

Amended October 4, 2010

The third 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 20, 2010. Present were Professors Basu, Ciepiela, Loinaz, Rockwell, Umphrey, and Saxton, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

The members reviewed the second draft of the minutes of the Committee's meeting of September 20. Conversation turned briefly to a point that had been raised by Professor Rockwell during a discussion of the John J. McCloy '16 Professorship of American Institutions and International Diplomacy and the John Woodruff Simpson Lectureship. Professor Rockwell had expressed the view that anyone appointed to these distinguished positions should have terminal degrees and other academic credentials that are, at a minimum, comparable to those required of Amherst faculty members, since he or she would be teaching. Professor Saxton reiterated her perspective that, under some circumstances, she could envision a distinguished individual who might not have a terminal degree being a suitable candidate for these positions. The Committee discussed whether a judge would be an acceptable candidate as an example. Professor Rockwell said that he would have no objection to the appointment of a judge, as he or she would have a terminal degree that would be comparable to a Ph.D. President Marx noted that last year's Committee had agreed that a distinguished journalist, who does not have a graduate degree, should be invited to teach a course as a Croxton Lecturer. The Committee agreed that the invitation was worthwhile, and that nominees for these distinguished visiting positions would continue to be discussed on an individual basis by the Committee, the President, and the Dean. The members then voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 20.

Under "Announcements from the President," President Marx informed the members that the Senior Staff has authorized a search for a replacement position, that of Health Professions Advisor, which is within the Career Center. The President noted that the Career Center has also requested an additional (new) position, and that the Senior Staff, the Dean, and he are considering the structure of the Health Professions position in relation to other needs within the Career Center, to determine how to allocate resources most effectively and efficiently. President Marx explained that pre-medical work makes up approximately 90 percent of the Health Professions Advisor position, leaving about 10 percent for other duties. The person occupying this position will be expected to serve as Dean-on-Duty, for example. Professor Loinaz asked about the time commitment required for this responsibility. Dean Call said that each of the Associate Deans in the Dean of Students office serves as Dean-on-Duty for two one-week shifts per semester, and that this duty involves being available outside normal operating hours to answer questions and to address urgent problems that arise concerning students. He noted that Resident Advisors and Area Coordinators are often the first line of contact under such circumstances, however.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Loinaz asked if candidates who might be suitable for the Health Professions Advisor position would typically also possess the skills needed to fulfill the role of Dean-on-Duty. The Dean said that he believes that qualified candidates most likely would. Noting that the work of the Health Professions Advisor is very heavy at some points of the year, because of the timetable of medical school applications, and lighter at others, Professor Loinaz asked if the scheduling for the assignment of the Dean-on-Duty responsibilities for the Health Professions Advisor would be taken into account. Dean Call said that he believes that Dean Hart would do so. Professor Loinaz noted that, during the summer, the duties of the

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Health Professions Advisor, which are at the moment being performed by him with support from Professor S. George, Associate Dean of Students Carolyn Bassett (who had been the Health Professions Advisor before moving into her new position within the Dean of Students office), and Associate Dean of Students Allyson Moore, are overwhelming. The advising and application process is becoming increasingly complex, and the Health Professions Advisor was recently asked to take on additional related duties for the new post-baccalaureate program, he commented. In his view, particularly since any new Health Professions Advisor would need time to learn the intricacies of Amherst's pre-medical advising and application process, the Health Professions Advisor will have little time left over for other duties.

Professor Loinaz noted that, as the faculty member who chairs the Health Professions Committee, he will be responsible for assuming additional responsibilities if the Health Professions Advisor does not have sufficient time to fulfill the duties of that position. The President and the Dean said that they recognize the importance of the Health Professions Advisor position and of the responsibility and burden of chairing the Health Professions Committee. They said that they anticipate having an ad developed for the Health Professions Advisor position within a week. Professor Loinaz thanked President Marx and Dean Call for moving forward expeditiously with filling the position. The President and the Dean expressed great appreciation to Professors Loinaz and S. George and Deans A. Moore, and Bassett for assisting Amherst's pre-medical students with the medical school application process.

Continuing with his announcements, President Marx said that, in reviewing the minutes of the Committee's September 20 meeting, which he had not attended, he had noted the members had continued the discussion of the three candidates who had recently been nominated for either a McCloy Professorship or Simpson Lectureship. He thanked the members for their advice.

Returning to the question of how best to disseminate information about these positions within and outside the College, President Marx said that he plans to ask the Faculty for nominations at the next Faculty Meeting, in addition to posting information on the Dean of the Faculty's Web site. Professor Basu suggested that, in addition, department chairs could speak with their colleagues about making nominations of Simpson Lecturers and McCloy Professors, as well as Croxton Lecturers. Dean Call said that he will notify departments next week, as part of his regular letter to chairs regarding requests for visitors, that they may nominate a Croxton Lecturer. President Marx asked for suggestions of venues to advertise the positions. He reiterated the Dean's view that the ad for the McCloy and Simpson positions that had been placed in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* last year, had drawn only a small number of viable candidates. Professor Umphrey noted that because the positions may be in a number of different fields, disciplinary publications would not be the most effective advertising vehicles. However, she continued to favor advertising these positions in ways that are comparable to those used for other academic positions. She asked what the regular procedures for advertising are. Dean Call responded that, at the end of the summer, his office, working with departments, places an omnibus ad in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in an annual special careers issue. Over the years, this ad has become increasingly expensive, so the decision was made to include only the titles of the positions (which are primarily tenure-track positions or appointments with tenure; Lecturer; or Resident Artist positions; as visiting positions are typically not yet allocated at the time the ad is placed) and to refer readers to the Dean's Web site for complete information. In addition, each department places ads in disciplinary-specific publications, either in print or

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online. Departments also place ads for visiting professors (assistant, associate, or full), but do not typically advertise for positions that involve teaching on a per-course basis. Noting that the opportunity to include the distinguished visiting positions in the omnibus ad for this year's searches had passed, the Committee, the Dean, and the President agreed that a separate ad for the McCloy Professorship and Simpson Lectureship should be placed in the *Chronicle*, and that, in future, these positions should be included as part of the omnibus ad.

Under Announcements from the Dean, Dean Call distributed the finalized procedures for the Committee's minute review process, as refined by the Committee over the past several meetings. The members agreed that the new system is working well and indicated that they are pleased with the timeliness with which the minutes are being posted for the Faculty. The members next discussed the schedule for some additional meetings. The Committee turned briefly to a procedural matter for the distribution of tenure materials. The Dean thanked the Committee for agreeing to participate on a panel as part of the Volunteer Leadership Summit that will begin this Thursday, September 30. The Advancement office has organized this event for alumni and parents who volunteer for Amherst's fundraising and engagement programs. The Dean noted that the program has been designed to provide an insider's view of Amherst. The Committee of Six was asked to offer information about faculty governance structures and the ways that Faculty serve the College through teaching, scholarship, and service. The Dean then discussed a committee nomination with the Faculty members.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," prompted by recently announced plans to conduct an external review of the Department of Information Technology, and noting the department's important intersections with the curriculum, Professor Umphrey asked about the regularity of external reviews of administrative departments, the process used to conduct them, and the role of the Committee of Six, if any. Dean Call responded that he has been in conversation with Professor Kimball, Chair of the Faculty Computer Committee, and Scott Payne, Director of Academic Technology Services, who also serves on the committee, about developing a charge for the visiting team and how best to solicit feedback about the department from faculty and administrators and to involve colleagues in the review. In addition, he has been working with the Faculty Computer Committee, the managers of the six IT departments, and administrative colleagues to assemble a visiting team. Professor Umphrey, noting that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reads the reports of visiting committees that review academic departments, asked who will read the report of the visiting team for IT. The Dean said that this has not yet been determined, but, depending on the issues that are raised, he said that he would imagine that the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR) and the Faculty Computer Committee would possibly do so. Professor Loinaz asked if administrative departments have a regular cycle of reviews, as academic departments do. President Marx said that reviews of administrative departments are often done when opportunities arise to re-think how these departments perform and function, for example a transition in leadership. The President noted that, in recent years, there have been external reviews of the Counseling Center, the Quantitative Center, the Writing Center, and the Career Center. Whether the reviews are of academic departments or administrative ones, the goal is to engage with experts in the particular field, who are asked to offer their best ideas for the College to consider.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Umphrey asked what the protocol is for bringing an issue to the Committee for discussion. President Marx said that

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the Dean and he would encourage the Committee to propose topics for discussion, either during meetings or in between meetings, as they wish. Dean Call agreed and explained that he assembles a list of agenda items each week and would welcome suggestions for additional items at any time.

The members considered when the next Faculty Meeting should be held, exploring the possibilities of October 5 and October 19. President Marx noted that, if the meeting were held on October 19, it would provide an opportunity to report on the meetings of the Board of Trustees, which would have been held the previous weekend and during which the Board will discuss the new science building project, among other topics of interest. Dean Call said that having the meeting on the later of the two dates would enable the President and him to share data that will inform the Treasurer's report with the Committee, in preparation for distributing it to the Faculty in advance of the Faculty Meeting in which it would be presented. That information is not yet available, so it would not be possible to take this approach if it is decided to have the meeting on October 5. The President also noted that Tom Parker, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, cannot attend a Faculty Meeting on October 5 and thus would not be able to offer a report to the Faculty in person, as he generally does at the first full Faculty Meeting. Professor Rockwell noted that responses to the draft of the Five College strategic plan are due by the end of October, and he wondered if there would be enough time for the Faculty to discuss the plan, if a decision is made to have some faculty committees respond to the document before the full Faculty considers it. President Marx said that he is certain that it will not be problematic for Amherst to offer comments on the document after October 31. Professors Ciepiela and Loinaz wondered if the other items on the agenda for the first meeting—the introduction of new colleagues and the reports of senior administrators—could be accomplished at the same meeting in which the other issues (the Five College strategic planning document, a detailed report from the Treasurer, and the President's report on the Board Meeting) under discussion might also be addressed. President Marx suggested that administrators could be asked to submit their reports in writing in advance of the Faculty Meeting, and that there could be an opportunity for discussion and questions at the meeting. The members agreed that this would be an excellent plan for freeing up more time at the meeting. The Committee agreed that the next Faculty Meeting would be held on October 19.

Professor Umphrey raised the more general, but related, topic of whether to have Faculty Meetings with greater regularity. She said that she favors doing so, as she knows other colleagues do, while noting that some faculty members hold the view that Faculty Meetings should only be held when there are some matters that require a faculty vote on the agenda. Professor Umphrey argued that it is possible to have substantive discussions even when the agenda does not include an issue that requires a vote, and that there is value in having regular opportunities for the Faculty to come together for dialogue and informational purposes. She suggested that three meetings a semester could be the goal, while commenting that meetings should not be held simply for the purpose of having them. Professor Umphrey said that she would find it interesting, for example, to have the major committees of the Faculty discuss what they have on their agendas for the year. Dean Call agreed that regular meetings would be valuable, noting that a pattern of meeting either very often, or not often enough, has emerged in recent years. Knowing that there would be a certain number of meetings during a given semester would enable a rhythm to develop and could lead to planning agendas for the meetings further in

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advance, which would be desirable, the Dean said. Noting that the tendency has been to meet when there is a pressing issue to consider, President Marx supported having more regular meetings. He agreed that anticipating matters that could be discussed before they become pressing issues would be desirable. The Committee, the Dean, and the President agreed to try to have Faculty meetings in October, November, and early-December, if possible. Dean Call suggested that a presentation on the College's new online advising tools would be particularly relevant immediately before pre-registration. The Committee agreed that a Faculty Meeting could be held on November 2 for this purpose, as well as for others that may arise. Dean Call noted that follow-up questions on the Treasurer's presentation, now set for October 19, could also be on the agenda of a November 2 meeting.

