

Amended October 15, 2007

The fifth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2007-2008 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, October 1, 2007. Present were Professors Frank, S. George, Jagannathan, O'Hara, Servos, and Sinos, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

The meeting began with "Announcements from the President." President Marx noted that, in the Committee's recent discussion about faculty committees, important issues relating to their structure, oversight, and number had been the focus. In addition to considering how committees are constituted and what they do, the President suggested that it might be useful for the Committee to think about how committees work. He asked whether the practice of having most chairs serve for only one year adds to the burden of the Faculty, because colleagues are continually working to bring themselves up to speed in a role that may be new to them. He asked if having greater continuity in chairmanships of major committees would result in faculty members' investment of time being put to more efficient use and whether greater continuity would allow chairs to bring the expertise that they develop in their first year to a second year. The Dean noted that the desirability of having chairs serve for two consecutive years has not been considered, generally, when committee assignments are made. He said that faculty leaves often interrupt continuous committee service. Professor Servos noted that there have been occasions, under unusual circumstances, when a colleague's chairmanship has been extended beyond a year. While commenting that having committee chairs serve for two years seems reasonable, Professor George noted that committees most often operate on the basis of consensus, and he said that, in the operation of many committees, the chair's role does not differ significantly from that of the other members of a committee.

President Marx said that having department chairs serve for at least two years might also be beneficial, for the same reasons that he had outlined in relation to committee chairs. Professor Jagannathan asked whether there is already a structure in place for having department chairs serve for more than one year, but no more than three. Dean Call noted that, according to the *Faculty Handbook*, the term of a chair's appointment may vary, but a Chair typically serves no more than three consecutive years. The Dean noted that, as with committees, the terms of chairs often vary because of leave schedules. President Marx commented that, in four to six departments it is typical for chairs to serve for only one year, and in other departments, service ranges from two to three years.

Professors Sinos and Jagannathan asked the President if problems are arising from the length of chairs' terms. President Marx responded that chairs of committees often legitimately need time to get up to speed each year. Professor Sinos said that a benefit of the regular rotation of faculty chairs is that it allows a significant number of faculty members to participate in faculty governance and to learn about different areas of the College. Dean Call said that having the Faculty serve as committee chairs for two consecutive years would diminish the amount of time faculty must devote to the learning curve needed for these positions and that the knowledge gained by chairs might be put to use effectively. Professor Sinos noted that faculty often serve on committees for a year and then use the experience that they have gained in the role of chair the following year.

Amended October 15, 2007

Returning to the topic of the length of service of department chairs, Professor George noted that chairs do not have a very powerful role at Amherst, and purposefully so. A relatively short term helps to ensure that chairs do not consolidate power. Professor Frank noted that learning how to be a good chair takes time, and she said that it's hard to gain a foothold on the duties when the term is relatively brief. Professor Sinos commented that chairs had longer terms at Amherst in the past, and that it was felt that difficulties arose as a result. Professor O'Hara commented that, because of the lack of continuity of the chairmanship, tenure-track professors might receive different messages about their progress.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Jagannathan noted that individual colleagues have strengths and weaknesses, and, while it might be prudent to do so, it can be awkward for departments to choose a colleague to be chair based on whether he or she has administrative talent. Thus, the selection can become a mechanical process. Professor Servos noted that larger departments have the luxury of taking colleagues' ability and experience into consideration when electing chairs, but that smaller departments must use a system of regular rotation. President Marx expressed confidence that Amherst faculty members can do an excellent job as chair for a term of two years. Professor Frank said that she would welcome the opportunity to discuss issues of governance and service, including the consideration of additional compensation—in the form of course relief, earlier leaves, or “amnesty” from future service on major committees for a stipulated period, for example—for faculty who take on roles at the College beyond teaching and scholarship that place significant demands on their time. President Marx said that he would be open to such a conversation and suggested that the members develop a list of possible approaches and include the pros and cons of adopting them. The Committee could then discuss this issue at a future meeting. The members agreed. As a final comment about committees, Professor Jagannathan noted that it would be helpful for faculty members, when they are appointed to a particular committee, to be given a sense of the rhythm and flow of the work of the committee, so that they can plan their schedules accordingly. The Dean and the other members agreed.

President Marx informed the members that Professor Cobham-Sander has been planning to step down from her position as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity at the end of 2007. He expressed his gratitude for the fine work that she has done and for her willingness to serve in this role for an extended term. President Marx noted that additional progress needs to be made in the area of diversity for both faculty and staff. He remarked on the relative lack of diversity within the Faculty and staff, while noting the success that Amherst has had in constituting a diverse student body. The President said that this is a particularly critical moment for moving forward in the area of diversity. As Amherst moves toward a major demographic shift in the Faculty in the coming decade, it is paramount that the College—using all of the tools at its disposal, including bridge appointments and targeted “opportunity” hires, as recommended by the Committee on Academic Priorities—build a Faculty that is both of the highest quality and which is reflective of the diversity of the student body. He asked the members to give him advice on how best to address the issue of increasing diversity at Amherst, and the Committee agreed to return to this subject soon.

Amended October 15, 2007

Dean Call next made a series of announcements. He reported that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), at the Committee of Six's suggestion, had considered possible models for moving forward a proposal for a new major in Film Studies and decided that it would recommend that a group of interested colleagues—perhaps those who were members of the Dean's Advisory Committee on Film and New Media that brought a proposal to the CEP—come together and apply for funding from the Dean and submit a proposal to the CEP in the spring. Dean Call said that he plans to meet with those colleagues who have expressed interest in working on such a proposal for a major in Film Studies.

The Dean informed the members that, during the month of October, Kenneth Rosenthal '62 and Lizzie Barker, the new Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum, will be leading a series of meal-time conversations about the future of the Mead with faculty members, students, staff, alumni, and community members. It is Mr. Rosenthal and Ms. Barker's hope that at least one representative from every academic department will be able to participate, and they would welcome additional faculty participation in the form of written comments and/or the completion of a forthcoming survey, Dean Call said. He noted that these discussions will help the Mead shape its goals for the coming years, in keeping with the needs of its constituencies and the demands of the curriculum. The conversations will serve as the conclusion to a strategic planning process begun more than two years ago by the ad hoc Mead Study Committee and will provide Ms. Barker with an opportunity to learn more about what the faculty needs from the museum. Dean Call said that the rapid pace of this process has been dictated by the Mead's upcoming reaccreditation review by the American Association of Museums (AAM). These conversations are being held in October so that a draft of the results can be shared with the AAM reviewers during their November site visit. At the conclusion of the Dean's announcement, Professor Sinos said that she appreciated Ms. Barker's efforts to involve the Faculty in the museum, and several members said that they have been impressed with Ms. Barker's plans and ideas. Professor Sinos expressed the hope that Ms. Barker would view the Faculty as allies and their involvement in the museum as a vehicle for drawing students to the Mead.

President Marx noted that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) and the Faculty's expression of support for college-wide programs in artistic practice in the form of both FTEs and other initiatives, the College has been investing in the arts in a number of ways. He commented that, in addition to efforts to make the Mead a more visible and welcoming presence, a campus-wide collaborative art program took place on September 28. Dean Call noted in the same vein that the theme of this year's Copeland Colloquium is Art and Identity, and that the Copeland Fellows—who are practicing artists—will be making a variety of presentations over the course of the year. This is the first year of a three-year pilot program in which the Copeland Program has a project theme and the Fellows will be on campus for a full year.

Dean Call, noting that some questions have emerged, offered clarification on aspects of the procedures for promotion to the rank of Professor. Changes to these procedures were approved by the Faculty in 2006-2007 and have taken effect this year. He reminded the members that promotion to the rank of Professor may originate with the department or with the

Amended October 15, 2007

candidate and usually occurs between six and eight years after the tenure decision. Candidates may put themselves forward in requesting that a promotion committee be formed. A candidate's promotion committee consists of all tenured full professors in his or her department(s) and, at the request of the candidate, may include up to two other tenured full professors from the College Faculty, chosen by the candidate in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty. The Chair of the promotion committee is selected by the Dean. The Dean noted that the Promotion Committee decides whether or not to bring the case forward. In the case of joint appointments, there is one promotion committee, which is made up of the tenured full professors from both departments, and, again, may include up to two other tenured full professors from the College Faculty, chosen by the candidate, in consultation with the Dean. In cases where there are fewer than two tenured full professors in the candidate's department, the Dean of the Faculty and the Committee of Six will appoint an ad hoc committee of tenured full professors from related departments to serve as the promotion committee. Should the department have one member at the rank of tenured full professor, he or she will also serve. Again, at the request of the candidate, the promotion committee may include up to two other tenured full professors from the College Faculty, chosen by the candidate in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty.

Professor O'Hara asked if the Promotion Committee can decide that a case not be brought forward, even if the candidate has asked for his or her case to be reviewed. The Dean said that the committee may make that recommendation. President Marx expressed some concern with the candidate playing the major role in choosing some members of the Promotion Committee who will judge his or her case. Some members wondered what protections were in place to ensure that the committee was constituted fairly. It was noted that only the candidate (but not the department) could add members from outside the department, and that the reason for doing so should be to have colleagues on the committee who have a good understanding of work that may have moved in interdisciplinary directions. The thought is that department members might be less familiar with work outside their fields. Having the Dean consult with the candidate about which additional colleagues are added to the committee should ensure fairness.

The Committee turned to a personnel matter. Turning briefly to the upcoming consideration of this year's tenure cases, the President and the Dean discussed the process of the members' review (for all cases), at the meeting of October 15, of the departmental recommendation; the characterizations of the outside reviewers; the outside reviewers' CVs; a description of the process by which the outside reviewers were chosen and information about their relationship, if any, to the candidate; and the outside reviewers' letters for each case). The President said that the purpose of this review is for the Committee to form a preliminary judgment as to whether there seems to be a sufficient array of letters, whether the qualifications and academic foci of the reviewers seem appropriate, and whether the level of engagement of the reviewers with the scholarship of the candidates appears to be satisfactory. If the members feel that additional letters are needed, the department will be contacted about how to proceed with providing them. Professor O'Hara suggested that the Committee also receive the Dean's letter to the Chair about tenure so that the members can review what departments were asked to provide to the Committee. The Dean agreed to provide the letter, along with the other materials.

Amended October 15, 2007

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Servos said that, he wished to express dismay over the announced resignations in the Frost Library’s Archives and Special Collections. Daria D’Arienzo, Head of Archives and Special Collections, and John Lancaster, a distinguished, long-time Archives and Special Collections Librarian at the College who retired from Amherst at the end of 2005 and who has been working on a part-time basis as Archives and Special Collections Cataloger, have decided to leave the College in December. Other members concurred with Professor Servos’s sense that their retirements constitute a loss for the College. The President and the Dean said that they too regretted that these fine colleagues have chosen to retire from these positions.

The Committee next discussed the request (appended) from Professors Dizard, on behalf of Professors Clotfelter, Cox, Delaney, Demorest, Hagadorn, Harms, Lopez, Martini, McKinney, Miller, Moore, Reyes, Servos, and Temeles that the Committee of Six place a motion to create an Environmental Studies major before the Faculty and reviewed draft catalog copy for the major. Professor Servos informed the members that he would not vote on this issue, since he is a member of the group proposing the major. He asked for guidance from the Committee about whether he should speak during the discussion. The Dean said that practice has been that a colleague in this position has provided answers to questions of information. The Committee agreed that it would be valuable for Professor Servos to participate in this way.

The Committee expressed great enthusiasm for the College having a major in Environmental Studies. Professor Sinos asked if the number of science courses that would be required would provide sufficient grounding in the sciences, and the scientists on the Committee, in particular, had strong views on this subject. Professors O’Hara and George expressed concern that the required science courses being proposed for the major did not include labs. Professor George wondered about the logic of having the one required natural science course (Biology 23) be a non-lab course, while also listing its prerequisite, Biology 18 (which does have labs), as an elective. Professor O’Hara agreed, noting that Chemistry 38, which is listed as an elective, also has a prerequisite, Chemistry 12, which itself has a prerequisite, Chemistry 11 or 15. All of these courses do have labs, she noted. Both Professor George and Professor O’Hara expressed concern about the “hidden” requirements that lie beneath the surface of the courses that are being proposed for the new major. Returning to the subject of the science content within the proposed major, Professor Jagannathan noted that, while he is very supportive of the proposed program, he was surprised that none of the required courses would appear to offer a foundational knowledge of basic concepts in the areas of energy and entropy. He said that this content could be offered through a chemistry or physics course, or a course designed specifically to be a part of the curriculum for the major.

Professor O’Hara said that she hopes that the Department of Chemistry’s participation can grow beyond the single course now listed as an elective. Noting that most pre-medical students take Chemistry 11 in the fall, she said that she could conceive of the department offering, for example, a “green” version of Chemistry 11 in the spring. She asked Professor Servos if the courses for the major would be flexible. He responded that there is certainly room for additional courses to be included in the major, and he said that the faculty group that has been

Amended October 15, 2007

shepherding this proposal through would encourage other faculty to participate. He noted that for this proposal, the group was not suggesting a definitive curriculum, but had assembled courses from what was already being offered at the College, which, in aggregate, seemed sufficient to constitute a major comparable to those offered by the College's peers.

Continuing the conversation, Professor O'Hara noted that a quick review of the programs of some peer institutions revealed that most majors had more than one required science class. One member pointed out that the proposal was for a program in Environmental Studies rather than Environmental Science. Professor Servos said that different Environmental Studies programs have different emphases. President Marx asked for clarification on how the process for approving the major would move forward. If the Faculty voted to create a major based on the Environmental Studies group's proposal, could the parameters and/or courses of the major be changed by the Environmental Studies Program in the future? Could a course in chemistry become a requirement, for example? The Committee said that they believed that such changes could be made. Elaborating on the process, Professor George noted that departments inform the CEP, basically as a courtesy, when they make extensive changes to their departmental curricula. He said that he would imagine that the same process would be followed for making changes to the new major in Environmental Studies once it was established. President Marx asked if the understanding is that the Faculty votes on a major based on a proposal that offers some sense of the parameters and then allows for organic processes to balance any curricular shifts that might be needed. He asked what the authority would be for such shifts. The members said that the CEP would be such an authority.

Professor Jagannathan said that, drawing on the courses that Amherst already offers as a means of creating the major may well be fine. The current proposal demonstrates the feasibility of such a major. However, he thought it would be better if the argument for the major is less constituency driven. Professor Jagannathan noted that he would like to see the proposal shaped differently. He said that intellectual arguments that will shape the major and the foundational ideas should be placed up front. In his view, the major should have required courses that are appropriate for the major, which do not have hidden prerequisites, and the other members agreed. The Committee also agreed that a major in Environmental Studies should be approved. The hope would be that the proposed program would later be broadened through the addition of more interdisciplinary courses. Some members argued that at least one lab-based course should be a required part of the major. Professor O'Hara wondered if Colloquium 22, which would be the foundational introductory course for the major, might include some of the basic scientific content that the members had been discussing, and even a lab. The Committee said that they would like to see a concrete proposal brought before the Faculty this fall, and they felt that the proposal should be restructured along the lines outlined by Professor Jagannathan. The members agreed that the proposal should not be delayed, but that it could be stronger.

Professor Servos asked why the scientists on the Committee felt that lab experiences would be so important. Professor Jagannathan said that labs often help to make abstract concepts real and tangible for students. Professor Servos suggested that the proposed major is meant to be flexible enough to allow students to associate a variety of sciences with their interests in

Amended October 15, 2007

environmental policy, history, or economics. Some might be interested in field biology, others ecology, for example. Professor George said he thought that students with those interests should be doing at least some labs in the field. Professor Sinos asked, in reference to the proposal's claim to include humanities, how the humanities have been incorporated into the major. Professor Servos noted that the electives include history courses (he said that he views history as a humanities discipline) and a philosophy course. Professor Servos noted that the hope is that, in the future, an FTE in environmental history will teach a regular broad survey of environmental history, as well as other courses within the major. He commented that the Department of Economics is currently searching for an environmental economist and that the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science is searching for a statistician who would teach biostatistics. He hoped that both of these colleagues would teach courses that would contribute to the major. Professor George said that he had been concerned about the prospect that students, particularly those majoring in Biology and Geology, might use the Environmental Studies major as a second major of convenience. He was pleased to see that, in the proposal, few of the required courses would overlap among these majors, so significant "double-counting" of courses toward two majors could not occur.

President Marx noted that it appears that colleagues in History and on last year's CEP have a continued interest in a new FTE in environmental history, which would support the focus of the major, as proposed. The Department of Chemistry, if it wished to become more involved in the new major, could likewise make a proposal to the CEP for an environmental chemist, which would fall within the CAP's recommendation that interdisciplinarity be fostered as a college-wide priority. Another option might be that the department applies for an FTE to teach the courses currently being taught by a member of the department, so other department members could teach courses in environmental chemistry, if they desired to do so.

At the conclusion of the conversation, Professor Servos said that the Environmental Studies group would support colleagues in other departments offering more courses in Environmental Studies. At this juncture, he said, the group feels that it is important to begin to provide Amherst students with the opportunity to major in Environmental Studies. The members agreed, but asked that the Environmental Studies group reformulate the proposal so that there is a greater emphasis on the intellectual arguments for the major and the strengths of the proposed program within the field of Environmental Studies.

At 5:00 the Committee was joined by attorneys Jim Wallace and Vincent O'Rourke, who reviewed tenure procedures with the Committee and answered questions about the tenure process.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty

AMHERST COLLEGE
American Studies - Sociology

Jan E. Dizard, Charles Hamilton Houston Professor of American Culture

28 September 2007

Gregory S. Call
The Dean of the Faculty &
The Committee of Six

Dear Colleagues:

We write to request that you place a motion to create an Environmental Studies major before the faculty, hopefully in a meeting this fall. There is a very specific reason why we think this should be dealt with this fall: there are two searches underway, one for an economist who specializes in environmental economics and the other for a second statistician to enable the Mathematics and Computer Science Department to offer a new course or a section of an existing course that emphasizes environmental issues in statistics. We think having a major to which these new hires can contribute will enhance our ability to attract the strongest candidates.

This said, there are broader programmatic reasons why we think the time is ripe for a major in environmental studies. Several years ago, with support from the PIF program, we surveyed what comparable institutions (Middlebury, Williams, Colby, Oberlin, Carleton, among others) were doing in this field. We discovered that we were far behind the curve. Virtually all small liberal arts colleges have environmental studies majors, majors that require science courses with labs as well as humanistic and policy oriented social science courses.

As we met and talked about what other institutions were doing, we recognized that we were very close to having a critical mass of faculty, drawn from across the curriculum, that would make it possible for us to offer a major in environmental studies. With the abovementioned searches underway, and with a visiting position in environmental history and a commitment from the History Department to make it a priority to seek a tenure track position in environmental history, we are confident that we can offer a robust major beginning next year.

Two years ago last spring, we submitted a proposal for an Environmental Studies program to the CEP. The CEP was strongly supportive. In fact, they asked us why we were not pressing for a major. Our answer was straightforward: we needed two key new positions (one in economics, the other in history) in order to offer a major. Pending those appointments, the Committee of Six voted to create a "program" in environmental studies, which was included in the Course Catalog for 2006-07 and continues in the current (2007-08) Catalog.

In the meantime, in anticipation of an eventual major, Peter Crowley and Jan Dizard, with PIF support, offered Colloquium 22, "The Resilient ? Earth," in 2005-06 and 2006-07 which is intended as an introductory course to the environmental studies major. (Dizard and Ethan Clotfelter will teach a similar colloquium in the spring semester, 2008.)

Student interest is high-Pick Colloquia have been at or near the cap of twenty students; Colloquium 22 has had 35-40 students; last year visiting assistant professor John Broich had solid enrollments in his environmental history courses; this year's visitor in environmental history, Jill Payne, despite the fact that her courses came in too late to be included in the College Catalog also has fifteen or more students in each of her environmental history courses this fall. In addition, a number of us have been fielding questions from an increasing number of students interested in majoring in environmental studies.

With faculty commitment strong, student interest growing, searches underway for faculty critical to launching a major, we think it is now time for the faculty to decide if Environmental Studies should be added as a major.

We are appending herewith, for illustrative purposes, a draft of catalog copy describing the major. The courses and requirements listed are necessarily illustrative since we cannot, at this juncture, know what courses the new environmental economist and new statistician will teach. The offerings in environmental history will also depend, first, on a visitor next year and, hopefully, a tenure track appointee who will begin teaching in the fall of 2009. But what we can confidently say is that there will be new courses directly relevant to environmental studies in economics, history, and mathematics/statistics. When we are in a position to specify these courses, we will submit the major program to the CEP for formal review and another vote of the faculty approving the actual major program.

Sincerely,

Jan E. Dizard
(on behalf of Professors Clotfelter, Cox, Delaney,
Demorest, Hagadorn, Harms, Lopez, Martini,
McKinney, Miller, Moore, Reyes, Servos, and Temeles)

cc: Professor Martha Umphrey, Chair of the CEP

attached: draft catalog copy of proposed environmental studies major

A draft of catalog copy for an environmental studies major

Advisory Committee: Professors Clotfelter, Cox, Crowley, Delaney, Demorest, Dizard (Chair), Hagadorn, Lopez, Martini, McKinney, Miller, J. Moore, Payne, Reyes, Servos, and Temeles.

For thousands of years, our ancestors were more shaped by than they were shapers of the environment. This began to change, first by hunting and then, roughly ten thousand years ago, with the beginning of agriculture. Since then, humans have had a steadily increasing impact on the natural world. Environmental Studies is a field that explores the complex interactions between humans and nature. This exploration requires grounding in the sciences, humanities and social sciences. To major in this field, six courses are required, which collectively reflect this interdisciplinary commitment. Beyond these required core courses, majors will take at least four electives. A capstone seminar must also be taken. In the fall of the senior year, the successful completion of which will constitute passing the comprehensive requirement. For those seniors intending to write an honors thesis, the required seminar may be waived. For others who are uncertain about conducting senior thesis research, seminar work may lead to an honors thesis to be completed in the second semester of the senior year.

Required Courses.

1. Introductory Course (now Colloquium 22), team taught
2. Biology 23 ("Ecology")
3. A statistics course
4. An environmental economics course
5. An environmental history survey course
6. Capstone seminar (to be taken in the first semester, senior year) team taught

Electives: (In alphabetical order)

1. Biology 18 (Adaptation and the Organism)
2. Biology 32 (Evolutionary Biology)
3. Biology 39 (Animal Behavior)
4. Biology 48 (Conservation Biology)
5. Chemistry 38 (Atmospheric Chemistry)
6. Economics (Quite possibly a course focused on Economics and Environmental Policy)
7. Geology 9 (Environmental Science: Case Studies)
8. Geology 21 (Surface Earth Dynamics)
9. Geology 28 (Hydrogeology)
10. Geology 45 (Seminar in Biogeochemistry)
11. History 54 (Environmental History of Latin America)
12. History (environmental history courses currently being taught by visitors and thus changing from year to year)
13. UST 35 (Law's Nature: Humans, the Environment, and the Predicament of Law)

15. Philosophy 24 (Environmental Philosophy) To be introduced by Professor Moore
16. Pick Colloquia (one each semester-topics change from year to year)
17. Psychology 46 (Environmental Psychology)
18. Sociology 40 (The Social Construction. of Nature)