

The use of contractors raises other issues as well. Potential tensions exist between the university’s legitimate need to constrain costs and function efficiently (and its use of contractors to promote those goals) and its commitment to act as an ethical institution. And there are significant cultural differences separating Emory’s academic culture from the views and values of its contractors.

There is broad belief that dealing with these potential tensions and evident divisions should entail Emory stating clear and public principles by which to select and evaluate contractors. Similarly, the university should enhance the concrete procedures for monitoring the performance of companies once they are in place. Emory’s supervision of contractors is currently divided among separate university offices and liaison officials and is largely limited to questions of service, safety, and financial performance; the nature of the companies’ labor relations on campus is generally not specifically addressed. This last omission is at least in part a consequence of federal labor law against co-employment—i.e. strictures against clients (such as Emory)
behaving toward workers in a role more appropriate for the actual employing agency (the contracting company). Addressing this legal hurdle and moving toward greater overall understanding of the situation experienced by contracted workers at Emory campus is fundamental to aligning the university’s principles with its reliance on contractors.

There is, finally, wide agreement that in balancing principles and fiscal priorities, the university should ensure that contracted employees have access to adequate benefits, fair wages, and functioning grievance structures. There also was support in focus groups for reducing gaps between benefits, wages, and grievance procedures available to Emory’s workforce and those available to contracted employees.

Summary of Recommendations
The committee has identified fifty-nine discrete recommendations whose implementation, we believe, will address the need for change suggested by our findings. Those recommendations are grouped into nine categories and are summarized concisely in the following paragraphs. We also wish to highlight three additional, overarching recommendations:

(1) the entire Emory community should review and engage with this report through appropriate mechanisms;

(2) the provost and executive vice president for finance and administration should assume primary responsibility and accountability for carrying forward the recommendations of the committee including assigning individuals or units on campus to assume primary responsibility for implementing specific recommendations (e.g., possibly expand the charge of the Emory WorkLife Resource Center to incorporate responsibility for some of these recommendations), tracking progress, and securing funding;

(3) an advisory committee of staff, faculty, students, and administrators, under the auspices of the University Senate, should be appointed by February 1, 2013 to work with the provost and the executive vice president for finance and administration toward monitoring and guiding the implementation of our recommendations.

Infrastructure
Survey responses and focus group discussions indicate that feelings of injustice—and actual injustice—arising from class difference might be addressed through structural changes or enhancement. Among these, we find particularly notable the
array of frustrations around such a seemingly simple thing as the telephonic clock-in system. We also have heard at varying levels a sense of inadequacy of current institutional resources for resolving workplace conflict, reporting fraud and abuse, or applying policies consistently but also with flexibility. We thus recommend that Emory review current offices and structures for dealing with these matters to see where there is room for improvement, including the possible creation of an ombudsman’s office or similar resource.

Community and Culture

One of the hallmarks of Emory University is its vision of being an ethically engaged community. An important facet of ethical life that we heard repeatedly was the right for every community member to be accorded respect and civility. Some of our recommendations thus aim to facilitate a culture of mutual regard and support while also recognizing the vast variety of roles played by the more than forty thousand members of the Emory University community.

Educating the Community about Class and Labor

As a committee, we have been struck by the remarkable learning experience we have enjoyed in educating ourselves about the social realities of class and the law surrounding labor practices and policies. We also are aware that we have been learning these things as our national society undergoes significant changes in demographics and cultural identities, in attitudes toward organized labor, in the way industries are outsourced, in the correlation of education and income levels, and in many other subjects that bear directly on the way class and labor influence each other on a university campus. We thus have recommended ways that we believe our university community would benefit if all community members were involved in a more extended and available discussion about these matters.

Communication

To a striking degree, many of the hopes and frustrations of Emory staff lie in the realm of communication. Although survey data indicate that 85 percent of respondents feel they can talk to their supervisors, and 88 percent can talk to other employees about work matters, focus group participants sometimes expressed inability to communicate with their supervisors, or were unable to communicate with someone other than their supervisors if that would be helpful. At other times staff members have expressed the need for their supervisors to communicate more effectively and comprehensively to them. Staff also desire the freedom and
opportunity to participate in activities and learning experiences, unaware that these already are available to them at Emory—suggesting that these opportunities are not communicated adequately, or staff are not receiving the communication for some reason. Recognizing that communication is a two-way process, and that considerable responsibility rests with staff as well as with administrators, we have made a number of recommendations to enhance communication on campus, particularly with regard to staff interests.

Professional Development

Curiously, as an educational institution, Emory has not articulated a philosophy about the education and professional development of its work force. The university offers many opportunities for personal and professional development, although these are not equally available to all, and not every staff member feels either responsible or empowered to take advantage of them (for instance the Woodruff Leadership Academy and Excellence through Leadership). We have outlined in some detail the ways we believe Emory can and should foster responsibility and accountability on the part of both staff and supervisors for ensuring that every staff member has a clear understanding of possible pathways toward professional development.

Supervision of Staff

One of the recurring themes in staff surveys and focus groups is the unevenness of quality in supervision of staff. In rare cases managers and supervisors have a natural gift for supervision. More typically, they learn the skills and qualities of a good supervisor through training. Too often, unfortunately, the academy (including Emory) requires on-the-job learning of these skills, casting people into responsible positions for which they are inadequately prepared. We believe that the university should invest in more programs like the Management and Supervisory Development Programs. In addition, Emory should make training in supervision mandatory for new supervisors and should provide ongoing training for all supervisors of staff.

Work Flexibility, Benefits, and Compensation

Emory’s benefit program is in the top quartile of companies in the Atlanta labor market, while compensation is on average slightly lower than the median of the market. We recommend that the university strive to continue and even enhance its leadership in these areas. To do that, we believe it will be necessary to provide centrally allocated funding for improving pay in job categories for which Emory is less competitive. Emory also should consider providing certain benefits that are commonly
found in other companies (such as adoption benefits). One major desire we heard frequently was for more flexibility in work schedules, not only in the formal structures of shifts but also, and especially, in the informal flexibility by which staff are not penalized inappropriately for needing to attend to family and other emergencies.

**Policy Making and Implementation**

The committee’s recommendations about policy can be summarized succinctly: No policy or practice should be implemented without consideration of its impact on staff who have fewer economic advantages and less voice in governance. As an example, we recommend eliminating differences in library privileges among staff, students, and faculty, because current policy gives additional advantages to those (faculty) who already have considerable advantage in terms of flexible schedules and access to parking, making it easier for them to take advantage of library privileges. Similarly, changes in parking and transportation should be made only after their impact on those who must use alternative-commute options is considered.

**Contract Labor**

Assuming that Emory will continue to use major contractors, the university should make the rationale and process for choosing them more transparent and more closely tied to the university’s “Statement of Guiding Ethical Principles.” We recommend also that regular evaluation of contractors take into account not only financial performance and customer satisfaction but also their demonstration of satisfactory labor relations and conformity to the university’s guiding ethical principles. We also recommend ways that the university could seek to ensure that contract workers be viewed more fully as members of the Emory community by the reduction of differences between their work circumstances and those of Emory staff. Recognizing that United States labor law puts certain restrictions on Emory’s relationship with contract workers, we also recommend exploring ways that these barriers might be addressed constructively.
INTRODUCTION

The Committee on Class and Labor has its roots in conversations that began at Emory University in the spring of 2010. Members of a student group called Students and Workers in Solidarity (SWS), concerned about what they perceived as unfair treatment of food-service workers (Sodexo employees) on campus, launched a series of public programs, protests, and conversations aimed at raising awareness of these contracted workers’ labor conditions, and of alleged rights abuses by the company that employed them. Representatives of SWS met several times with Provost Earl Lewis and, later, with President James Wagner to present their concerns, seek the termination of the university’s contract with the food-service provider, and request adoption of a “labor code of conduct.” They also sought creation of a new presidential commission focused on labor.

A number of faculty members also sought to deepen the community’s interest in these matters and raised other work-related concerns beyond the issue of contract labor, such as the status of adjunct faculty. Throughout the summer and fall of 2010, their searching conversations with the provost, along with the activities mentioned above, led to the creation of this committee.

Provost Lewis and Executive Vice President Mike Mandl met with the members of the Committee on Class and Labor on February 3, 2011, to present the committee’s charge (see Appendix A for committee membership and charge). In broad terms the committee’s charge has been to investigate thoroughly the ways in which class and status affect working relationships and the treatment of nonfaculty workers (“staff”) on campus—whether they are employed by Emory or by contractors and other outside service providers. Although beyond the committee’s purview, the arrest of students protesting Sodexo in the Spring of 2011 naturally deepened the committee’s commitment to address the broad issues it was assigned to consider.