President Marx informed the members that Trustee Howard Gardner and former Trustee Diana Chapman Walsh have requested to meet with the members the Committee of Six on October 14, when the Trustees will be in town for Board meetings. President Marx said that it is his understanding that the meeting would be a follow-up to the conversation that last year's Committee had with the full Board during Board Meetings in March. During this conversation, for which he had not been present, the President said that the Board noted that the Faculty expressed concerns about how faculty governance had been functioning and the role of the administration in regard to difficulties that had arisen in this area. The Board, recognizing that the future of the College rests on having effective governance structures, felt that, if there were serious concerns about faculty governance, it would be helpful to bring together faculty colleagues and Board members who are academics themselves for the purposes of conversation. In response to the invitation, the Committee engaged in a discussion that encompassed the role of the Board in matters of faculty governance; the absence of a clear agenda for the conversation; the structural awkwardness that new members of the Committee said that they would feel about meeting with the Trustees when they were not part of last year's confidential discussions and before they had experienced serving on the Committee for a significant length of time; the awkwardness that members of last year's Committee would feel because they would be unable to share the substance of last year's confidential discussion with new members of the Committee; the possibility of re-igniting tensions about faculty governance that appear to have subsided; and the irregularity of having a meeting between the Committee of Six and Trustees outside the regular annual conversation between the Board and the Committee that typically takes place during Instruction Weekend in March or April.

President Marx commented that it is his understanding that the Trustees have proposed a meeting in the spirit of open conversation and to be responsive to concerns that were shared with them by the Faculty. The members indicated their appreciation for the Board's responsiveness but, on reflection, agreed that there does not appear to be any urgent need to meet with the Trustees now, and that it would be preferable for the Committee to meet with the full Board at the regularly scheduled time in the spring. Under such a schedule, new members, in particular, would have the benefit of having served on the Committee for almost the full year and would be better equipped to reflect on faculty governance processes with their colleagues and engage Board members in conversation. Professor Ciepiela noted that last year was an exceptionally difficult year that tested governance structures, citing the example of the Faculty's consideration of adding staff members to the CPR. She continued, while there were contentious moments in the process, the very difficult issues at hand were resolved by the Faculty through its regular

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governance structures. President Marx said that he agreed fully. The Committee agreed that the President should convey to the Board that the Committee welcomes a conversation with the Trustees and looks forward to meeting with them this spring.

Turning to the process for responding to the Five College planning document, the members noted that the document is largely aspirational and does not require any commitments or endorsements from the College at this time. President Marx and the Dean agreed. Professor Rockwell suggested that certain faculty committees were perhaps best positioned to identify potential issues that might arise from the report. The other members agreed and asked the Dean to invite response statements on the plan from the CEP and the CPR by October 15. Professor Loinaz asked if taking on this task would interfere with the regular business of the committees, which may have already set their agendas for the semester. The Dean, who attends the meetings of both committees, said that the committees would discuss their agendas, but hopefully they would be able to make time to consider this document. Professor Rockwell commented that, once the Committee has received the informed opinions of these committees, it may become clearer whether it will be necessary to devote a full Faculty Meeting to the discussion of the document. The members agreed to discuss the responses of the CEP and the CPR at their meeting on October 18.

The Dean thanked the members for the informative discussion, which occurred during last week's meeting of the Committee, about restructuring visiting/temporary teaching positions at the College as permanent renewable teaching positions that are not tenure-track or tenured lines. The members then turned to a personnel matter.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty