

A Note from the Dean on the Class of 2011

I introduced the Annual Report to Secondary Schools for the Classes of 2008 and 2009 with what I termed admission parables. Last year, I postponed introducing the third and final parable because I felt compelled to comment on Harvard, Princeton, and the University of Virginia's decision to abandon Early Decision and Early Action. I postpone the telling of that final parable again this year because of an extremely important development in financial aid at Amherst that I would like to share with you.

After considerable discussion and extensive analysis, the Amherst College Board of Trustees voted to eliminate *all* loans from financial aid packages for the Class of 2012. In the interest of equity, they additionally decided to eliminate loans for all classes enrolled at Amherst next year, that is, the Classes of 2009, 2010, and 2011. As you can imagine, this is a considerable financial commitment on Amherst's part.

We made this commitment for two reasons. First, we were concerned that financial aid students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, were making career and educational choices that were heavily influenced by current debt levels and by the prospect of considerable additional debt, while those students not on financial aid were making those decisions free of financial considerations. This simply seemed wrong to us and smacked of a kind of two-tiered system at a critical point in our students' lives. The last thing we want is for our financial aid recipients to forego careers in education or the non-profit sector generally for fear of the income implications of such decisions.

We also engaged in a sort of thought experiment, the gist of which was the following question: "If Amherst College were to design a financial aid system from scratch this year, given our extraordinary resources and without the constraints of history or past practice, what would it look like?" With an endowment of more than one million dollars per student, it seemed ludicrous to us to be including loans in financial aid packages. Our current president, Tony Marx, has eloquently and forcefully articulated in countless venues the obligation for colleges and universities as extraordinarily favored

as Amherst to think deeply about the debt *they* owe to the larger society and to act in a progressive and enlightened manner, and that stance figured prominently in our thinking.

As you can imagine, this announcement has been greeted with universal enthusiasm in the secondary school community. We hope, as was the case with our decision to eliminate loans for low-income students seven years ago, that similarly favored colleges and universities will follow our lead. We did not make this decision with "competitive advantage" in mind, and we truly hope other institutions will follow our lead.

Speaking of the distribution of financial aid, I continue to be disturbed by an increasing tendency to "leverage" financial aid or to use it as a part of a "tuition income maximization model" of greater or lesser sophistication, which almost inevitably results in staggering debt levels for students. To see leveraging replacing a focus on access in the distribution of financial aid is certainly disheartening. Again, what is Amherst's stance? We continue to practice genuinely need-blind admission and to meet the full need of all admitted students. Of course, it is far easier for a school with Amherst's considerable means to take the high road in awarding aid, but I do believe access has been one of Amherst's core values (if not *the* core value) since its founding as a college for "indigent and pious" young men.

Enough of my ranting. Now on to the Class of 2011 at Amherst. We received 6,680 applications for the Class of 2011, the largest number the College has ever received. We accepted 1,175 and matriculated 474. Women account for 54% of the Class, fully 38% are students of color, and 8% are non-U.S. citizens. Our students hail from 381 different secondary schools.

Because average SAT and ACT scores, rightly or wrongly, tend to be the shorthand for academic quality, or the closest thing we have to a common standard or means of comparison, I will quickly observe that the average composite critical reading and math SAT score for the Class of 2011 is 1,420, and the average composite ACT score is 31. The academic credentials cited above

are certainly arresting, but I urge you to dig more deeply into the table, which exhibits the range of SAT scores for applicants, admits, and matriculants. I hope those data reassure you that the admission process here is far from simplistic or crudely formulaic. In fact, I believe that the Admission Committee is at its best when it is able to recognize academic potential that is not necessarily reflected in standardized testing.

To my way of thinking, what lies behind, or perhaps accounts for, such statistics is more important. What has struck me thus far in my eight-year tenure here are the habits of mind of Amherst students. They are curious, comfortable, even buoyant in the world of ideas, remarkably aware of the world around them, and deeply committed to the values of a diverse community. Fascinating to me also is the degree to which they are deeply interested in the admission process itself—an interest that I suspect grows out of their knowledge that the content and context of their education in a small community such as ours grows as much out of myriad interactions with fellow students as out of more formal classroom instruction.

I hope that I or a member of my staff will have the opportunity to meet you or to renew conversations on the road. To that end, allow me to introduce this year's staff: Director of Admission/Senior Associate Dean Katie Fretwell; Senior Associate Director/Associate Dean Kathy Mayberry; Associate Deans Michael Hawkins, Demisha Lee, Joy St. John, and Cate Zolkos; Assistant Deans Eli Bromberg, Nancy Ratner, and Darren Reaume; Senior Admission Fellow Tiffani Hooper; Admission Fellows Eduardo Garcia and Keli Gunn.

Finally, and as always, let me thank you for all past and future kindnesses. Should your travel bring you to Amherst, please do not hesitate to visit with us.



Tom Parker
Dean of Admission and Financial Aid
October 2007

The Admission and Financial Aid Staff for 2007-08

Tom Parker, *Dean of Admission and Financial Aid*

Admission

Katharine Fretwell, *Director of Admission/
Senior Associate Dean*
Kathy Mayberry, *Senior Associate Director/
Associate Dean*
Michael Hawkins, *Associate Dean*
Demisha Lee, *Associate Dean*
Joy St. John, *Associate Dean*
Cate Zolkos, *Associate Dean*
Eli Bromberg, *Assistant Dean*
Nancy Ratner, *Assistant Dean*
Darren Reaume, *Assistant Dean*
Tiffani Hooper, *Senior Admission Fellow*
Eduardo Garcia, *Admission Fellow*
Keli Gunn, *Admission Fellow*

Susan Brulotte, *Admission Processing Assistant*
Flora Chamlin, *Secretary to the Dean of Admission
and Financial Aid*
Jean Clark, *Director of Admission Information
Systems*
Donna Eaton, *Campus Visit Coordinator*

Debbie Fuller, *Reference Secretary*
Susan Geissler, *Staff Assistant*
Marcy Gustafson, *Staff Assistant*
Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, *Admission
Information Coordinator*
Linda Rodriguez, *Admission Assistant*
Judith Trzcieski, *Data Entry Coordinator*

Financial Aid

Joe Paul Case, *Dean/Director*
Kathleen Gentile, *Senior Associate Dean*
Michael Ellison, *Associate Dean of Admission
and Financial Aid*

Michael Albano, *Financial Aid Counselor*
Jonathan Ekard, *Student Records Assistant*
Pamela Guyott, *Department Secretary*
Nancy Robinson, *Student Employment
Coordinator*

First-Year Students in the Class of 2011

September 14, 2007 } A Snapshot

Student Background Profile

46% are men; 54% women
 50% are receiving scholarship and grant aid
 38% indicated they are students of color
 (179 students)
 10% African-American (49 students)
 10% Asian-American (47 students)
 11% Latino/a (54 students)
 6% Multi-racial (27 students)
 < 1% Native-American (2 students)
 16% are first-generation college students
 11% are children of alumni
 8% are non-U.S. citizens

Students hail from 40 states, D.C., PR, VI,
 29 countries

Student Academic Profile

85% finished in the top 10% of their class
 (of those with reported rank)
 20% are valedictorians
 (of those with reported rank)
 28% were admitted through Early Decision
 Mean SAT scores: critical reading 714, math 706
 Mean ACT score: 31
 Secondary schools represented in the class: 381

	Men	Women	Total
Applied	2,956 (44%)	3,724 (56%)	6,680
Accepted	535 (46%)	640 (54%)	1,175
Enrolled	220 (46%)	254 (54%)	474

For the Class of 2011, 350 students applied under the Early Decision option; 134 students enrolled.

Statistics for the Past Decade

Year	Number of Applicants	Number of Students Accepted	Number of Students Enrolled
1997	5,210	1,039 (20%)	434 (42%)
1998	4,491	1,030 (23%)	440 (43%)
1999	5,194	997 (19%)	428 (43%)
2000	5,352	1,041 (19%)	434 (42%)
2001	5,175	973 (19%)	430 (44%)
2002	5,238	957 (18%)	412 (43%)
2003	5,631	1,001 (18%)	413 (41%)
2004	5,489	1,136 (21%)	428 (38%)
2005	6,281	1,176 (19%)	431 (37%)
2006	6,142	1,144 (19%)	433 (38%)
2007	6,680	1,175 (18%)	474 (40%)

Rank in Class

	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
Top 10th	2,691 (76%)	627 (89%)	225 (85%)
Second 10th	483 (14%)	57 (8%)	28 (11%)
Third 10th	184 (5%)	15 (2%)	9 (3%)
Top 31st-50th	124 (4%)	4 (1%)	3 (1%)
Total Number of Ranked Students	3,523 (53%)	705 (60%)	266 (56%)
Total Number of Unranked Students	3,158 (47%)	470 (40%)	208 (44%)

Distribution of College Board SAT Scores

CRITICAL READING	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
750-800	1,547 (31%)	432 (47%)	139 (39%)
700-749	1,236 (25%)	227 (25%)	98 (27%)
650-699	917 (19%)	134 (15%)	62 (17%)
600-649	620 (13%)	83 (9%)	43 (12%)
550-599	330 (7%)	31 (3%)	14 (4%)
500-549	174 (4%)	10 (1%)	5 (1%)
450-499	77 (2%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
200-449	40 (1%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Mean	694	726	714
Mid 50%	640-750	690-790	670-770

MATH	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
750-800	1,302 (26%)	384 (42%)	124 (34%)
700-749	1,233 (25%)	206 (22%)	93 (26%)
650-699	1,155 (23%)	170 (19%)	75 (21%)
600-649	648 (13%)	92 (10%)	39 (11%)
550-599	341 (7%)	45 (5%)	22 (6%)
500-549	160 (3%)	16 (2%)	6 (2%)
450-499	76 (2%)	4 (%)	2 (1%)
200-449	26 (1%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Mean	689	716	706
Mid 50%	640-750	670-780	660-760

WRITING	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
750-800	1,227 (25%)	356 (39%)	117 (32%)
700-749	1,342 (27%)	254 (28%)	108 (30%)
650-699	1,096 (22%)	184 (20%)	80 (22%)
600-649	645 (13%)	71 (8%)	35 (10%)
550-599	371 (8%)	40 (4%)	16 (4%)
500-549	152 (3%)	9 (1%)	5 (1%)
450-499	59 (1%)	1 (%)	0 (%)
200-449	41 (1%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Mean	687	717	710
Mid 50%	640-740	680-770	670-760

Distribution of ACT Scores

ACT Composite	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
34-36	291 (21%)	101 (39%)	30 (27%)
30-33	644 (47%)	94 (36%)	48 (43%)
24-29	364 (27%)	63 (24%)	32 (29%)
21-23	38 (3%)	1 (%)	1 (1%)
Below 21	27 (2%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Mean	31	32	31
Mid 50%	29-33	30-34	29-34

Secondary School Representation

	Public	Private	Parochial	Home School
Applied	4,595 (69%)	1,627 (24%)	419 (6%)	39 (1%)
Accepted	767 (65%)	350 (30%)	56 (5%)	2 (%)
Enrolled	289 (61%)	164 (35%)	21 (4%)	0 (%)
Number of schools represented in the class	244	118	19	0

Geographical Distribution of Those Matriculating

Alabama	1	Kentucky	1	Oklahoma	3	New England	18%
Arkansas	1	Louisiana	2	Oregon	1	Mid-Atlantic	27%
California	61	Maine	4	Pennsylvania	8	Midwest	14%
Colorado	9	Maryland	13	Puerto Rico	1	South-Southeast	9%
Connecticut	31	Massachusetts	41	South Carolina	1	West-Southwest	21%
DC	3	Michigan	6	Tennessee	1	International	11%
Delaware	1	Minnesota	11	Texas	13		
Florida	16	Missouri	3	Vermont	3		
Georgia	7	Montana	1	Virginia	8		
Hawaii	2	New Hampshire	5	Virgin Islands	2		
Idaho	1	New Jersey	26	Washington	7		
Illinois	28	New Mexico	3	West Virginia	1		
Indiana	2	New York	79	Wisconsin	6		
Iowa	2	North Carolina	3				
Kansas	1	Ohio	5				

Financial Aid

	2007 Class of 2011	2006 Class of 2010	2005 Class of 2009
Accepted students who applied for scholarship and grant aid	826 (70%)	795 (70%)	792 (67%)
Accepted students who demonstrated need for scholarship and grant aid	520	501	501
Of those, accepted students awarded scholarship and grant aid	520	501	501
Total amount offered	\$16,543,114	\$15,362,546	\$13,927,206
Average amount offered	\$31,814	\$30,664	\$27,799
Matriculating students who received scholarship and grant aid	239	225	203
Total amount	\$8,078,003	\$7,400,623	\$5,637,045
Average amount	\$33,799	\$32,892	\$27,769
Percent of class receiving scholarship and grant aid	50.4%	52%	47%

Fall Transfer Students

	Men	Women	Total
Applied	140 (51%)	136 (49%)	276
Accepted	11 (61%)	7 (39%)	18
Enrolled	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	11

Eleven transfer students enrolled in the spring of 2007.

Senior Major Distribution for the Class of 2007

Single Majors		Black Studies and Fine Arts	1	History and Theater & Dance	2
American Studies	2	Black Studies and Political Science	1	Interdisciplinary and Music	1
Anthropology	6	Black Studies and Psychology	1	Interdisciplinary and Spanish	1
Asian Languages/Civilizations	6	Black Studies and Sociology	2	Law, Jurisprudence & Social	
Biology	22	Black Studies and Spanish	1	Thought and Political Science	1
Black Studies	3	Chemistry and French	1	Law, Jurisprudence & Social	
Chemistry	3	Chemistry and German	1	Thought and Psychology	1
Classics	4	Chemistry and History	1	Law, Jurisprudence & Social	
Computer Science	2	Chemistry and Music	1	Thought and Religion	1
Economics	18	Classics and English	2	Law, Jurisprudence & Social	
English	21	Computer Science and English	1	Thought and Spanish	2
European Studies	3	Computer Science and		Mathematics and Music	1
Fine Arts	14	Mathematics	3	Mathematics and Philosophy	1
French	3	Computer Science and Psychology	1	Music and Neuroscience	1
Geology	6	Computer Science and Theater &		Music and Philosophy	1
German	3	Dance	1	Music and Spanish	1
History	14	Economics and English	2	Neuroscience and Psychology	1
Interdisciplinary	7	Economics and Fine Arts	1	Philosophy and Political Science	1
Law, Jurisprudence & Social		Economics and French	1	Philosophy and Theater & Dance	1
Thought	15	Economics and History	1	Political Science and Psychology	1
Mathematics	4	Economics and Latin	1	Political Science and Religion	2
Music	7	Economics and Law, Jurisprudence		Political Science and Spanish	6
Neuroscience	10	& Social Thought	2	Political Science and Women's &	
Philosophy	2	Economics and Mathematics	4	Gender Studies	1
Physics	3	Economics and Music	1	Psychology and Religion	1
Political Science	22	Economics and Political Science	5	Psychology and Spanish	3
Psychology	34	Economics and Psychology	7	Psychology and Theater & Dance	1
Religion	4	Economics and Spanish	3	Religion and Women's &	
Russian	3	English and European Studies	2	Gender Studies	1
Sociology	7	English and Fine Arts	1	Spanish and Theater & Dance	1
Spanish	9	English and French	3	Total Double Majors	143
Theater & Dance	2	English and Law, Jurisprudence			
Women's & Gender Studies	3	& Social Thought	1	Triple Majors	
Total Single Majors	262	English and Mathematics	1	Asian Languages/Civilizations,	
		English and Music	2	Political Science and Women's &	
Double Majors		English and Philosophy	1	Gender Studies	1
American Studies and		English and Physics	1	Economics, History and Math	1
Black Studies	1	English and Political Science	3	European Studies, Fine Arts	
American Studies and English	1	English and Spanish	2	and French	1
American Studies and Law,		English and Theater & Dance	1	Mathematics, Music and Physics	1
Jurisprudence & Social Thought	1	English and Women's &		Total Triple Majors	4
Anthropology and Asian		Gender Studies	2		
Languages/Civilizations	1	European Studies and French	1	Total Class of 2007 Graduates	
Anthropology and Economics	1	Fine Arts and Mathematics	1	409	
Anthropology and Spanish	1	Fine Arts and Political Science	1		
Asian Languages/Civilizations		Fine Arts and Psychology	2		
and Economics	1	French and History	1		
Asian Languages/Civilizations		French and Law, Jurisprudence			
and English	1	& Social Thought	1		
Asian Languages/Civilizations		French and Philosophy	2		
and History	1	French and Political Science	5		
Asian Languages/Civilizations		French and Psychology	2		
and Political Science	2	French and Sociology	1		
Asian Languages/Civilizations		French and Spanish	1		
and Women's & Gender Studies	1	Geology and History	1		
Astronomy and Economics	1	Geology and Russian	1		
Biology and Fine Arts	1	History and Interdisciplinary	1		
Biology and Music	1	History and Physics	1		
Biology and Political Science	1	History and Political Science	2		
Biology and Women's & Gender		History and Sociology	1		
Studies	1	History and Spanish	1		

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