To fulfill our charge, we have worked for nearly twenty-one months examining Emory’s role as an employer of the nonfaculty labor force and the role of class and status in shaping the work environment at Emory. We set about our task by pursuing five interwoven tracks aligned with specific points of the committee’s charge:

1. assessing whether class is a significant factor in work relationships at Emory;
(2) collecting data that outline the basic contours of the nonacademic labor market in which Emory competes in Atlanta and beyond;
(3) evaluating retention, advancement, and employee engagement;
(4) identifying structural impediments to career and educational opportunities; and
(5) determining clear principles and effective practices for guiding the use of contracted labor on Emory’s campus.

Each of these tracks for advancing our work served as the focus for a respective subcommittee. In time it became clear that points 3 and 4 were closely related, and the two subcommittees responsible for examining these issues merged their activities.

Emory University has had good precedent for undertaking such ethical engagement by means of committee. In 1985-86, the President’s Advisory Committee on South Africa, appointed by then-President James Laney and chaired by Professor Jon Gunnemann, undertook “to sort through the issues presented by the crisis [of apartheid] in South Africa and to make recommendations about what we can and should do about them as an academic community.” Just a few years later, in the spring of 1990, following a number of sexual assaults and date rapes on campus, President Laney again appointed a committee, called the Task Force on Security and Responsibility, to examine community life and recommend ways to “improve security and ensure responsibility in community life by recognizing and honoring diversity.” Still later, following an incident in which two students were harassed because of their sexual orientation—an incident that led to a public demonstration and sit-in of the Administration Building—President Laney appointed a “dialogue group” to gauge the ethos of the campus and make recommendations for how best to ensure the full participation of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in university life without fear of discrimination.

In most of these instances, recommendations led to concrete actions. Although the Committee on South Africa succeeded in raising awareness of ethical issues around investments in companies doing business in South Africa, the committee’s recommendation to appoint an advisory committee on university investment responsibility has not been carried out. (It is worth noting, however, that in 2007, at the request of students concerned about the fate of Darfur, the university administration directed its portfolio managers to avoid companies investing in Sudan.) On the other hand, the recommendations of the Task Force on Security and
Responsibility led directly to the creation of the Emory Center for Women, among other changes. In addition, the dialogue group created after the harassment of two gay students led to the establishment of a president’s commission, appointment of a full-time director of the LGBT Office, and revisions to university benefits policy. More recently, extensive conversations fostered by the Transforming Community Project, following an incident of racially charged language, have demonstrated the capacity of structured study and dialogue to effect change at fundamental levels of institutional life. All of this, along with the immediate issues of fair treatment of contract workers, served as the context of the work of this committee.

Comprising faculty members, staff members, administrators, and undergraduate and graduate students, the committee met biweekly for the duration of the project, with subcommittee meetings occurring in addition. Lengthy meetings also were held in order to gain group consensus regarding the report and its recommendations. The committee experienced some transition in membership during its life. One faculty member and a graduate student had to step away from the committee to complete writing commitments, and one nonexempt staff member could not accommodate the meetings of the committee in his daily schedule. (The committee notes that this staff member’s scheduling difficulty points to a recurring issue raised by nonexempt [hourly] staff, which is addressed in this report—the issue of hourly staff having little opportunity to engage in self-governance as other employees of the university may). In addition, although one of the co-chairs is a member of the medical faculty, the committee felt the need to add a member who could speak from the perspective of staff in the health sciences. In the end, the committee was able to replace the nonexempt staff member, faculty member, and graduate student, as well as to add a representative from the health sciences center and from the Campus Services staff.

The committee has gathered and studied information from sources throughout the university and beyond. This information has included:

- an online survey of Emory staff (paper copies available to those without online access), which yielded both quantitative and qualitative data from more than 2,200 respondents (a 33 percent return); see Appendix B;
- a survey of the university’s major contractors (See Appendix C for a list of major contractors. We were unable to survey the contracted employees; for full discussion, see Section IV);
- an independent survey and market analysis of compensation and benefits of Emory and other major employers in Atlanta;
• data on promotion, retention, turnover, and exits;
• a survey of educational and professional development offerings at Emory;
• a survey of people who declined offers of employment at Emory;
• relevant Emory policies.

In addition to the primary and secondary sources noted above, the committee gained valuable insight from dozens of meetings with representatives of Emory’s various constituencies. These meetings included:

• focus groups for staff, including separate meetings with Campus Services employees and with Emory employees at Grady Hospital and at Oxford College;
• focus groups for faculty members, including both the Druid Hills and the Oxford campuses;
• focus groups for students, including both graduate and undergraduate students;
• representatives of Students and Workers in Solidarity (SWS);
• the Council of Deans;
• the University Senate;
• the Employee Council;
• the President’s Commissions on Race and Ethnicity, on the Status of Women, and on Sexuality, Gender Diversity, and Queer Equality;
• senior administrators from academic affairs, campus life, campus services, and finance;
• Emory liaisons with the university’s major contractors;
• senior administrative representatives of those major contractors;
• a representative of the Teamsters Union;
• leaders of the Task Force on Dissent, Protest, and Community;
• Emory faculty members from the business school and Emory College who have special expertise in labor economics, ethics, community, and class.

All of the data and information gleaned from these meetings form the basis of our analysis and recommendations.

As a side note, we want to emphasize that the data gathered through various surveys has been independently audited and analyzed to ensure its integrity.

With this by way of background, we are pleased to report our findings and to make recommendations. We believe these recommendations, if implemented, can enhance
the sense of shared purpose, respect, and dignity that infuses our community. We have found that class differences, while often hard to define precisely, are a significant and unavoidable dimension of our shared life at Emory. Often these differences add to the variety of our community and to the diversity that Emory values. In at least one significant way, any university is inherently classist, for it privileges certain kinds of credentialed knowledge and learning as a key basis of position and influence. Moreover, certain distinctions are imposed from outside Emory, such as the categories of “exempt” and “nonexempt” workers defined by the National Labor Relations Act.

The challenge is to find ways to honor positive dimensions of these differences, while minimizing their inappropriate and unjust impact on the quality of our work life together. We believe that it is unlikely that class as a marker and shaper of social status can be eliminated in our society or on our campus, and therefore we believe that our proper goal should be to become mindful of and reflective about class and its impact on all aspects of campus life. We believe that it is imperative to take note of class in order to minimize its inappropriate and unjust impact on the quality of our work life together. We also believe that addressing issues of class will inevitably lead to greater work satisfaction on campus. To that end, we present our findings and recommendations in the hope that they will help the Emory community live out its values more fully and successfully.

SECTION I: THE ROLE OF CLASS AT EMORY

Background

Definition

The committee’s first charge was to examine whether class, and the status it affords, has a significant influence on relationships at Emory. Class is a deeply contested concept, both as a tool of social analysis and as a marker of personal identity. There is no obvious or simple definition of “class,” which is often used as if identical to “status” to describe evaluative rankings of social and economic position. The committee came to rely on understandings of “class” as this concept was expressed by the university community; “class” in that respect is how Emory experiences it. Nor is there any simple definition of the related term “status,” which again we came to understand substantially in terms expressed by the university community.
That said, we offer some preliminary ways of thinking about class and status. We suggest that class can be taken to mean, in a general sense, “social position,” and that status can be taken to mean, generally, “how we actively use our social position to enhance our relationship to others.”

In the United States, a deep tradition of individualism and a dominant belief in a “classless society” lead many or most Americans to downplay (or even deny) the impact or very existence of class-based social stratification in our country. Belief in a “meritocratic” society often leads to the assumption that in America everyone and anyone is given fair opportunity to change social position by hard work. While this kind of social advancement has been possible for certain groups at certain historical periods, it never has been universally available. To add to these difficulties, differences of race/ethnicity and gender are intertwined with markers of class and can lead to ignoring class as one among several contributors to social inequities.

Nevertheless, most people can ascribe, interpret, and act on social rankings without much difficulty. (Think of terms like “redneck,” “Wall Street banker,” and “artist”—all of them deriving from kinds of work, yet all of them connoting lifestyle, education, and social status.) The social phenomenon of class exists, and varieties of its influence at Emory have been described by members of our community.

Sociological literature differentiates class on the basis of economic position, status, or access to power (see especially Max Weber). In the United States, class has tended not to be a fixed identity, but determined by various detailed markers, such as salary, educational background, vehicle ownership, occupational prestige, mobility and life opportunities, residence, clothing, and the status or class of one’s family of origin. All of these markers mix together dynamically, especially with factors of race/ethnicity and gender, and become more or less important in different social contexts. One of the most important of these social contexts is one’s place of work.

Drawing on the overall work of the committee, as well as academic and popular literature about class, we determined that it would be less useful to seek a comprehensive definition of class than to try to understand how certain social rankings operate within the context of a university campus, where both the variety of jobs and the frequency of personal interactions are much higher than in many other employment settings. This decision suggests that the more flexible term “status” might be more useful. Nevertheless, our committee employs “class,” because this word more
clearly connects rankings within the university to social orderings in the broader society. This connection is particularly relevant when trying to consider class in conjunction with race, ethnicity, and gender. While Emory has had initiatives focused on race/ethnicity and gender in the campus community, there has been no comparable initiative concerning class. One reason for this is that, while women and minorities often are overrepresented in areas of lower class and status, the concerns of women and minorities often are viewed as matters of gender and race/ethnicity rather than class or ranking. Yet without attention to class, an institution could attend to race/ethnicity and gender representation in areas implicitly understood as “higher status” (e.g., administrative and professional positions), while ignoring inequalities that affect persons in lower-status positions, regardless of their gender or race/ethnicity.

Some specific factors are, in our opinion, particularly critical for better understanding the impact of class and status at Emory University. All of these factors point to class differences. Some are traditional factors, while others are more specific to a university:

- Degree of agency or capacity to participate in decision making;
- Educational attainment or aspirations;
- Compensation;
- Economic security;
- Job classification (including “exempt” versus “nonexempt”);
- Degree of visibility in one’s job (including kind of work station, uniform);
- Privileges (library, educational opportunities, etc.);
- Flexibility of schedule (clocking in v. clock freedom);
- Ability to control use of work space;
- Modes of transportation to work (and parking location).

Unfortunately, because we were unable to survey or lead focus groups with contract workers, we do not know what class markers may be relevant to their experience.

Findings

In the overall survey of Emory staff, 25 percent of those responding indicated that class occasionally, frequently, or always makes a difference in our university community, while 53 percent of those responding said that class did not make a difference at Emory (another 22 percent indicated “seldom”). While 53 percent represents a large proportion of the campus community, it disguises the variety and nuance of some responses. Our focus groups, for example, made it clear that
responses to questions about class vary considerably in relation to status at Emory. Surprisingly, students tend not to see class differences among themselves, but they do note the effect of class differences between themselves and staff members, especially those whom students encounter most frequently—food service workers and Campus Services personnel. To their credit, students express a willingness to try to communicate across those differences and to take note of workers as persons, not just functionaries. Some faculty members appear completely unaware of class differences, while others speak quite perceptively of class. For example, several noted the different library privileges for staff, students, and faculty members as an indication that, as one put it, “the closer you are to the heart of the academic enterprise, the higher your status.”

Staff, on the other hand, see class at work in many ways—in the perceived affluence of students, in the superior or patronizing attitudes of some faculty members and students, in the generally greater burden of commuting for lower-paid staff members (e.g., length of time, cost, and difficulty of access to MARTA and shuttles), and in the perceived differences in privilege among different schools and departments. Comments made by staff in the survey focused particularly on treatment by faculty:

Faculty view staff as a service provider rather than [people who have] the same mission.

I am staff — I have a good education but I’m not a faculty member who has dedicated my career to education (of myself and others). There is an attitude (sometime appropriate and sometimes not) of faculty being the ruling class. They seem to have to stretch themselves to understand that the rest of the world doesn’t really operate that way.

Overall, then, class distinctions are evidently experienced as varied but real elements of the university community.

For the survey and its results, see Appendix B.

Markers of Difference

Focus group responses indicate that status is signaled in part by working arrangements, especially by the degree of control staff have over time and space. Do you work in a cubicle or an office? Do you use a time clock or monitor your own time? Do you park near your office or across the campus—or do you have to spend an hour
or more on public transportation? Do you have regular access to computers or not? Do you have access to special areas like faculty dining rooms or need to use a break room for lunch? Do you work in public space or more private areas? This last marker is especially interesting in view of Americans’ love of private space. At Emory the degree of personal space at work ranges from none to a locker, a common break area, a desk in an open space, an office with an always open door, or an office with the door closed at one’s own initiative. Working arrangements—and the status they signify—have a subtle yet significant impact on the sense of community.

“The work load of my job and the amount of time required to commute to and from Emory, leaves very little time to experience the Emory Community.”

The wearing of uniforms came up a number of times. It is generally acknowledged that uniforms can be useful, especially in the healthcare arena of campus (Where’s that white coat in an emergency? Who’s the nurse here and who’s just a visitor?). It also is acknowledged that for certain professions it is the norm to wear uniforms (such as the white shirt and pants generally worn by painters). On the other hand, in other parts of the university there is a perception that women and members of racial/ethnic minorities wear uniforms more often than men and whites. (The committee was not able to confirm whether this perception is borne out by statistics.) In some instances, moreover, uniforms are prescribed for employees, not offered with choices. In some cases employees remarked that they prefer to wear uniforms if Emory provides them, as this reduces the personal cost of clothing. One person noted that the special shoes required by his job are far more costly than ordinary shoes and might well be provided by Emory.

“Emory’s culture names groups as faculty, staff, and administration. The names are used throughout Emory’s official documents and used in informal conversation. Staff are less equal than faculty, who may or may not be less equal than administration. There are even uniforms that broadcast group membership such as FM, health care (a whole universe of class distinctions on its own), administration (suits). Faculty, in general, use a uniform of casual clothing or sometimes [the stereotypic look of tweed jackets and horn-rimmed glasses]. Staff casual uniforms can be distinct as jeans over business clothing and kakis. Until recently, there was a class distinction for parking spots. This still remains but is less palpable in that the most desired decks are still overwhelmingly faculty and administration. I’ll stop here.”
Status and Relationships

In addition to these markers, status often is signaled by the degree of respect practiced and understood within relationships. From the perception of many staff and some faculty, Emory’s articulated values—offering others dignity, fair treatment, compassion, collegiality, responsibility, accountability—play out differently in different corners of the campus and at different levels of management. Application of rhetoric about “family” and “community” is not perceived to apply consistently or with equity.

Staff members comment often on a perceived gap between the aspirations of senior administrators for improving morale and work/life balance, and the attitude of some mid-level managers, for whom productivity takes precedence over a positive work experience. While staff spoke with pride of the experience and competencies they bring to their jobs, they also frequently referred to being relegated to “second-class citizenship” (some faculty also remarked on this phenomenon in behalf of staff). This perception of being overlooked or disregarded has a direct impact on perceptions about opportunities for growth in the workplace: those staff members not viewed as important are not encouraged to develop. Staff frequently do not perceive that they have voice—for instance, in school or departmental meetings about nonacademic matters—and they frequently express concern about reprisal or retaliation if they report grievances.

To a large extent, the creation of the Employee Council in 1970 was intended to address some of these feelings and perceptions. Ideally, the Employee Council represents the perspective of employees to the administration (recommending change when appropriate); facilitates communication between the administration and employees at all organizational levels regarding university policies, practices, and programs; and fosters closer working relationships between organizational areas and groups of employees. Yet many Employee Council members do not have access to the leadership in their respective areas nor the means to communicate to the colleagues they represent. In some cases, their areas of representation are not well defined.

All of these perceptions and expressions are balanced by a recognition that all universities—not just Emory—are built on hierarchies, that many of these hierarchies are historically conditioned, and that they are difficult to change. Along these lines, our conversations with staff members have led us to believe that finding ways to make the community more aware of these hierarchies—and their potential power—is imperative. Similarly, while it is not germane to this committee’s charge to examine the academic work force (the faculty), we are compelled to note the recurring issue of the
status of adjunct/volunteer faculty who view themselves (and are viewed by others) as lacking status and rights concomitant with the important teaching mission they fulfill.

SECTION II: THE NONACADEMIC LABOR MARKET

Background

In meeting the second part of its charge—to understand Emory’s nonacademic workforce in the context of the nonacademic labor market—the committee used three major sources of data:

- Market salary data from surveys published by consulting firms. This market analysis was conducted by staff in Emory’s compensation department.
- Survey of benefit programs and values, conducted by the firm of Towers Watson (see Appendix D).
- Survey of demographic data and perceptions about class and labor from Emory employees (excluding faculty members, although faculty members who supervise staff were asked to complete a separate survey; see Appendix B).

The survey of benefits market competitiveness was made possible by funding from the Provost’s Office. Towers Watson was chosen after a competitive bidding process. The firm researched benefits at major employers in metropolitan Atlanta (e.g., Delta, The Coca-Cola Company). Detailed analysis of this survey is in Appendix D.

The staff survey was constructed by the Committee on Class and Labor and was refined with the help of the Office of Institutional Research. It was administered both online and in paper (in three languages—English, Spanish, and Mandarin) after being publicized widely and heavily during the fall of 2011. The Office of Institutional Research also provided invaluable assistance in collating and analyzing the data, whose integrity has been verified by a third party (see Appendix B).

Findings

Emory’s Staff Compensation Compared to the Atlanta Market

The compensation analysis compared Emory’s average compensation to the market median, by job, for jobs in which there are four or more incumbents. In general the analysis showed that Emory’s compensation for staff jobs is fairly competitive. With few exceptions, salaries at Emory are comparable to the market; 60 percent of all job groups (weighted by number of employees) are within 95 to 105 percent of the market wage (see Appendix D, Table 2). (“Market wage” is the median (50th percentile)
income from salaries and wages of comparable jobs in the Atlanta area.) Median pay at Emory is approximately 98 percent of the median market pay. That is, on average, an Emory employee makes about 98 percent of what the same job would pay in the Atlanta market beyond Emory.

Emory’s pay philosophy targets the median of the market for staff compensation. Average employee salaries were used to protect the confidentiality of individual salaries. The use of jobs with four or more incumbents for the analysis was also to protect confidentiality.

Emory has established a minimum pay rate, which means that the lowest-paid job groups (especially maintenance workers, craft workers, and technical workers) earn more than they likely would earn with other employers. Clerical employees, however, are most likely to be paid less than the market rate; 89 percent of employees in these jobs earn less than the market rate. (See Appendix D, Table 3 for additional information by job group.)

Data revealed that higher-paid employees are less likely to be paid above the market than are lower-paid employees (see negative slope in Figure 1, Appendix D).

**Emory’s Benefits Compared to the Atlanta Market**

In general Emory’s benefits are similar in kind to those of other employers – e.g., health insurance, leave time, etc. A full list of Emory’s benefits can be found on the Human Resources website.] The Towers Watson survey compared the value of Emory’s benefits to those of other employers, using an actuarial valuation methodology. A list of the benefits valued by Towers Watson can be found in Appendix D.

Emory’s overall benefits program ranks second among ten major Atlanta employers. This relatively high ranking reflects primarily the generous retirement plan and vacation/holiday leave, which are among the highest cost benefits provided by employers. In addition, long-term disability benefits for staff are slightly above average, while the medical plan is about average among the peer group. On the other hand, Emory’s standard life insurance benefit of $10,000 falls substantially below the average life insurance provided by other employers, which is 1 to 1.5 times the employee’s annual pay. Additionally, Emory’s dental plan and short-term disability plans are in the bottom quartile of the group for the employer subsidized portion of
the benefit, although the total values of the plans’ coverage are above the average of the peer group. (Details of Emory’s rankings by major benefit categories are provided in Appendix D.)

The survey also provided comparison data on fifty lifestyle benefits—e.g. flexible work arrangements, commuter options, tuition reimbursement. These benefits are designed to help employees balance their work, family, and personal obligations. Most of the lifestyle benefits are provided by a small percentage of employers. Of these fifty benefits, Emory provides, subsidizes, or partially subsidizes eighteen. The benefit that distinguishes Emory from other employers is the courtesy scholarship program, which increases the value of Emory’s benefit program by approximately 5 percentage points. The list of lifestyle benefits and percentage of employers providing them is available in Appendix D.

Staff Perceptions of Compensation and Benefits

The results of the Towers Watson benefits survey are confirmed by the staff survey and staff focus groups. Employees expressed high satisfaction with the benefits offered by Emory. However, there is much less satisfaction with compensation, and a third of all respondents indicated that pay is one of the aspects they liked least at Emory. Dissatisfaction with pay is a common finding of employee surveys across many employers.

While non-university employers are perceived to offer better compensation and benefits than Emory and other Atlanta universities, skilled craft and maintenance workers are least likely to believe that their pay and benefits would be better elsewhere. This is consistent with previous analyses that showed that maintenance and skilled craft workers were the group most likely to be paid above the market average. At the same time, however, research staff express particular dissatisfaction with pay and benefits and are most likely to believe that compensation and benefits would be better elsewhere.

One theme from survey comments identified in the qualitative analysis was that staff members recognized that the downturn in the economy resulted in necessary cut-backs, which affected both workload and salary. The idea that “Emory keeps asking more for less” emerged frequently and was associated with concerns that increases in workload and responsibility, with no accompanying increase in salary, would never end. Respondents often listed the number of years they went without salary increases.
despite good performance reviews, and many indicated that increases in health insurance costs with no salary increases resulted in either a decline in compensation in real dollars or the decision to do without health insurance.

Perhaps of greater concern with regard to class differences on campus, some staff members perceive an inconsistent application of policies from school to school or unit to unit. Access to tuition reimbursement and leave time, in particular, which is at the discretion of supervisors, sometimes appears to depend on supervisors’ preferences. With regard to more informal benefits, some nonexempt employees report variable giving of holiday gifts collected or funded by departments, or other unofficial practices that have the effect of discriminating by rank or place within the university (if you’re lucky enough to be in Department X, you get the afternoon off before July 4, but not if you’re in Department Y).

In focus groups, staff members have objected that department budgets too seldom allow for overtime pay, yet workloads often require overtime for completion. This situation leads to frustration at being unable to complete work in a timely way.

The opportunity to use flex time also depends on job level within the organization—in general, employees at higher levels have greater freedom for flexible work hours. However, employees whose jobs require set hours and locations may have equal or greater need for flex time (e.g., for child care).

There appears to be awareness and at least some comfort among both staff and faculty that the Human Resources Division regularly does market comparisons of benefits and compensation.

SECTION III: RETENTION, TURNOVER, AND IMPEDIMENTS TO PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Background

Among the questions posed about the possible effect of class and status on work relationships at Emory, perhaps the most interesting was whether class differences could influence an employee’s decision to leave. Could feelings of alienation arising from lifestyle, financial resources, family background, or any of the other markers of class identified in Section I make the experience of working at Emory unsatisfying enough to prompt a career move away from Emory? Even within Emory, do class
differences affect the degree to which people are offered additional training, promoted within or across units, or otherwise able to advance in their work life? Are there assumptions within the university—perhaps biases about language, education, style, dress, behaviors—that affect decisions about advancement?

The committee addressed these questions with three basic assumptions, which were later borne out by feedback from focus groups and surveys of both employees and potential employees who declined job offers.

First, as an educational institution, Emory should foster a culture of learning that promotes personal development and professional advancement. This philosophy is basic to Emory’s mission and educational purpose.

Second, Emory should provide certain basics for staff in all jobs, regardless of their location, function, or relative value to the academic enterprise. These basics include, but are not limited to, safe conditions, proper tools (including special job-required clothing such as uniforms or work boots), sufficient support, a nondiscriminatory environment, respect for personal dignity, and opportunity to participate in community.

Third, there is always the possibility of tension between professional development that would be good for the individual and professional development that would be good for the institution. That is, training, education, and advancement of job skills may lead to the institution’s loss of well-trained, hard-working, and committed staff members. This risk always must be weighed when making professional development available, but the committee believes that more weight should be given to the benefit of the individual than may currently be the case, and that as a result there will be positive effects in making Emory a more valued employer.

**Findings**

**Promotion, Advancement, and Self-Improvement**

Emory offers many outstanding opportunities for self-improvement. The committee has found, however, that these opportunities could be more widely publicized so that staff in all sectors of the university know about them. Unfortunately, according to focus groups and survey data, many staff were unaware of the wealth of opportunities available to them, and some who were aware said that their access to these opportunities was limited by departmental practices.
Among the model programs Emory offers, the Human Resources (HR) Learning Services is a nationally recognized program that provides courses taught by HR and Goizueta Business School personnel. Through these courses, staff members develop competencies that can be put to use across the University (e.g., communication, conflict resolution, management/leadership skills, project management, etc.) Emory Learning Management Services (ELMS) also offers opportunities for schools, departments, and divisions to teach courses specific to the work of the respective unit: e.g., Campus Services, Finance, the School of Medicine; Development and Alumni Relations, the Office of Information Technology, and the Office of Sponsored Programs. These and other offices avail themselves of the space and expertise of ELMS in providing additional training and education to their specific staff.

In addition, many departments offer courses of their own not delivered through the ELMS—e.g., Emory Police Department and the Yerkes National Primate Research Center. And many departments provide for professional development through external opportunities such as conferences and seminars.

Through Emory Continuing Education (formerly the Center for Lifelong Learning), Emory employees receive 10 percent discounts on certificate programs, computer training, professional development, and personal enrichment. Emory employees also pursue degrees through the courtesy scholarship program and tuition reimbursement benefit. (For data on numbers of participants and Emory’s costs for these programs in 2008-10, see Appendix E.)

Two class-related areas where employees might benefit, but where Emory offers limited or no access, are in completing General Education Diploma (GED) or English as a Second Language (ESL). While Emory formerly offered GED completion programs on campus (until 2010), the demand was too low to justify the expense to Emory. ESL courses are taught at Emory through various divisions (the Laney Graduate School, Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Emory Continuing Education), but there is no central system for delivering these courses. Generally these courses are available only to employees enrolled as college, graduate, or ECE students. Employees can obtain both GED education and ESL assistance in the local community free of charge.

Many staff members in survey responses and focus group commented on the desire for more opportunities to learn computer skills.
In focus groups and on surveys, some respondents noted that limiting tuition reimbursement to job-related instruction serves the interest of Emory, but not necessarily that of employees. Nearly half of survey respondents indicated that they had used the tuition reimbursement program, courtesy scholarship, Learning Services programs, Emory’s development programs, or conferences on or off campus at Emory’s expense.

**Retention, Promotion, and Turnover**

Voluntary turnover at Emory is relatively low compared to that in other universities and general industry, averaging under 10 percent since FY2008; during this same period, involuntary turnover has ranged from 2.5 percent (FY2011) to 3.7 percent (FY2009, following the economic downturn). From the general survey of staff, it appears that most employees would recommend Emory as a place to work, and most feel that they are a part of the Emory community. Feeling valued and listened to, and given a sense that their ideas for change are acted upon, enhances employees’ sense of engagement.

In trying to gauge why employees leave voluntarily, and why persons offered positions at Emory decline to accept them, the committee drew on data from exit interviews. In addition, we identified a cohort of those who had declined job offers at Emory and sent them a survey. (See Appendix F for this survey and data analysis.) The principal reasons cited for leaving Emory include family changes (relocation of a spouse or domestic partner, or birth of a child or elder care), lack of opportunity for career advancement within Emory, better compensation elsewhere, becoming a full-time student, and wanting to reduce commuting time.

When it comes to promotion, overwhelmingly respondents to surveys and focus groups indicate frustration that the relatively flat organization of the university makes it difficult to achieve greater levels of responsibility (and compensation) within units, thus requiring a move either across the university or outside it, in order to advance in one’s career. In FY2011, 666 employees within Emory were promoted, compared to 793 persons hired from outside Emory; 173 temporary employees became regular, permanent employees, while 98 employees made lateral transfers.

When comparing the number of persons promoted to the number hired from outside Emory, data show that for positions with salaries greater than $100,000, the
numbers are about the same; for positions with salaries between $47,000 and $100,000, more Emory employees are promoted than are hired from outside the university. Lower salary levels see more new hires than promotions. Women tend to be promoted in slightly greater proportion to their numbers in the Emory workforce than do men (69-76 percent since FY2008, compared to 67 percent of the workforce in 2011). Whites similarly are promoted at or above their proportion in the workforce (53-60 percent of promotions since FY2008, compared to 52 percent of staff in FY2011). Blacks or African Americans are promoted at somewhat lower rates than their presence in the Emory workforce—29-35 percent of promotions (FY2008-11), compared to 36 percent of FY2011 staff. (Note that racial and ethnic terms reflect US Census usage.)

Structural Impediments to Employment and Career Advancement

Emory’s vision statement calls for the university to be an “inquiry-driven” community. As such, the university necessarily and rightly suggests that learning is essential to its mission. For employees, this implies that the university values learning for its own sake as well as for professional development—that is, for personal growth as well as for what a more highly educated workforce can bring to the institution.

Unfortunately, the university lacks a clearly stated and embodied philosophy or stance on employee development to go along with its clearly stated vision. Moreover, the opportunities that exist tend to be supported inconsistently by supervisors, and employees are themselves not held accountable for planning a path of professional/personal development or knowing what resources are available to them. Without a formal talent management system, Emory is limited in its ability to fill more positions by internal promotion rather than external hiring, and many (if not most) employees lack a clearly defined career path for advancement. Many employees note that it is difficult to take time away from the job for learning opportunities, either because permission is not forthcoming or because the work load is too great. Faculty supervisors do not always feel obligated to support staff development, and some supervisors (faculty and managerial staff) fear that fostering staff development will mean losing valuable staff members. Beyond all these factors, there simply are not sufficient resources to support staff development at the level staff desire.

Additional impediments to staff development lie outside of Emory’s control. Employees do not consistently take responsibility for gathering Emory information, available in many venues and media, about opportunities for development and career
advancement. And while Emory has a high retention rate, the downside of this is that it results in fewer opportunities for advancement.

**SECTION IV: THE PLACE AND IMPACT OF CONTRACT LABOR AT EMBRY**

**Background**

Emory’s current contracted, or “contingent,” labor force is not large (amounting to about 10 percent of the university’s non-academic workforce—3.7 percent if healthcare employees are included. By “contracted workers” we mean employees of companies contracted by Emory to perform stipulated services. (See Appendix G for numbers of Emory’s nonacademic employees and Appendix C for numbers of contracted workers.) Assessing the situation of these employees on our campus was a vital component of the committee’s work, for several reasons.

First, these workers have been the subject of protracted controversy, which, in turn, played a considerable role in the creation of this committee.

Second, although there are evidently no specific plans to enlarge the number of contracted employees at Emory, the use of such workers is increasing across the United States and throughout the global economy, including in institutions of higher education. It is thus conceivable that the proportion of Emory’s contracted workforce could expand in the future to become a more sizable part of the University’s non-academic payroll.

Third, and most importantly, whether or not the roster of contracted workers grows or remains about the same (and leaving aside specific issues surrounding Sodexo, which were not within the committee’s purview), the presence of these employees at Emory underscores significant questions that need to be addressed. For one thing, hosting workers on our campus who are under the immediate authority of a third party raises in a direct way the issue of community. Who belongs and to what degree? Who has a voice and rights of membership, and who does not?

At the same time, the fact that federal labor law places contracted workers essentially outside Emory’s formal jurisdiction raises the issue of priorities. There is the potential tension between, on the one hand, the university’s legitimate need for economic efficiency (and the use of contracted labor to support that efficiency) and, on the other hand, the university’s commitment to stand as an ethical institution (and
to exercise the consistent administrative oversight consonant with ensuring ethical practices). The use of contracted labor, in other words, focuses attention on the fact that if Emory must demonstrate sound business practices, it is not only a business, and its fiscal goals need to be weighed constantly, carefully, and soberly against its proclaimed standards of “courageous” and “ethically driven” inquiry.

Findings

Survey of Major Contractors on the Emory Campus

Our first task in this regard was to identify the major contractors on Emory’s campus and then determine the size of their presence. We defined “major contractors” as companies that assign at least ten employees to Emory’s campuses and that are present continuously in order to perform key services. With these criteria in mind, we identified six major contractors:

- Barnes and Noble (manager of book stores at Emory and Oxford campuses);
- Crestline (manager of the Emory Conference Center Hotel);
- First Transit (manager of shuttle buses);
- Ricoh (formerly IKON—manager of campus mail services);
- Sodexo (manager of food services and food facilities);
- SP Plus (formerly Standard Parking—manager of parking facilities).

These six companies employ approximately 80 managers and more than 700 nonmanagerial staff, for an aggregate workforce of nearly 800 (see Appendix C for more detailed information about each contractor).

The committee distributed a questionnaire (see Appendix C for survey and analysis) to managers of the six major contractors, covering these topics:

- the composition of each company’s workforce at Emory;
- the definition and proportion of fulltime/part-time employees;
- pay and benefits;
- seasonal contractions of workforces;
- processes for handling employee grievances;
- processes of monitoring by Emory.

Questions raised by some of the companies’ responses led to follow-up queries.

In the aggregate, the responses portray a contracted workforce whose managerial cadre is 40.2 percent female and 59.8 percent male, while its nonmanagerial workers are 55.1 percent female and 44.9 percent male. The managerial workforce is 61
percent white and 39 percent black or African American or Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, while the nonmanagerial workforce is 21.3 percent white and 78.7 percent black or African American or Hispanic/Latino/Spanish. (These terms reflect usage of the United States Census.)

The companies varied in their definition of full-time employment. They varied, too, in the proportion of employees working less than full time (from Ricoh, which reported a workforce that is 100 percent full time, to SP Plus and First Transit, whose non-management employees are some 90-95 percent part time). Overall, nearly two-fifths (38.2 percent) of the companies’ nonmanagerial labor force works less than full time. (This falls to 34.3 percent if we exclude Barnes & Noble, which hires large numbers of part-time work-study students.) Several companies with a high number of part-time workers report that this arrangement reflects “operational needs,” and that moving toward a higher proportion of full-time employees could raise costs to Emory. First Transit and Sodexo indicated that their workers often prefer part-time employment, but the committee could not independently verify this view, and this perspective may not be uniformly shared among the workers.

The statistics bearing on part-time work among contracted laborers are not necessarily out of line with national standards for these respective businesses. But they may be compared to Emory, whose university workforce is 13.4 percent part time (or temporary), and whose aggregate (university plus healthcare) nonacademic labor force is 18.8 percent less-than-full-time. The role of part-time work in the contracted labor force also bears on access to healthcare, since (as at Emory and other businesses) only employees working more than twenty hours are eligible to purchase the benefit plans offered by their employers. Moreover, one conversation partner, a representative of the Teamsters local representing First Transit drivers, commented that even full-time contract employees often find the companies’ plans unaffordable. We recognize as a committee that contracted workers (like Emory employees) may have access to health benefits through other household members. Still, our considered view is that the relation of part-time employment to healthcare must be born in mind when considering the situation of the University’s contracted employees.

Some companies reported providing nontraditional benefits, including MARTA passes, library privileges, parking, and a per diem food allowance. Regarding compensation, the companies indicate that their pay rates reflect the market, experience, and performance and meet Emory’s mandated minimum. Curiously, Ricoh
noted that while it does not feel itself bound by “any contractual or other legal obligation” to honor Emory’s specified minimum wage level—perhaps because its labor force is under 50 individuals—no Ricoh employee at Emory in fact receives less than the Emory minimum.

Two companies (Sodexo and First Transit) indicated that they customarily reduce Emory payrolls outside the regular academic school year. (SP Plus characterized its Emory labor force as “predominately” year round.) While there are evidently some efforts made to place workers thus displaced in other situations, this practice gains particular saliency given new limits imposed on unemployment claims in Georgia. Until February 2012, contract workers in schools and colleges (cafeteria workers and bus drivers, for instance) whose jobs were eliminated by their companies seasonally (during holiday breaks and summer vacations, for instance) were eligible for state unemployment compensation. The state has declared that these employees in public institutions will now be ineligible (see Appendix H). The United States Department of Labor has declared that this policy is impermissible as an administrative action, but some Georgia legislators have declared their intention to enact the policy into law. In any case, these seasonal employees remain vulnerable.

All the companies indicate the presence of internal grievance mechanisms; several specifically note the availability of hotlines. Emory has no role in these mechanisms, and while questions have been raised by students and contract workers about the adequacy of these mechanisms, the university has no way of independently assessing them.

Indeed, Emory’s responsibility for monitoring these companies is evidently divided among separate university offices and liaison officials. While the companies characterize this monitoring as frequent or continuous, it is largely limited to questions of service, safety, and financial performance. No contracting company cites labor relations as a variable reviewed by Emory in assessing the company’s service.

Feedback From Focus Groups

The committee’s conversations with different university constituencies included the topic of contractors and contracted employees. There was widespread recognition that Emory might find it useful to contract for some services as a way to cut costs and make efficient use of limited resources. At the same time, however, there was widespread acknowledgement that the presence of contracted employees on campus
raises questions about how (or whether) individuals formally linked to the University through another employer are considered to be fully part of the community. For instance, they lack representation on university governance bodies but are affected by conditions created by Emory faculty, staff, students, and administrators. There also was appreciation that different contracted workers have different kinds of relations with the university: food service workers, for example, have closer contact with students than parking attendants.

There was broad agreement that Emory has the responsibility to ensure that contracted employees have access to good benefits, fair recompense, and functioning grievance mechanisms. There also was support for the university’s moving to reduce any gaps between benefits, wages, and grievance procedures available to Emory’s workforce and those available to contracted employees.

Further points of consensus included:

- The university needs to monitor its contractors, including these companies’ labor relations, throughout the life of the contract.
- Emory should develop clear and publicly articulated principles—possibly amounting to a formal checklist—by which to select and evaluate companies contracted to work regularly on the campus. (Questions were raised whether the standards developed for such assessments should be constructed to address a company’s national and international record or remain focused on local practices.)

Meetings with Invited Students, Faculty, and Emory Liaisons.

Student representatives of Students and Workers in Solidarity (SWS) presented the committee with concerns about Sodexo’s relations with its campus workforce, including reports by Sodexo workers of covert monitoring by the company and assertions that workers have little faith in the company’s grievance mechanisms. (We were unable to verify independently whether Sodexo workers in fact feel as the students claimed.) The students argued that Emory is effectively moving toward a two-tiered, differently treated nonacademic labor force—one tier comprising employees directly hired by the university and the other employed by the university’s contractors.

In conversations with Emory liaisons to the major contractors (see list in Appendix C), the liaisons said they believe they have effective relations with the contractors. Supervision of the bookstore seems to be especially close and responsive. On the
other hand, it was disturbing to the committee that questions raised by students and faculty about Sodexo in the spring of 2010 were not a significant issue when Emory renewed its contract with this company later that same year.

As in the monitoring of contractors, the university’s selection of them is largely the responsibility of different offices and divisions. At the same time, the office of the executive vice president for finance/administration does employ a template of fifteen unranked criteria in selecting major contractors. Although “Social Responsibility” is among the listed factors, the specific rubric of labor relations is not cited (see Appendix I, memo from David Payne).

Meetings with Company Officials and Emory Counsel

In addition to meeting with company representatives and Emory liaisons to the companies, the committee sought to survey and lead focus groups with the employees of those companies, just as the committee had done with Emory staff members. While company officials readily cooperated in making themselves available for conversations, significant impediments arose when the committee asked to contact these companies’ Emory employees.

Officials from the six contractors expressed varying but substantial discomfort with the very idea of our engaging directly with their employees. The problem of co-employment loomed large in this discussion. Federal labor law prohibits a contracting agency such as Emory from treating workers of a contractor as if those employees were Emory’s own. In light of this reaction, the committee submitted a list of focus-group and survey questions for review by Emory counsel and the companies. Barnes & Noble declined to cooperate in any fashion; the other companies offered substantial revisions and in two cases (First Transit and SP Plus) indicated that management would need to be present at focus groups with nonmanagement staff. Given the inconsistency of data that would have resulted from such varied surveys, and the possibility that management’s presence would inhibit free discussion, the committee chose not to pursue either the survey or the focus groups.

Without the opportunity formally to meet with or survey the contracted employees, the committee had little means of determining their perspective on their experience at Emory. When a member of the Teamsters Union, whose members include employees of one of our contractors (First Transit), offered to meet with the
committee, we worked with the Office of General Counsel to establish parameters for a meeting with the Teamsters representative.

From all of this experience—our frequent interactions with contractor representatives and liaisons, the impediments to first-hand meetings with contracted employees, and the meeting with the union representative—we have gained an understanding of significant cultural differences that separate Emory from its contractors.

(See Appendix J for proposed questions for survey and focus groups for contracted employees.)

The committee was frustrated that we could not engage with contracted employees as we wished, and as we usefully did with Emory’s own employees. We could not gain independent information about important questions, such as whether some sets of contracted workers prefer part-time schedules, or whether employees find their company’s grievance procedures problematic. More generally, we could not ascertain how Emory’s contracted employees experience their situations on our campus. Notwithstanding the belief among Emory liaison officials that they have effective relations with these companies (exercising varying administrative styles), current arrangements limit the university’s review of these companies’ labor relations largely to reviewing what the companies themselves report. The university therefore cannot claim that it knows the status of the contracted workers’ experience. And this lack of direct knowledge, in turn, is a key indicator of the difficulties encountered by a university striving both to implement ethically responsible oversight and to rely on outside businesses.

We emphasize that we do not assume there are problems in how these companies deal with their employees. We also emphasize that the difficulties we encountered in reaching out to the contractors’ workforce reflect real legal issues and understandable company priorities. Yet the fact is that these difficulties were major impediments in learning about the place and condition of contracted workers on our campus. In that sense, these laborers do indeed occupy a distinct tier within the University community: our present knowledge about them is qualitatively more limited than our knowledge about Emory’s own non-academic employees.
Recommendations

Class is woven integrally throughout Emory’s institutional life and cannot, therefore, be separated out in a series of recommendations related to class alone. It is threaded through all of the recommendations that follow.

The recommendations advanced by this committee obviously comprise a lengthy and complex list of proposals. Their sheer volume and intricacy raise questions as to how they might best be reviewed and enacted. Still, the Committee on Class and Labor believes that our recommendations—the product of literally hundreds of hours of community meetings and expert analysis, leading to significant and compelling findings—must be carefully considered and, where possible, put into action.

To that end, we urge, first, that the entire Emory community review and respond to this report, and that the issues it raises about class and labor be addressed and acted upon with seriousness and integrity.

Second, we urge the provost and executive vice president for finance and administration to assume primary responsibility and accountability for carrying forward the recommendations of the committee, including assigning individuals or units on campus to assume primary leadership for implementing specific recommendations (e.g., possibly expand the charge of the Emory WorkLife Resource Center to incorporate responsibility for some of these recommendations), tracking progress, and securing funding. The provost and executive vice president for finance and administration would have “ownership” of the recommendations identified for implementation and would be charged with enacting these proposals.

Third, we recommend that by February 1, 2013, an advisory committee, comprising staff, faculty, students, and administrators be created to work with the provost and the executive vice president for finance and administration to monitor and guide the implementation of our recommendations. This advisory committee should be under the auspices of the University Senate.

The committee’s recommendations are outlined thematically as a way of addressing issues that often cut across the five parts of the committee’s charge. Our intention is to highlight facets of the university’s structure and ethos that came to the fore in our findings.
It is recommended that Emory University:

**Infrastructure**

(1) Review existing programs and offices that are designed to ensure that all members of the university community are treated equitably and fairly. Based on findings from this review, consider recommendations for improving these programs and offices. One such recommendation could be to create an ombuds office or similar office to serve staff as well as all other members of the university community. Such an office could be an independent resource for resolving workplace problems and a source of information about grievance procedures and policies. In addition to helping to resolve conflict, the office should have sufficient authority and influence in the perception of the campus community to effect real change. The committee supports the recommendation of the Faculty Council Ad Hoc Committee on University Grievance Procedures (see Appendix K) but recommends that consideration be given to expanding the purview of this office to cover all members of the university community, not just faculty. This office could address a commonly voiced discomfort with or distrust of current mechanisms for resolution of conflict or grievance. The ombuds office could serve helpfully to remind staff of the avenues for resolution available to them and could correct staff misperceptions about the reasons for and implementation of policies and practices.

(2) Add “class” as a category of diversity to be represented in Emory’s newly reorganized diversity structure, including Emory’s Advisory Council on Community and Diversity.

(3) Examine the charge of the Employee Council in order to ensure its effectiveness in representation of and communication with all staff.

(4) Promote third-party reviews of workplace practices—for example, Organization Dynamics Assessment available through the Faculty Staff Assistance Program, or external consultants.

(5) Create standards for and enhance school-specific and division-specific employee-relations resources.
(6) Strive to make available to every employee some space—whether a desk, locker, or other area—over which the employee has control.

(7) Find ways to identify staff by name—on signage, for instance—in their respective buildings, in order to recognize and give value to all staff, especially those who don't have desks or offices in the building.

(8) Evaluate the telephonic clock-in system and consider fair alternatives that imply trustworthiness of staff and that are appropriately applied across the university.

Community and Culture

(1) Foster a culture of civility that respects all persons and dignifies the contributions of all to the mission of the university. Steps toward this should include:

a. Creating a pledge or promise that reinforces a community approach to reminding each other about respectful behavior. The Emory Healthcare Pledge and the Children's Healthcare Employee Promise (Appendix L) could serve as models.

b. Monitoring and responding to complaints through an office or system to be identified.

(2) Emphasize repeatedly that all non-academic campus staff should be treated with respect by all members of the community, including faculty and students. (Toward this end, the Pledge used in the Health Transformation Program might provide useful language for this undertaking. See Appendix L.)

(3) Make diversity and inclusivity training part of every unit’s ongoing professional development plan.

(4) Make anti-harassment training part of every unit’s ongoing professional development plan.

(5) Create a network of clearly identified persons, located throughout the university, who are trained to know what to do and how to provide guidance when employment or ethical issues arise.
(6) Include staff on major (nonacademic) committees of all schools and colleges.

(7) Review appropriateness of exclusive nonwork spaces (e.g., faculty/staff locker rooms, the Faculty Dining Room, lounges) to determine whether they should remain as such or be altered to eliminate class distinctions.

(8) Find ways to encourage units to ensure that every person in the unit receives invitations to common celebrations in the unit or building.

**Educating the Community about Class and Labor**

(1) Foster open conversations about the history and current conditions of labor and labor organizing. For example, create cross-university seminars and programs to engage with questions about labor. The aim of these initiatives should be to educate the Emory community about the social, legal, and economic dimensions of work within local, national, and global contexts. These programs should be open to all members of the Emory community.

(2) Remind staff of their access to information about their right to organize and make this information widely available.

**Communication**

(1) Create a system of multiple media for communicating matters of importance. These media should include social media, strategically placed video monitors, and email as well as print.

(2) Create and make publicly available a central digest of learning opportunities.

(3) Conduct annual, locally focused surveys of staff and make units accountable for conducting surveys and acting on the results. Share the findings and use them to inform changes in policies and practices.

(4) Annually examine and report to the Employee Council data about promotion, reclassification, and voluntary and involuntary termination of staff to demonstrate the extent to which Emory's efforts are fair and supportive of Emory's workforce. To encourage transparency, the Employee Council should share this information with its constituency.
(5) Ensure that Employee Council representatives have access to leadership within their respective schools or units, so that representatives can communicate more effectively both to staff they represent and to their units’ leadership. Leadership in each area represented by an Employee Council member should meet regularly with that area’s representative and ensure good communication between each staff member in the area and to the Employee Council representative.

(6) Continue to publicize Emory’s successes in training, education, and promotion. For instance, Emory Learning Services has done some of this through feature articles and a new video, and Emory Report could recognize staff members who earn degrees at commencement through the courtesy scholarship.

Professional Development

(1) Articulate a clear philosophy about staff development, promotion, and advancement. This philosophy should include
   a. a statement of commitment that outlines the accountability of staff members, their supervisors, and the university (While Emory cannot provide regular promotions for all, it would help to have clarity about the roles and responsibilities related to an employee’s career progression at Emory.);
   b. an explicit recognition of two different kinds of education available to staff members:
      i. participation in formal education curricula, whether at Emory or at other educational institutions, and
      ii. development of job-related skills through in-house or off-campus training programs;
   c. a clear recognition that job assignments can also provide opportunities for development.

(2) Recognize that as a single—though large—organization, Emory benefits from having talented people who have experience in more than one area of the university.

To this end, Emory should:
   a. provide staff with multiple channels of information about professional development and career advancement;
   b. encourage staff to develop their own career and professional development plans;
c. encourage supervisors to mentor their staff who want to seek opportunities in other areas of Emory;

d. encourage supervisors to mentor and guide staff members to consider what “advancement” would mean for them individually in their respective careers;

e. encourage units to give appropriate consideration to internal candidates when hiring;

f. develop a way to measure and recognize units for their success in these endeavors.

(3) Develop a university learning strategy and create the necessary organizational structure to support the strategy.

a. Ensure that all staff have access to developmental opportunities, whether classroom training, online training, cross-functional assignments, etc.

b. Ensure good, low-cost opportunities to obtain computer literacy or more advanced computer skills. Currently, these classes are not offered through Learning Services and there seems to be a gap between needs and access for some staff.

c. Ensure sufficient opportunities for lower-paid staff to have learning opportunities and to have sufficient flexibility in the work environment to attend them.

d. Encourage more attendance at Emory’s training and educational opportunities. This could be accomplished through scholarships for Emory Continuing Education and opportunity to enroll in Emory graduate programs part time (some have this opportunity but not all).

e. Create a Learning Resource Center that could be staffed by volunteers (staff, faculty, and students) to provide assistance (through classes or one-on-one training) on topics such as computer programs, ESL, numeracy, etc.

(4) Establish a talent management strategy that identifies staff with high performance and high potential, and results in the establishment of talent pools that can be considered for possible promotion or transfer.

(5) Increase access to education by allowing staff more work time flexibility to take more academic credit hours per semester, thus reducing the time to obtain a degree at Emory (ten years is too long).
(6) Increase Emory-provided courses leading to personal and professional enrichment.

(7) Consider the impact on the fringe benefits pool of increasing the cap for tuition reimbursement.

(8) Review the job-related restrictions of tuition-reimbursement for classes leading to degrees or certificates at other institutions, so as to encourage broader educational objectives of staff.

(9) Encourage and allow each staff member to take time for professional development annually, funded to the extent possible by a central pool of funds in Human Resources to eliminate inconsistency among units.

(10) Devise a competitive process that allows staff to take one month of paid sabbatical leave to learn new and important matters with job relevance.

(11) Create a goal of 100 percent literacy and numeracy for staff and expect that all staff will be given the support and opportunity to attain this goal.

**Supervision of Staff**

(1) Mandate targeted and efficient training for new supervisors, including faculty, who supervise staff. This training should use the best methods, whether through focused and concentrated sessions or on-line delivery. This training might include the following topics:
   a. Having “crucial conversations”;
   b. Fostering diversity;
   c. Managing conflict;
   d. Conducting performance evaluations;
   e. Recognizing different work styles;
   f. Exercising logic and problem-solving;
   g. Others as needed to support best practice.

(2) Require ongoing training of supervisors as appropriate (including faculty members who supervise staff).

(3) Require periodic 360-style reviews of all supervisors (with three or more individuals who report directly to them), as appropriate, with associated
development plans. These reviews are for development, not performance evaluation.

(4) Explore whether there is a need for more effective ways to identify, address, and provide training and/or coaching for problematic supervisors.

**Work Flexibility, Benefits, and Compensation**

1. Ensure that all jobs have access to some form of flexibility, recognizing that different jobs may require different approaches.
   a. Both regular flexibility (in scheduling or in working from home) and ad hoc flexibility (the freedom to leave work without penalty for urgent family matters, for instance) should be considered.
   b. Continue to experiment with and implement flexible work schedules for more staff.

2. Continue to work toward and inform the community about child-care options on or off campus to meet the needs of individuals taking into account their work shifts or financial status.

3. Continue to conduct market analyses of compensation and benefits, and provide better communication about the market comparisons to the campus.

4. Consider certain benefit improvements where Emory is below market:
   a. Life insurance—while this is a low-cost benefit, it has not been increased in many years and should at least be indexed for inflation from the time it was instituted.
   b. Dental insurance—the employer contribution is very low compared to market practice, and increasing the benefit would entail a low-cost change.
   c. Adoption benefit—this is offered by a majority of employers.

5. Continue to increase the minimum wage for Emory staff and contract workers. Emory is a regional leader on this front, and it is important that this continue. Emory should bear in mind certain living wage standards, without necessarily indexing its minimum wage to these.

6. Budget money centrally to address market competitiveness problems, with priority being given to relatively lower-paid staff positions.
7. Provide financial education geared toward the needs of staff. For instance, greater awareness of the Earned Income Credit could make a significant difference in tax liability and, therefore, provide more disposable income. While Emory provides financial education, it is currently geared toward stage of life rather than level of income.

8. Encourage departments to monitor work flow and ensure that staff are not asked to do more with less for extended periods without pay increases or supplements commensurate with their additional responsibilities.

**Policy Making and Implementation**

(1) Consider whether the university’s nondiscrimination policy could include “class” as a protected category.

(2) Review program and policy changes to ensure that they do not disproportionately harm the less advantaged—e.g., parking rate increases, changes to bus routes, and changes to the time and attendance system.

(3) Evaluate differences in policy implementation across schools and departments.

(4) Ensure that policies governing benefits, access to programs, and time management apply to day-to-day operations equitably across the institution. Surveys, audits, and external reviews of units could be effective mechanisms in this effort.

(5) Eliminate differences in library privileges among staff, students, and faculty.

(6) Review policies to ensure consideration of their impact on staff members’ work-life balance.

(7) Require in departments where staff are not assigned a computer, that each staff member be allowed 15 minutes of computer time daily for connecting with Emory (e.g., responding to Emory email, visiting Emory websites, enrolling in benefits). Alternatively, make some kind of computer access possible in breaks and lunch time. This time is not replaceable by other activities. Departments should be given material support and encouragement to implement this practice.
(8) Create a committee to review parking and transportation at Emory as they affect people very differently according to class, job status, or income level. The university should minimize any risk that certain classes of employee are gaining unfair advantage in parking and transportation.

**Contract Labor**

(1) Make the rational and process for choosing major contractors more transparent (assuming that Emory will continue to make use of major contractors)

a. Ensure that the university’s choice to use major contractors is a mindful one that seriously considers ethical, operational, community, and financial advantages and disadvantages of contracting. Prospective financial and organizational benefits of using contractors should be explicitly identified and, where possible, quantified. The university should weigh the potential tensions between these benefits and Emory’s broader mission as an ethically grounded educational institution.

b. Develop a comprehensive set of principles and practices, reflective of the “Emory University Statement of Guiding Ethical Principles” (see Appendix M), to guide the university’s selection of and engagement with major contractors.

   i. As a first step, revisit the recommendations of the 2006 final report by Contract Managers Committee convened by Bruce Covey (see Appendix N). The current “Statement of Guiding Ethical Principles” and “Criteria Used to Select Outside Vendor Services” may serve as starting points here. In any case, what is needed are directly relevant and implementable standards that attend to a company’s record of labor relations. The Labor Code of Conduct proposed by Students and Workers in Solidarity (SWS) might serve as a reference for the kind of standards that would be appropriate (See Appendix O). Other universities also have posted such codes on their websites, and these also may serve as references.

   ii. Develop a checklist of institutional values and practices (e.g., wage guidelines, passing of National Labor Relations Board standards, meeting measurable ethical standards, nondiscrimination in all of Emory’s categories, range of benefits, availability of benefits to same-sex domestic
partners, adequate grievance procedures, work/life balance, career development paths, attention to the impact of seasonal and part-time employment practices, and possibly access to information about employee satisfaction pending solutions to co-employment issues below.), against which potential contractors’ practices would be measured. Scores on the checklist are to be balanced against financial benefits to the university. To aid this process, the university should identify a minimally acceptable score on the checklist as well as ethical criteria that must be met.

(2) Establish a centralized campus entity (possibly under the scope of the Labor Resource Center) to advise in selecting major contractors. This group should comprise representatives from the student body, the faculty, the staff, and relevant sectors of the administration. This committee could be a “social responsibility committee” similar to advisory groups at Georgetown University [http://publicaffairs.georgetown.edu/page/1242676305005.html] and the University of Michigan [http://irlee.umich.edu/CoLSHR/]. Selection of contractors should be accomplished without jeopardizing employees already in place.

(3) Implement regular evaluation of contractors.
   a. Assess major contractors by a centralized entity comprising representatives from the student body, the faculty, the staff, and relevant sectors of the Administration. Those evaluating the companies should not be those selecting them, to avoid possible conflict of interest.
   b. Ensure that assessments of major contractors take into account their current and recent performance in other universities or relevant institutions; should be guided by clear and directly relevant standards; should be both formative (i.e., informal and ongoing) and summative (i.e., annually and at time of contract renewal); and should review various facets, including service, safety, financial performance, and—importantly—contractors’ demonstration of satisfactory labor relations.
   c. Be certain that assessments of major contractors’ labor relations recognize both the contractors’ corporate culture and the need to respect the special nature of a university culture. The focus should encompass:
      i. Confirmation that the contractors uphold Emory’s wage standards.
ii. Confirmation that grievance procedures are satisfactory.
iii. Consideration of the impact of the contractors’ practices regarding seasonal layoffs and part-time employment.

(4) Acknowledge explicitly and actively address the impediments—especially prevailing interpretations of strictures against “co-employment”—that currently prevent the university from gaining independent knowledge about contractors’ employees. Emory also should give high priority to finding solutions to these obstacles—soliciting access to the companies’ worker surveys, for example, or commissioning third-party reviews.

(5) Explore how companies engage in practices like monitoring demonstrations and holding closed-door meetings with employees about labor organizing. The university should further determine whether such practices conflict with the university’s commitments to free expression. The outcome of this exploration could determine additional measures for assessing contractors both before selection and during regular evaluation.

(6) Affirm that the role of Emory liaisons to major contractors is not only to facilitate the activities of these companies on our campus, but also to articulate and protect relevant university values and ethical practices.

(7) Identify and, where possible, seek to reduce significant differences between the circumstances of Emory’s staff and circumstances of contracted workers. In particular the University should:
   a. strive to reduce significant gaps in wages between Emory and non-Emory workers on campus;
   b. strive to reduce significant gaps between benefits of Emory and non-Emory workers on campus—e.g., standardized health screenings, parking policies, library and gym access, bookstore discounts, and other academic pricing requiring the Emory Card, carpool arrangements, MARTA card eligibility, access to (and information about) university facilities, local discount opportunities, tax counseling, and educational (and career development) opportunities;
   c. encourage a shift toward greater fulltime employment for contracted workers;
   d. consider enrolling contracted employees within Emory’s health plans;
e. strive to ensure that contractors’ policies and practices regarding non-discrimination and grievances match the university’s;

f. investigate ways to include employees of contractors within Emory’s general communication network for Emory’s staff;

g. consider developing a “What is Emory” orientation (either as website or direct presentation) for both contracted and Emory employees;

h. consider recognizing employees, Emory and non-Emory alike, by posting their names and titles on worksites.
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I Criteria for selecting contractors (David Payne memo)
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L Emory Healthcare Pledge
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O Labor Code of Conduct