

Amended December 3, 2007

The eighth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2007-2008 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 3:00 P.M. on Monday, November 5, 2007. Present were Professors Frank, Jagannathan, O'Hara, Servos, and Sinos, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder. Professor George was absent by prior arrangement.

The President discussed briefly with the members the announcements he intended to make at the Faculty Meeting of November 6, including information about plans to renovate the Lord Jeffery Inn. President Marx also asked the members for suggestions of faculty colleagues who might serve as coordinators of upcoming colloquia that will occur during Interterm and in the spring.

Dean Call made a series of announcements. He informed the members that the ad hoc Science Planning Committee is now fully staffed with representatives from the science departments. The group will soon begin meeting on a regular basis. The faculty members who will serve on the committee are J.P. Baird (Neuroscience), Caroline Goutte (Biology) through fall 2008, David Hall (Physics), Tanya Leise (Mathematics), Mark Marshall (Chemistry), Anna Martini (Geology), Cathy McGeoch (Computer Science), L. Arielle Phillips (Astronomy), and Matt Schulkind (Psychology). The Dean noted that the Memorial Minute Committee for Ernest Alfred Johnson, Professor of Romance Languages, Emeritus has also been finalized. James Maraniss, Professor of Spanish; Donald White, Professor of German Emeritus; and Daria D'Arienzo, Head of Archives and Special Collections, have agreed to serve.

In reference to the Science Planning Committee, Professor Jagannathan asked if administrators would become members of the committee or would serve in an advisory role and when they would begin to participate, in either case. Professor Frank wondered if the committee would be ad hoc. The Dean said that the committee would meet soon to discuss when administrators should be brought into the process and to develop a charge. The committee would begin as an ad hoc committee and could decide at a future time if it wished to bring a motion to become a standing committee forward to the Committee of Six and to the Faculty as a whole. Professor Frank wondered whether a comparable committee should be considered for the humanities. The Dean noted that, while it is not anticipated that there will be a comparable planning process needed for facilities for the humanities, he would be open to having a conversation about forming a planning committee for the humanities. Professor Frank said that, at a future date, she would welcome the opportunity to have a broad discussion about what some perceive as the decline in prestige of the humanities at the College and nationwide.

The Dean next noted that, with the assistance of the Committee on Priorities and Resources, an Academic Facilities Planning Group has been formed and has just selected a consultant, Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott to work with the College on a campus-wide academic facilities study that will focus on classrooms, laboratories, studios, performance spaces, and faculty offices. The firm designed James, Stearns, and Charles Pratt Dormitories. In addition, the Dean said, the Library Planning Committee will soon engage a consultant to assist with the assessment of programmatic needs that might be addressed through the renovation of Frost Library. Professor Sinos noted that it will be important for those who choose consultants to consider firms' history with the College, when relevant. She asked the President and the Dean

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about the timetable for developing a vision for the library. The Dean said that, in order for the renovation of the library to become one of the campaign goals, such a vision must be articulated by the time of Commencement at the very latest. The President reiterated that, in regard to the library and to other upcoming large-scale projects, such as the Merrill renovation, it is essential that a clear sense of vision and direction is established through a planning process. Professor Sinos said that she wished that discussions about the future of the library had begun earlier. The President and Dean agreed, noting some frustration with the pace of the process. Professor Jagannathan cautioned against rushing through the planning process and advocated for a short extension should more time be needed for planning for the future of the library.

The members discussed briefly the experiment of having informal open lunches with the Faculty to increase the Committee's accessibility to colleagues. The lunches were poorly attended and it was decided to discontinue them.

The Committee considered two course proposals and voted five to zero to forward them to the Faculty. The members also considered a renewal proposal for a President's Initiative Fund for Interdisciplinary Curricular Projects and made a recommendation to the President, who thanked them for their advice. Professor Servos, being a member of the Law in Science PIF, left the room during the discussion.

The Committee turned to personnel matters.

The Committee discussed structures and initiatives that might facilitate progress in increasing diversity within the Faculty. President Marx reiterated that, as Amherst moves toward a substantial demographic shift in the Faculty in the coming decade, it is imperative that the College be proactive in creating a Faculty that is of the highest quality and which is reflective of the diversity to which Amherst aspires. President Marx noted that there are some new tools that have been proposed to assist with diversity efforts, in particular the two FTEs recommended as target-of-opportunity hires by the Committee on Academic Priorities. He asked the members whether the Faculty is, generally, supportive of increasing the diversity of the Faculty. It was agreed that most Faculty and departments are committed to this goal. The members discussed the possibility of increasing the flexibility of the hiring system to allow for the ability to hire exceptional candidates of color, who might emerge through the search process or through other avenues and within subfields for which searches may or may not be authorized. Possibilities such as developing an infrastructure for recruitment and retention of faculty of color, shaping positions in ways that might attract minority candidates, providing job opportunities for their spouses, and other initiatives were also considered.

Since little time remained, it was agreed that the members would return to this subject at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty