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The twentieth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2011-2012 was called to order by Dean Call in the President's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, February 27, 2012. Present were Professors Basu, Ferguson, Hewitt, Loinaz, Ratner, and Umphrey, Dean Call, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder. President Martin participated in the meeting via speaker phone.

The Committee discussed briefly the Faculty's response to the proposal that a Provost be added to the administration. The members agreed that, based on the discussion at the Faculty Meeting of February 21, the Faculty was supportive of moving forward with this position, with some colleagues expressing the view that considering a different title for it might be desirable. President Martin said that she had been pleased with the Faculty's response to the proposal and would be open to alternative titles. Professor Umphrey asked how the Committee of Six could be most helpful at this point in the process and inquired whether the senior staff would be consulted as the position is shaped. President Martin responded that she plans to develop a draft job description and to share it with the Committee of Six and the senior staff, though she anticipates working most closely with the Committee to define the position, as the Faculty requested. The President explained that, since the job description is still at a stage of formation, it would be helpful if the Committee could first consider the question of the title. Professor Umphrey expressed the view that the title of Dean of the College, which had been proposed at the Faculty Meeting, often is the equivalent of Amherst's Dean of Students position. She feels that giving the position that title might lead to some confusion about the role of the individual. Dean Call agreed and noted that, at other institutions, the Dean of the College is the chief academic officer, functioning as the Dean of the Faculty. Professor Ratner was of the impression that the responsibilities associated with the title of Dean of the College vary. If so, he would favor calling the position Dean of the College, as long as that title does not result in miscommunication of the role that is envisioned for the job at Amherst, he said. Professor Ferguson expressed a preference for the title of Provost, as he feels it is most commonly associated with the functions of the position, as President Martin has articulated it. The President said that she looks forward to continuing the conversation about the position at the time she shares the job description with the members. Conversation turned briefly to a personnel matter.

The Committee next returned to a discussion of the issue of regularizing long-term visiting appointments at the College for scholars who have tenurable credentials. The Dean has been discussing with the CEP the possibility of bringing up for tenure, through the regular process for senior hires, a small number of individuals who have occupied visiting positions at Amherst, have strong records of scholarship, and have been making valuable contributions to the College for many years. The colleagues in question are considered to be highly productive scholars who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, and their departments have recommended them for tenured positions. The CEP has decided to consider the question of whether to allocate FTEs for this purpose after the committee receives regular FTE requests this spring, in order to gain a sense of the number of FTEs that would be available. The Dean reminded the members that, at present, because of the number of retirements and the expansion of the Faculty, the College is in the rare position of not being overly constrained by the FTE count. Dean Call explained that funding for the positions in question is presently available in the budget, since the individuals are already being paid by the College in their current roles. The positions could be kept outside the FTE count or another approach could be taken, the Dean said. At present, he explained, faculty members who serve as administrators and have reduced teaching loads, or do not teach at all, are counted in the faculty FTE count. The Dean, President, and Dean of Students are counted as full faculty FTEs. The two Associate Deans of the Faculty, the Director and Associate Director of the Writing Center, and Dean of New Students are also counted as full faculty FTEs, even

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though they each serve half-time as administrators. The Provost position will bring the number of faculty who serve as full-time administrators to four. When those four full-time positions are combined with the five positions for faculty who serve half time in administrative roles, there will be 6.5 faculty FTEs devoted to administration. Since the size of the faculty salary pool is determined, in part, by the faculty FTE count, including all faculty-administrators in the faculty FTE count has enabled the Dean to sustain the faculty salary pool at a higher level. The faculty FTE count is thus higher than it would be if these positions were outside the count, and the salary pool that is available for distribution to the Faculty is greater. (It should be noted that the administrative salary budget pays the administrative portion of the salaries of faculty-administrators.) With the creation of the Provost's position, it may be time now to raise formally the faculty FTE cap to account for these 6.5 FTEs. If the long-term visiting positions under discussion (which would count as 1.5 FTEs) are regularized as tenured positions and shift into the faculty FTE count, at the same time the Provost's position is added and the FTE cap is raised by 6.5, the net effect would be to give the CEP more flexibility when it considers the number of FTEs available for allocation moving forward. The Dean said that he had not yet discussed this approach with the CEP but has plans to do so.

Continuing the discussion of procedures that might be put in place to regularize the positions, Professor Umphrey asked if the Committee would be provided with teaching evaluations as part of the envisioned tenure reviews. The Dean said that he would propose soliciting retrospective letters from students who had been taught by the individuals in the last three years. Professor Umphrey expressed some concern that appointments for tenured positions might be made without the vetting that is intrinsic to a national search. She noted that a national search is required for teaching positions at the College, including visiting positions. The Dean said that he is almost always in favor of having national searches and has required that this process be followed for new visiting and tenured or tenure-track faculty hires. However, he has thought a great deal about what process would make the most sense in these and other unusual circumstances, and has come to the conclusion that the tenure review, which is the most thorough evaluation the College conducts and which includes an evaluation of a candidate's scholarship by outside experts in his or her field, would provide a high degree of external vetting of the candidates. The Dean noted that regularizing long-term visiting positions has been one of his priorities as Dean. In most circumstances, regularization has been accomplished through Senior Lecturer appointments (a designation that might not be attractive to the individuals in question, who are accomplished scholars as well as teachers). Requests for Senior Lecturers, which have originated in departments, have been brought before the CEP, Dean Call said. Once the position has been allocated, he has required that a national search be conducted. The Dean noted that, in the majority of cases, the department has hired the person who was already here. So, while he had considered whether national searches should be part of the process for considering long-term visitors with tenurable credentials for tenured positions, he had felt that since the tenure process itself was the College's most rigorous mode of assessment, a national search with a very strong internal candidate would not serve to add much additional value as a vehicle for vetting candidates. In addition, if a position is (purposefully) structured to represent the needs and niche that are being filled by the individual, that structure might be unusual and might end up limiting the applicant pool, Professor Ferguson offered.

Professor Basu asked what might happen if departments put forward these individuals for tenure and received outside letters from external reviewers that raise questions about the quality of the candidate's scholarly work. Could the process be halted before its conclusion? If so, could such a tenure candidate become a Senior Lecturer? Alternatively, could a long-term visitor who stands for tenure and receives a negative decision be permitted to become a Senior

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Lecturer, instead of being required to leave the College after a terminal year of teaching, as is ordinarily the case with a tenure denial? Professor Ferguson felt that the option of remaining at the College as a Senior Lecturer should be a possibility for individuals in these circumstances. The Dean said that, perhaps, if a department assembles a tenure dossier for an individual and solicits letters, and then finds that the letters raise concerns that might put the case in jeopardy, there could be a conversation with the Dean before the case proceeds to the Committee of Six. Under those circumstances, perhaps the case would not go forward, and the individual, if he or she wished, could remain at the College as a Senior Lecturer. In order for the person to assume this position, the department would first have to make a request to the CEP for a Senior Lecturer. A national search would then need to be conducted, he said. The Dean expressed the view that it should only be possible for an individual to have one opportunity to be considered for tenure, whether his or her case ultimately came before the Committee of Six or not. President Martin said that she feels strongly that it should be up to departments to assess the strength of any case for tenure. This could be done by reaching out to colleagues in the field in informal ways to get an assessment, for example. The President said that she would not be in favor of offering the option of halting a case once it has been brought forward, and/or allowing an individual to become a Senior Lecturer if tenure is denied. Some members agreed. Professor Hewitt asked if the colleagues under discussion would be asked to serve on faculty committees if they received tenure. The Dean said that once tenured, these individuals would have the same responsibilities, including College service, as any tenured faculty member.

Professor Umphrey expressed some concern that allowing departments to bring visitors up for tenured or tenure-track positions, without requesting an FTE through regular processes and without a national search, would enable “end-runs” around the tenure process. Professor Basu said that she had similar worries about developing mechanisms for visitors, who are brought to the College through a process that is largely departmental, to cross over into permanent positions, without the vetting that is otherwise required at College-wide (via the CEP, Dean, and President) and national levels (via a search). Professor Ferguson said that, while the process for requesting and hiring visitors, which is authorized and overseen by the Dean and does not involve the CEP or the President, is less rigorous than the procedures for making a tenure-track hire, if the individual is later brought up for tenure, that review will be rigorous. The Dean noted that he has made it a rule that no visiting appointment can be regularized into a Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, tenure-track or tenured position without the department first making a request to the CEP. The Committee agreed that the questions under discussion are vexing and are made more complex when a long-term visitor is the spouse or partner of a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Professors Umphrey and Basu stressed that they understand the importance and complexity of finding ways to support the careers of partners/spouses of faculty. Professor Umphrey expressed the view that a Senior Lecturer appointment, resulting from a process that would involve a request to the CEP for the position and a national search, is one attractive model for regularizing visiting positions, when departments wish to do so. The Committee agreed that the issue of spousal hiring will take on increasing importance in the years to come because of the large amount of hiring that is anticipated over the next decade, in particular, because of faculty retirements.

Professor Ratner commented that tenuring scholar-teachers (when they have the necessary credentials) who have served the College well as visitors for many years might be the best option for those who are already here, during a time when FTEs are relatively plentiful. However, he said that he suspects that faculty would be less willing to have FTEs used for this purpose if similar circumstances arise during a time when FTEs are scarce. The Dean agreed, commenting that one of the reasons he had chosen to use the Senior Lectureship model for regularizing

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positions earlier, was that only a small number of FTEs had been available. He noted that no system will be perfect, but said that his goal is to develop a process that will help make decisions that are best for the College, and which will treat individuals fairly. He explained that, if there is a tenure review for the individuals under discussion, the outside letters would provide information about the candidates that is external to the College. Having such a perspective would be critical for ensuring that the evaluations of those with whom departments have had long relationships would be objective and based on a full range of evidence.

Professor Umphrey, who said that she knows that the Dean has implemented a rule that visitors not teach at the College for a period of more than three years, asked Dean Call if he anticipates having visitors remain at the College for more extended periods and whether the rule has been applied to spouses/partners of tenured or tenure-track faculty who teach at the College. Dean Call replied that it is his hope that, in the future, individuals will not teach in non-regularized positions for extended periods (beyond three years) and that an equitable process will be in place for regularizing long-term visiting appointments, should they occur. He said that it has been his practice to allow spouses/partners of faculty no more than two, two-year appointments as visitors. By the time the second appointment concludes, it would be his expectation that a decision would be made about whether the individual and the department wish to move the individual into a regularized position. Often, he noted, the two appointments give an individual sufficient time to explore tenure-track options at other institutions. Some faculty spouses/partners have ended up moving into such positions, he noted. At the conclusion of the conversation, the Dean thanked the members for helping to think through this complex issue.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Umphrey returned to the Dean's suggestion that he might propose to the Board that the FTE count be raised to account for the faculty FTEs currently devoted to administrative responsibilities. Given that he may use some of those FTEs creatively vis-a-vis long-term visitors, she urged him to consider using the rest, or some portion of it, for course release for faculty members serving on or chairing major committees, and perhaps chairs of large departments. Professor Umphrey noted that at present, there is little College recognition of the extra burdens placed on faculty who serve in these ways, and that Amherst's approach to committee service is an exception to common practice in this regard. Professor Basu agreed and pointed out that the workload for faculty in these roles has increased significantly over time. She suggested that a discussion of this issue be placed on the Committee of Six's agenda, while recognizing that this topic might be considered as part of the long-range planning process, as well. Professor Ratner wondered whether this might be a moment, with the upcoming addition of the Provost to the administration, to consider whether the responsibilities of the Committee of Six should be divided between two committees, with one committee serving as the tenure and promotion committee and the other assuming the other duties of the executive committee of the Faculty. Perhaps the Provost could be an ex officio member of the latter of these two committees, he said.

The Committee next reviewed a draft of a Faculty Meeting agenda for March 6. The members agreed that there was not sufficient business to have a meeting. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty