

Amended September 20, 2010

The first meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2010-2011 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, September 13, 2010. Present were Professors Basu, Ciepiela, Loinaz, Rockwell, Umphrey, and Saxton, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

President Marx opened the meeting by welcoming new and returning members of the Committee of Six and said that he looks forward to working with the Committee this year.

The President provided an update on the progress of planning for the College's new science center. President Marx said that the architectural firms of Stefan Behnisch Architects and Payette Architects have been contracted to develop a conceptual design for the new building, with Behnisch focusing on the exterior and overall design, and Payette working on the interior of the building, the designs for which will be guided by programming needs. The architects are exploring the option of a site that encompasses the current Merrill location and adjacent land to the north and east of the present structure, the President noted. He explained that goals for the project include a central campus location for the new center, sensitivity to existing campus architecture, retaining current open views, and opening up new views. President Marx noted that emphasis is being placed on planning to ensure that there is as little disruption as possible to the sciences during the transition from the old building to the new, and the option of building the new structure in phases is under discussion. President Marx said that the center's architects will visit the campus on September 23 and 24 to discuss the project with faculty in departments currently located in Merrill and McGuire and members of the Board of Trustees and administration. Professor Umphrey asked why the decision was made to build a new structure, rather than to renovate Merrill. President Marx replied that the cost of these two approaches was roughly comparable, but that there would be more disruption if the renovation approach had been chosen, and that a renovation would likely not provide the flexibility of space needed to meet programmatic needs. Professor Loinaz asked how the McGuire Life Sciences Building, which houses the Department of Biology, would be incorporated into the new science center. President Marx explained that, since the new building may be located far enough away from McGuire so as to hinder possibilities for fostering interdisciplinarity among the sciences, the Trustees have requested that the architects explore options that incorporate the biology department into the new building. Alternative uses for McGuire would be considered if biology is located in the new building, he said. Professor Loinaz asked about the costs associated with the new science center. President Marx said that it is currently estimated that the project will cost about \$150 million.

Continuing with his remarks, President Marx asked for the members' thoughts on the draft of a Five College strategic plan (available at <http://fivecolleges.edu/sites/planning/> that he had recently distributed by email to all faculty and staff. He said that the Five College directors would welcome the Committee's feedback on the document and asked if the members would offer their thoughts on the draft at the Committee's meeting on September 20. Professor Basu noted that the document, and the request for comments on it, had been mentioned at the recent Five College chairs meeting that she had attended. She wondered if chairs should be asked to share the document with their departmental colleagues and to request their feedback. It was noted that everyone on campus has received the document, and Dean Call commented that the timeframe (comments are due by October 31, 2010) is fairly short for responding, so there may not be time for a formalized effort to review the document. President Marx explained that each institution is being asked to decide how best to conduct the review of the document on its own campus. Comments may be submitted online or emailed directly to Neal Abraham, Executive

Amended September 20, 2010

Director of Five Colleges, Inc. Professor Umphrey wondered whether some faculty committees might be asked to consider the document. She noted that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has been engaged in a number of discussions relating to the consortium in recent years. Professor Ciepiela, who said that she found the document to be abstract and rhetorical overall, noted a new emphasis on having collaborations within the consortium, between two or three schools for example, rather than insisting that all of the Five College institutions always launch initiatives together. The President and the Dean commented that such collaborations are often very effective. The members agreed to read the strategic plan and to have a discussion about it at the September 20 Committee of Six meeting.

President Marx next informed the members that conversations are continuing about the creation of a body, which will likely be called the Employee Council, to represent all staff, including Trustee-appointed staff (with the exception of managers). He then turned briefly to the topic of the John Woodruff Simpson Lectureship and the John J. McCloy '16 Professorship of American Institutions and International Diplomacy.

President Marx noted that, this year, Richard Wilbur '42, who is being hosted by the Department of English, and Fulvio Melia, an astrophysicist, hold appointments as Simpson Lecturers. Andrew Bacevich, who is being hosted by the Department of History, holds an appointment as a McCloy Professor for the Fall semester. President Marx informed the members that Robert Kagan, who had agreed to be a McCloy Professor during the Spring semester, can no longer come to Amherst this year. He asked the Committee to review the credentials of a nominee to replace Professor Kagan, perhaps for the Spring 2011 semester, if not at another time. He also asked the members to review the credentials of other candidates for the Simpson Lectureship. The members agreed.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Loinaz asked about the process for selecting Simpson Lecturers and McCloy Professors. President Marx responded that he has been, and remains, open to nominations from individual faculty and/or departments for these positions. He said he has also received responses from scholars to an ad that he had placed for these positions and would continue to seek nominations broadly. The procedure for considering these appointments has been to share the CVs of candidates with the Committee of Six and to ask for the members' advice as to whether to offer individuals these positions. The Committee of Six has agreed that Simpson and McCloy should have made significant contributions to their fields. They should have the potential to contribute something new and exciting to Amherst's curriculum, and, through their teaching, it is hoped that they will expose and/or attract Amherst students to fields or approaches that the students might otherwise not have been inclined to explore. President Marx said that Simpson Lecturers and McCloy Professors could be, but need not be, affiliated with departments. The President said that, after discussion with the Faculty, it had been agreed that he could invite a small number of highly distinguished scholars to be appointed as Simpson Lecturers or McCloy Professors to teach at the College for a period of up to three years. It had been agreed that there would be a total of no more than three Simpson Lecturers and only one McCloy Professor at any given time. Simpson Lecturers can be from any field, while McCloy Professors had some restrictions in terms of field. Professor Ciepiela said that she had been unaware that there were limitations in terms of field for McCloy Professors, noting that such restrictions diminish the value of the position for replacing visitors across the curriculum. President Marx said that he would re-read the document that established the fund to

Amended September 20, 2010

see if there is flexibility within the terms of the agreement in regard to acceptable fields and would report back.

The President said that, while there can be only a very few Simpson Lecturers or McCloy Professors, he has bolstered the visitors budget in a number of ways. He has been supportive of having a small number of accomplished alumni and/or others teach courses on a single-course basis, if departments wish to make proposals to the Dean, following regular procedures for requesting visitors. Those appointed to these positions are known as Croxton Lecturers, and he has made funding from the Croxton Lecture Fund available to support them. In 2009-2010, David Bollier '78 (hosted by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology) taught a course as a Croxton Lecturer, and this year, Ralph Thaxton (hosted by the Department of Political Science) and Werner Gundersheimer '59 (hosted by the Department of History) have been appointed as Croxton Lecturers. In addition, drawing from his discretionary funds, specifically the President's Initiative Fund (PIF), the President said that he has been able to support some departmental requests for visitors. The Dean noted that, last year, five visitors were awarded through the PIF to a combination of departments and faculty groups that had made proposals. Professor Basu asked if departments may still apply for Croxton Lecturer positions, and, if so, how they would be informed that this is a possibility. President Marx said requests should be sent to the Dean. Dean Call noted that he would make an announcement at the next Faculty Meeting and that the Committee's minutes would also serve as a source of information about this continuing opportunity.

Dean Call began his announcements with words of welcome to new and returning members. He discussed with the Committee interim structures that he plans to put in place for the Department of Information Technology, following the departure from the College of Peter Schilling, who had served as Amherst's Director of Information Technology since 2005 and recently accepted the position of Associate Vice President for Academic Innovation at New York University's Global Network University. Dean Call expressed best wishes to Mr. Schilling and praised his service to the College over the past five years.

The Dean informed the members that he has been meeting regularly, both individually and collectively, with the heads of the six groups within IT, and said that he is confident that these colleagues will be able to meet Amherst's IT needs during the time that the College is without a Director of Information Technology. He explained that the last external review of the department occurred eight years ago and that plans for another review had already been under way before Mr. Schilling decided to accept a new position. Dean Call said that he would work with members of the Faculty Computer Committee, in consultation with IT directors at peer institutions, to assemble a team of colleagues to review the department during the fall. It is his hope that, after a national search, there will be a new IT director in place by the summer of 2011. Since the review will be completed this fall, the new director will be able to use the review team's recommendations for the department's goals as a guide.

Continuing with his discussion about IT, the Dean said that, after consulting with the President, members of the administration, and IT colleagues, he has decided to appoint two Acting Co-Directors of Information Technology, drawn from the current IT managers, who are already familiar with projects under way and initiatives that have been planned. Such an interim structure should ensure that current projects, such as online registration and other initiatives, continue to move forward on schedule. Professor Loinaz asked if there will be a sharp delineation of responsibilities between the Co-Directors and why a single director is not being

Amended September 20, 2010

put in place. The Dean responded that, although the responsibilities within IT are clearly delineated, the department operates under a model of shared responsibility and collaboration, and he feels that continuing this approach is important. Having two Co-Directors, who between them are familiar with most of the projects under way on campus, seems to be the best option.

Discussion turned to staffing within IT. Professor Umphrey asked about the current state of staffing levels in the department. The Dean said that there are currently some vacancies, and that the department is in the process of filling a number of them. Approval to search for a number of additional positions was recently authorized, he said. Professor Ciepiela noted that it seems that, at present, IT is inadequately staffed to respond to daily requests. Dean Call said that filling vacant positions will be helpful in this regard. He commented that, although this will be a challenging transition period, the budget and priorities for the year for the department have already been set, which will be helpful. Professor Loinaz asked what role Professor Jack Cheney, Associate Dean of the Faculty, and Marian Matheson, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, will play in the interim structure. The Dean explained that Professor Cheney, the Associate Dean in his office who has been serving as the liaison to IT, will work with the heads of the six groups within IT on projects relating to the Faculty and the academic side. Ms. Matheson will serve as a liaison for administrative projects. Professor Cheney and Ms. Matheson's primary role will be communicating with faculty, administrators, and staff about their IT needs and facilitating projects with IT. The Dean said that, by adding pieces of the directors' position to a number of colleagues' duties, he believes that IT projects will be kept on track this year.

Continuing with the discussion about IT, the Dean asked the members to consider how best to support the work of the Faculty Computer Committee, which may be asked to take on additional responsibilities because of the transition in leadership in IT. He asked whether appointing an additional faculty member to the committee should be considered. Professor Rockwell suggested that, if the chair of the Faculty Computer Committee, Professor Kimball, wishes, he could invite an additional faculty colleague, preferably with experience working on IT issues, to serve in a consultative role to the Committee. In this way, there would be no need to go through the process of revising the current charge of the Faculty Computer Committee, which would require a vote of the Faculty, since an additional faculty member would most likely only be needed on a temporary basis. The other members and the Dean agreed that this would be the best approach, and the Dean thanked the Committee for its advice. The Committee then turned to several committee nominations.

Continuing with his announcements, the Dean informed the Committee that Assistant Dean Janet Tobin will continue to serve as the Recorder of Committee of Six minutes and that Nancy Ratner, Associate Dean of Admission and Researcher for Academic Projects, will serve as the Recorder of the Faculty Meeting minutes. He then turned to the subject of the College calendar, noting that, over the summer, Hampshire College had decided to make changes to its calendar that must now be considered, along with other calendar changes by Five College institutions, before the College Council can finalize its proposal for Amherst's calendar to bring before the Faculty. The Dean explained that Hampshire has decided to align its calendar more closely with the three other members of the Consortium (Mount Holyoke, Smith, and the University of Massachusetts) that have agreed to changes in their academic calendars. The university and Mount Holyoke have decided to start their spring semesters on the Tuesday after

Amended September 20, 2010

Martin Luther King Day for five out of seven years and on the following Monday for the two years out of seven when Martin Luther King Day falls as early as possible.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Umphrey noted the upcoming (October 14) dinner, lecture, and discussion with Louis Menand, Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of English at Harvard University. She explained that, last February, Professors L. McGeoch and Parham, Dean Call, and she had attended a stimulating Mellon 23 meeting on the subject of “the liberal arts college.” In preparation for discussions, the Amherst group had read Professor Menand’s latest book, *The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University*. Mellon awarded each institution with representation at the meeting funds to follow-up on the discussions that began there, and the Amherst group decided to host a series of gatherings to discuss the future of the liberal arts college. It was agreed that these events, the first of which will be the Menand dinner/talk, should be open to all members of the Faculty and Board of Trustees, and to invited members of the administration. To inform the conversation, attendees have been provided with copies of Professor Menand’s book. Dean Call informed the members that the response to the invitation to the Menand event has been excellent, with more than ninety colleagues planning to attend so far. Noting that the group that attended the Mellon meetings feels strongly that it is the Faculty’s role to lead a dialogue on the larger questions facing liberal arts colleges in the next decade or two, he asked the members to consider future events that would continue to stimulate conversation among members of the Amherst community about the College’s future. Professor Umphrey and other members expressed enthusiasm for having informal and wide-ranging discussion of issues facing liberal arts colleges. Professor Basu suggested having a Teaching and Advising Program (TAP) lunch as a follow-up to the Menand event.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Rockwell asked the President about the performance of the endowment. President Marx replied that the return on the endowment for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, was 8.4 percent. He noted that the Treasurer will give a report on the budget and endowment performance at the next Faculty Meeting. The President noted that, when making budget projections, the assumption for the endowment’s return for last year was zero. The actual performance will bring the College closer to the long-term endowment spending target of 5 percent. President Marx stressed that it remains difficult to make budget projections in an uncertain economic climate, and that the College must remain vigilant in thinking about the assumptions on which it bases its budget projections. Professor Loinaz, noting both his enthusiasm for quantitative data and the difficulty of engaging quantitative data productively at Faculty Meetings, suggested that it would be helpful to have such data in advance of the Faculty Meetings during which the information would be discussed, ideally with the Faculty Meeting agenda. President Marx agreed that doing so would be informative, and he said that he would discuss with the Treasurer the possibilities for providing data in advance, given the schedules under which information is gathered and analyzed and presentations created. The Dean noted that one possibility, when time does not permit making information available in advance of a Faculty Meeting, would be to have the presentation at the Faculty Meeting and to have further conversation at a subsequent Faculty Meeting, by which time the Faculty would have had time to digest the information.

Dean Call next reviewed issues of Committee of Six confidentiality and attribution in the minutes, noting that the public minutes should be used as a guide in questions of whether matters discussed by the Committee can be shared with others. The Dean said that personnel matters are

Amended September 20, 2010

kept confidential; members of last year's members commented that very few conversations (typically those concerning personnel matters and committee nominations that were under consideration) had been kept out of the public minutes of the Committee. Professor Rockwell noted that last year's Committee aimed for as much transparency in the minutes as possible and used reasonableness as a guide when determining if a discussion, on rare occasions, should be kept confidential. Professor Umphrey commented that there seems to have been a rebuttable presumption of publication. Committee of Six members who had served last year agreed. Professor Ciepiela expressed support for aspiring to reasonable transparency in the minutes. Professor Basu asked if there have been opportunities for Committee members to offer an unformulated idea without having comments appear in the public minutes. Professor Ciepiela replied that last year's Committee did not endorse or follow such a practice, as, she believes, this year's Committee should not. The members of last year's Committee noted that there are two opportunities for members, the President, and the Dean to edit their comments during the minute approval process.

President Marx agreed on the import of transparency and commented that each Committee of Six with which he has worked has come to its own understanding, informed by the Faculty as a whole, of whether or when the members would be comfortable discussing issues in confidence. Instances could include when he is seeking guidance from the Committee on sensitive matters that cannot be made public, or if any member wants to discuss any idea that is not yet fully formed. The President asked for the members' views on how to ensure both transparency and honest exchanges of often preliminary ideas or views.

Professor Loinaz asked if there is language in the *Faculty Handbook* about the place of confidentiality within the Committee's minutes. The President said that the *Faculty Handbook* does not address this issue. Dean Call said that he is in favor of transparency, but that he worries that the minutes have become lengthy in an effort to record every detail of the meetings. He expressed concern that, if the minutes are too long, fewer colleagues would read them. Professor Umphrey agreed. She noted that the delay in distributing the minutes to the Faculty became problematic last year and wondered if the length of the minutes contributed to this problem. The Dean noted that longer minutes require more time to read. Professor Ciepiela commented that, at the end of last year, the Committee had agreed that, when there was little disagreement during particular discussions, summary could be employed. However, when divergent views are put forward, more attribution and fuller details would be required in the minutes. The Committee agreed that this would be a good approach to take in the future. The Dean reviewed with the members a proposal to improve the efficiency and timeliness of the minute review and approval process. The members, the President, and the Dean agreed to adhere to a schedule that includes firm deadlines and to make every effort to meet these deadlines regularly. The Dean noted that, traditionally, the Dean and the President have read the first draft of the minutes before they are shared with the Committee. He said that last year's Committee had requested that the Committee, the Dean, and the President receive the minutes at the same time. Dean Call wondered if this year's Committee wished to return to the earlier practice or wanted to continue with the more recent one. Professor Basu asked what the reason was for the change in practice. Noting the busy schedules of the President and the Dean, in particular their travel schedules, Professor Rockwell said that, at times, having to wait for the President and the Dean to complete an initial reading of the minutes resulted in lag time between Committee of Six discussions and the distribution of the minutes to Committee members and to the Faculty. Professor Loinaz said

Amended September 20, 2010

that the change of last year seemed to respond well to faculty concerns, and he suggested that the Committee continue to receive the minutes at the same time that they are shared with the President and the Dean. Professor Ciepiela noted that, during the process of writing the minutes, Assistant Dean Tobin, had, on occasion, contacted her to clarify a statement. The members agreed that the practice of last year should continue, and that the Committee, the President, and the Dean would receive the minutes at the same time, and that Assistant Dean Tobin, during the process of writing the minutes, may contact the Committee, the Dean, and the President to gain clarification on their comments. At the conclusion of the conversation, the members agreed that direct attribution would be their preferred mode.

The Committee then discussed the circumstances under which it would communicate via email. It was agreed that email would not be used to communicate about personnel or other confidential matters and that, in general, the use of email would be kept to a minimum. The Dean informed the members that there is a secure shared drive that the Committee can use for electronic communication.

The Dean next discussed with the members options for a regular meeting time for the Committee of Six, and it was agreed that the Committee would meet at 3:30 P.M. on Mondays until tenure season, but that the Committee would meet at 3:00 and at a number of additional times, as needed, during the period of tenure discussions. The meeting ended with the discussion of a personnel matter.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call  
Dean of the Faculty