

The nineteenth 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, January 28, 2008. Present were Professors Frank, S. George, Jagannathan, O'Hara, Servos, and Sinos, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

President Marx began the meeting by expressing his great sorrow over the death of Jenny Kim '08, and the Dean and the members also spoke of their sadness over this tragic loss. President Marx noted that a group of students, faculty, and staff had gathered to share their thoughts about Jenny at an informal service that was held in Johnson Chapel after the news of her death was shared with the community, and again the next day at the President's house. A memorial service on campus is being planned and will take place on February 9, the President said. He noted that College counselors and religious advisors are available to talk with students in dorm meetings and at extended drop-in hours in coming weeks. Professor Servos asked whether the services provided by the Dean of Students office are reduced in any way during Interterm, questioning, in particular, whether the Counseling Center is fully operational during this period. Dean Call said that he believed that services continue to be provided during Interterm and agreed to confirm with the Dean of Students office whether this is indeed the case. The Committee also discussed possible ways for the College to honor Jenny's memory.

President Marx informed the members that a search committee is now in place for the position of Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion. Professor Ron Lembo will chair the committee, the members of which will include Professors Rhonda Cobham-Sander, who will be stepping down as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity at the end of this academic year, and David Cox; Demisha Lee, Associate Dean of Admission; Peter Shea, Treasurer; Barbara St. Onge, Manager of OAS/Mailing Center and Support Services; and Rylan Burns '09 and Catherine Chen '08.

The President next discussed with the members possible business for a Faculty Meeting early in this semester, noting that the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR) has asked him to update the Faculty about progress that is being made on implementing the recommendations of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP), as well as associated fundraising. In regard to the campaign, President Marx said that he anticipates that the goal will be between \$400 and \$425 million.

President Marx informed the members that the results of fundraising efforts during the early phase of the campaign have been heartening and noted that the Board, at its meetings the previous weekend, had reiterated their support for implementing all of the recommendations of the CAP. The President noted that the Trustees had agreed to accelerate the schedule for phasing in new FTEs, in order to increase the size of the Faculty more rapidly than originally imagined, and to keep pace with the growth of the student body. He said that he anticipates that the Board would vote at its next meeting in April to implement 100 percent sabbaticals for the Faculty in 2009-2010 and need-blind admission for international students. Further, the Trustees have informed him that they would be responsive to considering additional needs that might emerge during the implementation of the CAP recommendations. He offered as an example, resources, including additional FTEs beyond the eighteen that the Board has already agreed to fund, that might be allocated to enhance the First-Year Seminar Program. While fundraising efforts thus

far have been very encouraging, President Marx said that optimism should be tempered with caution in light of the state of the economy, which is unpredictable.

Returning to the subject of the First-Year Seminar Program, the President said that Dean Griffiths and the First-Year Seminar Committee have found that, over the past several years, it has become more difficult to recruit the number of faculty members needed to teach these seminars. The First-Year Seminar Committee, in its memo (appended) of January 21, 2008, to the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the Committee of Six, expressed the view that the program is “not sustainable in its current form,” citing the lack of a clearly articulated mission, the impending retirements within a core group of faculty members who have taught the seminars, and the difficulty of recruiting tenure-track professors to teach the seminars because of a lack of clarity about the benefits to them of doing so.

Professor Servos expressed excitement and enthusiasm in response to the President’s remarks regarding the forward movement on the CAP implementation front and the fundraising success so far. Professor Frank agreed that the news was very promising and asked whether there were plans to address the needs of the Arms Music Center. Dean Call replied that the building would undergo modest renovations this summer to address immediate needs, and that Arms would be considered as part of the academic facilities study, which will include an assessment of all academic facilities on campus. Dean Call said that an update on the academic facilities study would be given at the next Faculty Meeting. President Marx commented that a coherent process for prioritizing facilities needs will be essential moving forward, since only a limited number of facilities projects can and should be undertaken simultaneously.

Professor O’Hara asked the President if consideration has been given to how College facilities, as well as services, might enable Amherst College to contribute to the local community. President Marx, who said that this is an issue that he takes very seriously, responded that the revitalization of the Mead and the Dickinson Homestead and Amherst’s new natural history museum have already benefited the community greatly. He noted that the College’s investment in the Amherst Cinema and the upcoming renovation of the Lord Jeffery Inn are efforts to invigorate the local economy. President Marx informed the members that he has been working closely with Amherst’s Town Manager to develop ideas about ways to bring additional economic development to the town, thereby increasing revenues for the public schools. In addition, the President commented, the College’s new Center for Community Engagement has been designed to benefit the local community by providing local non-profit organizations, including the Amherst public schools, with much needed student-volunteers. Finally, the President said that the College, for the first time, has agreed to make a gift to the town to cover the costs of fire and ambulance services. In all these ways, Amherst is making efforts to be a good citizen of the town, and the President said that he will continue to explore ways to collaborate with local officials on the town’s behalf. Dean Call noted that the local community has responded very positively to Amherst College Portraits, the collaborative public art project sponsored by the College. It was also noted that the Frost Library serves local residents, as well as the College community.

In regard to the Frost, Dean Call noted that, at its meeting, the Board expressed support for the ongoing planning efforts to revitalize the library. He noted that two arms of the same

consulting firm (Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott) have been selected, through independent processes, to work as consultants with the Library Planning Committee and to the academic facilities study. Professors Sinos and Servos asked about the consultative process that would be used to make decisions along the way about these critical projects and inquired about the ways in which input from the Amherst community will be solicited and acted upon. The Dean said that an update on the work of both the Library Planning Committee and the larger academic planning effort will be provided at the next Faculty Meeting and that the Library Planning Committee would soon be contacting members of the Amherst community to solicit thoughts and responses. As these planning processes progress, the community will be consulted regularly, and there will be a continuing series of updates, Dean Call said. He informed the members that the planning for the renovation of the Frost and of Merrill would be substantial and should take between eighteen months and two years. Professor George asked if the branch libraries would be part of the library renovation project. The Dean said that issues surrounding the science, math, and music libraries are being considered as part of the library planning process, and that these “branch” libraries will be part of the ongoing discussion. The President said that much remains to be done before a library renovation moves forward, and he stressed that a period of intensive and thorough evaluation, planning, and decision-making must serve as the foundation of this very important and complex project.

The President noted that, in addition to the updates on the Library planning and academic facility planning processes, he hopes that the next Faculty Meeting would include progress reports by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the CPR. Professor Jagannathan noted that it is unusual to have a Faculty Meeting when motions are not being brought before the Faculty. President Marx stressed the importance of having a meeting soon, in order to foster communication regarding important matters. The Committee agreed that a Faculty Meeting should be held on February 19 and that the agenda should include the progress reports, which had just been discussed, to be made by the President and various committees, as well as a report on the next steps in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) reaccreditation process. It was noted that the NEASC evaluation team will be on campus March 2-5. The Committee agreed to discuss the specifics of the agenda at its next meeting.

The Dean next made a series of announcements. He noted that the Board has approved an enhancement to the phased retirement program that will be implemented in tandem with a program of faculty bridge appointments. The bridge appointments will be funded with a grant of \$860,000 from the Mellon Foundation over a period of four years. Dean Call said that he would soon be sending a letter to the Faculty that would outline the new program, which will provide new ways to encourage departments to plan for their futures, including the possibility of having new colleagues overlap for several years with senior members of the department who have entered the phased retirement program. Professor Frank asked if it would be typical, under the new program, for colleagues who are retiring to participate in the search for their successors. The Dean said that the degree to which retiring colleagues participate would depend on departmental practice and culture. He noted that a retiring colleague generally consults with his or her department, and that they determine together how the retiring colleague can be most useful in the search. Professor Jagannathan expressed concern that having a senior colleague play a

Amended February 14, 2008

substantial role in the search for his or her successor could lead to many difficulties. Professor Servos agreed and said that he believes that some institutions do not allow this practice. Professor Sinos commented that having the participation of the retiring colleague, who would be most knowledgeable about his or her field, might sometimes be essential for small departments. Professor George expressed the view that there are different levels of involvement, and perhaps the retiring colleague could assist with recruitment, while not participating in the selection process. President Marx noted that, in the case of small departments, colleagues from outside the department are often brought in to participate in personnel matters. He wondered whether this procedure could be followed for searches for bridge appointments, as well, perhaps in both small and larger departments, as a means of bringing in additional perspectives, including interdisciplinary ones.

The Dean next informed the members that the Health Professions Committee has agreed to relieve some of the burden of the Student Fellowships Committee by taking on, as a regular part of their charge, the review of Amherst's applications for Goldwater and Churchill fellowships. The Committee of Six agreed that this would be a useful change. The Committee turned briefly to personnel matters. At the conclusion of that discussion, Dean Call asked the members for their preference regarding a meeting time for the spring semester, and it was agreed that the Committee would meet from 3:30 to 6:00 on Mondays.

The members returned to the topic of the report of the First-Year Seminar Committee. Professor Servos said that, while he appreciated the need to look ahead, he does not understand the committee's sense of urgency about what is described as the declining state of the First-Year Seminars. Professor Jagannathan agreed that the program does not seem to be in any immediate jeopardy. The Committee discussed the fact that many of the criteria that were established initially to define what would constitute a First-Year Seminar have faded away. It was noted that these seminars are often no longer taught by faculty from at least two disciplines, as was originally envisioned. They can now count toward the requirements for a major. In short, there seem to be no defining characteristics other than having each faculty member teach fifteen first-year students per seminar.

President Marx said he feels that it would be useful to re-evaluate the only requirement that Amherst has for all students, particularly at a moment when more resources may be available to support a revised program. In his view, it would be worth debating whether Amherst students should have some commonality of academic experience during their first year, which might be accomplished by assigning a common book or readings for all seminars or by focusing on a shared theme for part of the semester. Professor Servos expressed concern about moving the program in the direction of uniformity. He agreed that the seminar program should be better organized and better defined, while expressing the view that there is value in the diverse nature of the seminars as a means of meeting a variety of student needs. The Committee agreed that the First-Year Seminars should be examined in the context of the first-year experience and the overall College experience and that specific recommendations to improve the program should be offered. After discussing whether the First-Year Seminar Committee should undertake this assignment, the Committee asked the Dean and the President to consult with the CEP and to

prepare a list of names of colleagues, be they members of the committee or not, who might be asked to consider ways to enhance the program.

President Marx next asked the members if they thought that the issue, which has been raised by students, of the diversity of political views represented within the Faculty, should be brought before the Faculty for discussion. Professor Servos, noting that, as a faculty member, he has found that Amherst is a place that is, generally, very tolerant of individuals' views, said that he does not think that this is an urgent issue. Other members commented that individual faculty members' political views are not even known, often, and that it would be difficult to define what a proper balance might be, though it was agreed that there is value in having a range of perspectives represented within the Faculty. In respect to the feelings expressed by some students that their political views are not being respected by faculty and other students, the Committee agreed that every student has the right to express his or her beliefs and opinions and to be treated with respect, as articulated in the College's Statement on Freedom of Expression and Dissent (voted by the Faculty, 1968) and Statement on Respect For Persons (voted by the Faculty, 1969).

The President thanked the members and reiterated both his firm view that a political litmus test not be applied to the process of faculty hiring, as well as his hope that ways might be found to encourage departments, when they make hires, to consider the aim of having a range of perspectives represented by their members.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty

AMHERST COLLEGE

January 21, 2008

To: The Committee on Education Policy and the Committee of Six From: The First Year Seminar Committee,

Buffy Aries (chair)
Jyl Gentzler
Ethan Temeles
Rick Griffiths (ex officio)

We recommend that the CEP lead the faculty in a reconsideration of the FYS program, which is not sustainable in its current form.

The CAP report made no recommendations on the FYS program beyond charging the CEP and the FYS Committee to consider the program further (p. 26). Working in an anomalous period of high voluntarism (40+ per year; 29-30 are needed), the CAP did not anticipate how vulnerable FYS recruitment might be to other CAP initiatives or how quickly a generation of FYS stalwarts might retire. In recruiting for 2008, we are grappling with a shortfall that is likely to grow worse over time for the following reasons:

- **A demographic cliff.** The core group of FYS volunteers formed under the Introduction to Liberal Studies (I.L.S.) program (1978-96) is retiring; a fifth of the 2005 staff have gone on full or phased retirement. Since 1998 almost a quarter of the seminars have been taught by seven individuals, all of whom will be as of fall 2008 either retired or, with one exception, over age 65. Compared to this senior group, overall participation is thin. Only one-sixth of the whole faculty has taught more than once in the last five years; another one-sixth has taught one time. While FYS has steadily been invigorated by newcomers, they can rarely manage more than sporadic participation.

- **Mixed signals to untenured faculty.** Over the last decade, fewer than one-tenth of sections have been taught by untenured faculty. Apparently no one-administrators, Committees of Six, FYS Committees-can or will say whether it's meritorious or foolish for an assistant professor to teach a FYS. As a result, the FYS Committee in recent years has not recruited actively in these ranks. How can we advocate to junior colleagues, given the pressures they face, a program without a 'mission'?

- **CAP initiatives.** FYS supporters have been pivotal in developing new ventures: the writing-intensive courses (English 01 and Philosophy 01), Biology/Chemistry 03, and Environmental Studies. FYS can expect further competition from CAP-proposed courses (writing / Q / arts / global / interdisciplinary), for which departments can receive fractional FTEs, while FYS remains a staffing liability. Along the same lines, departments are making staffing-intensive efforts to bolster students' writing/research skills (e.g., the new required mid-level seminars in Psychology; the required senior

projects in UST). We're not guessing here; colleagues tell us what courses they are teaching instead of FYS.

There is a fourth issue that has been with us from the start of FYS:

- Any 30 will do. Our committee does not have a charge or any authority to select among proposed courses, even if we had a surplus of volunteers. FYS has no mission for us to interpret. In most years the committee struggles to keep science and the arts from being completely unrepresented—usually managing at most one seminar by a practicing artist but otherwise takes what is offered. As a result, the seminar options represent liberal studies at Amherst in lopsided ways: Students have had little chance to study with a musician (1 section since 1998), a mathematician (2), economist (3), geologist (3), chemist (4), computer scientist (5), or physicist (6). Students have a better chance to work with someone in Theater and Dance (10), Biology (11), Art and Art History (12, but no one in studio), Psychology (14), Political Science (17), Anthro/Soc (25), English (29), or History (56).

We hasten to point out that the seminars, despite the difficult prospects for 2008 and after, have been alive and well this past fall. In December we talked with current instructors (24 of 31), who were enthusiastic about the program and about the current crop of students, though concerned about the stragglers and about students with ESL difficulties. In the context of many necessarily large courses for first-year students,¹ a section with only fifteen students can play an important role for beginning students. The seminars, especially in their discussion-based pedagogy, seem to be well appreciated. In a 2005 COME survey of all enrolled students, 66 percent agreed that they would encourage other students to enroll in an FYS course, even if it weren't required. In a spring 2006 inventory of best practices,² four-fifths of first-years found that their seminar had been intellectually engaging. First-year seminars have gained popularity among our peer institutions, who often envy Amherst's ability to provide seminars for all students (see the appendix).

Those who have heard these annual discussions of FYS instructors over the last five years also noted in December a growing distance between colleagues who strongly feel that the seminars should all become writing-attentive and those who will leave the program if that happens. The staffing shortages in most departments, especially in addressing writing skills, have sharpened criticism of FYS as a missed opportunity, with particular complaints from departments (natural sciences, Math/CS, Psychology) that have to deal with the writing-avoiders as seniors. The

¹ In the fall of 2007, one course with 164 students had 90 first-years; one with 113 students had 72; and another with 93 students had 45.

² The inventory can be found on the FYS Committee page on the Dean of the Faculty's site: https://cms.amherst.edu/academiclife/dean_faculty/faccolnmittees/fvsccommittee

newly explicit FYS brochure for incoming students makes clear that not all seminars aim to teach writing, but the complaints persist from students who feel cheated if their seminar doesn't help their writing. This is a familiar issue: Of students (all four years) surveyed in the spring of 2005, 56 percent found that FYS has not helped their writing; about the same number could not see how FYS provides an introduction to college study different from other courses. In the 2006 inventory of best practices in teaching FYS, writing skills were the area where students had the highest expectations and where reality lagged by the largest degree. That inventory showed the large disparity between a cluster of high-rated and low-rated courses, with 15 percent of the students in the high-rated seminars saying that the class did not help their writing; in the low-rated courses, 55 percent said that.

In all, the writing-attentive FYS issue that the CAP declined to resolve seems to be heating up, especially while other college-wide solutions have not yet emerged. Meanwhile, the rationale of not wanting to tamper with the FYS volunteer base fades as that base shrinks.

Seeking alternatives, we have looked at FYS programs in peer institutions.³ None strives for a common theme among all seminars, but two commonalities emerge:

- Either the seminars have a writing or research requirement (some of them with a speaking component as well) or there is a writing requirement that can be fulfilled otherwise (with most seminars being writing-intensive in any case). Amherst is the only school without a writing requirement either in the FYS program or elsewhere.
- All programs have faculty or administrative oversight. Some have regular programs to train faculty to teach the seminars.

As the appendix reveals, there are many permutations in the programs tied to the structure of other graduation requirements. Swarthmore is relatively casual about the seminars (not required of students—though 90 percent take them—and not required to be writing courses), but students are otherwise required to take three writing-intensive courses. At Grinnell, the First Year Tutorial is the only required course, as at Amherst, but with highly specific expectations for what the courses will accomplish, including independent research. Grinnell merits special attention, since the tutorials are the basis of the advising system and of incorporating new faculty into the college; nobody gets tenure without teaching one, and the evaluations of the seminars also address the advising system.

The extent of *laissez faire* in our FYS program is not only unique among peer schools, it is unique at Amherst. The seminars are outside of the regulatory mechanisms and peer pressures within departments that maintain the quality and appropriateness of courses in the context of our increasingly structured majors. Functioning in the place of a department, the FYS Committee sends courses forward for approval, but is also the only standing faculty committee without a charge. The committee lacks any powers to set standards, establish policy, avoid redundancy, or

³ Bowdoin, Carleton, Dartmouth, Grinnell, Pomona, Smith, Swarthmore, Trinity, Wesleyan, and Williams. Grinnell, Smith, and Wesleyan have open curricula. See the appendix.

address what we know (from the 2006 inventory and persistent reports from students) to be striking disparities among seminars in workload, interest, and perceived learning. Last year the FYS committee could not sustain its proposal to keep some seminars from counting toward majors while others do not. Even though FYS is our only required course (and students, once enrolled, can't vote with their feet), the seminars are the courses with least accountability.

That lack of accountability is part of their appeal to instructors, who often want to get outside of the constraints of department courses (including the pressure to teach large numbers of students). Many make brilliant use of that freedom. There are suspicions that others just seek a captive audience. Whatever the case, the seminars are untouchable in ways that no other Amherst courses are.

What is to be done? Much is contingent on how Amherst addresses the skills issues. Requiring "W" courses might alleviate the writing expectations for FYS, but would probably drain FYS staffing further and further isolate FYS as an amorphous program with unclear objectives. We have only parts of solutions to recommend:

- **Rationalize departments' contributions to the program.** The 7.5 FTEs devoted to the program every year are not charity, but a college resource and, a part of departments' individual missions- a variable part, but one not impossible to determine or negotiate. The current system of voluntarism allows committed colleagues to teach the seminars, but regularly shuts out equally interested colleagues in departments who can't spare them for FYS. (The 10 least-participating departments fielded a total of 34 sections in the last ten years; that is 1/3 of Amherst departments contribute just over 1/10 of the sections.) There are various models of attaching seminars to departments. At Dartmouth, the required (and writing-intensive) seminars are taught in departments, but not counted toward major credit. At Swarthmore, which has several other requirements, the seminars count toward majors and easily recruit faculty since, for example, scientists can use them to teach fast-track introductions into their fields and the humanists can use them to attract students into their disciplines. At Grinnell, all departments are required to teach them.
- **Resolve the implications of FYS for untenured faculty.** We keep these faculty in the dark about whether the savvy assistant prof will teach FYS or to steer clear. Pomona uses the program as a way to introduce new faculty into teaching at the college by letting them join the 2% day training workshop and consultation provided to all FYS teachers at the end of the spring semester. As mentioned, Grinnell has an active training program and requires all untenured faculty to participate. See below for details.
- **Clarify the objectives of the program and give someone-the FYS Committee, the CEP, a dean-some authority to screen courses, look for a balanced range of offerings, and monitor the overall effectiveness of the program.** We're not going to get away forever with "nobody in charge" when FYS has the considerable symbolic weight of being our only required course and the only one that students can't switch. If we can't agree on a writing requirement, then it might be reasonable to make the seminars all "W" or at least require that they all be labeled "W", "A" (arts), or "Q".

Appendix: First-Year Seminar Programs at Peer Institutions

Compiled by Nancy Ratner

Bowdoin College

Bowdoin has been offering first-year seminars to all students since 2005, although not all students are guaranteed a seminar during their first semester. Those who fail to get admitted to a seminar in the fall are guaranteed a seminar in the spring, and some students manage to take more than one seminar during their first year. The seminars are limited to 16 students and are designed to ground first-year students in the fundamentals of research, academic writing, public speaking, critical reading and analysis, all within a discipline. They all share the common goal of teaching writing, and all adhere to a few rough guidelines in that respect. For example, the instructors agree to offer 4 papers with some structure allowing for revisions; the actual form is flexible and can include multiple drafts, work-in-progress conversations, or other methods. Students can receive major credit for many of the first-year seminars. Recruitment of instructors this year is in the hands of a visiting assistant professor (David Hecht), who is in his second year at the college. He does not believe Bowdoin has had any difficulty recruiting faculty to teach in the program in the past.

Carleton College

Students are required to take at least one "writing rich" (WR) course and to submit a portfolio of essays. One-third of their courses must also be "distributional," that is, distributed among courses marked "humanities," "social science," and the like.

At the moment, first-year students have a choice of special courses that enroll only first-year students and limit enrollment. Students can take more than one during their first year but only one per term (with the exception of courses linked in pairs and triplets). Students choose between writing seminars, first-year seminars (11 of the 18 current courses are "writing rich"), introductory courses reserved for first-year students, courses in pairs and triplets, and an interdisciplinary science program that has a 3-course sequence (students take one course per term and a colloquium that meets all year long). These are basically clusters of seminars around quantitative reasoning, writing, and cross-cultural understanding, although almost all are writing-intensive. There are no other common themes.

Elizabeth Ciner, Associate Dean of the College and Professor of English, oversees the program. She says that the college is engaged in a curriculum review, which is likely to change the way the seminars are offered, advertised, and staffed. Currently every department contributes a seminar to the program. In the future, every department will have responsibility for providing seminars based on the number of faculty in the department. Small departments might only provide a seminar once every two years. She anticipates trading of credits as well.

Grinnell College

Grinnell requires a First-Year Tutorial, a one-semester, four-credit seminar program, which gives each first-year student the opportunity to work in a small group with the tutorial professor on a topic of mutual interest. Although not all Tutorial sections progress in exactly the same way, most include an introduction to college-level writing, oral presentation and discussion, critical analysis, and information literacy. Students then undertake independent study of the tutorial topic, working individually or in small groups and meeting regularly with the professor in and out of class.

As the first ongoing relationship between student and professor, the tutorial guarantees that from the beginning each student knows at least one professor well. The tutorial professor also serves as the student's academic advisor until a major is declared. Because the tutorial is limited to 12-13 students, the tutorial professor contributes to a close student-advisor relationship, which has been the basis of Grinnell's academic advising system for more than 30 years.

Each year, faculty members from all departments offer more than 30 tutorials on different topics, allowing students to choose a subject that interests them.

They work from the following specific guidelines:

1. All tutors will submit a short written description of the topic for approval by the Dean or Associate Dean of the College towards the end of the Spring semester.
2. Each tutor will require the equivalent of at least four formal pieces of written work. To promote an understanding of writing as a process, one or more of these assignments may include the preparation of drafts, revisions, outlines, etc. The tutor will also provide classroom opportunities for the development of oral expression of ideas. Some tutors may include a research component, but this is not required.
3. It is the responsibility of tutors to work with librarians to make sure tutees receive instruction in information literacy appropriate to the goals of the tutorial. If the tutorial contains a research component, instruction may focus on resources, both print and electronic; if there is not a research component, librarians may suggest other useful ways to introduce students to basic information literacy. Instruction may take place during one session or in briefer multiple segments over two or more sessions.
4. It is the responsibility of tutors to make sure that their tutees have discussed the rules for proper citation and for paraphrase and that they practice applying these rules in their written work. Tutors may use exercises on proper citation and paraphrasing approved by the Subcommittee on Academic Honesty of the Committee on Academic Standing or they may incorporate such practice in their own writing assignments for the tutorial in order to satisfy this requirement. Tutors must place in each student's file either the completed exercise or a note stating that the student has practiced applying rules for proper citation and paraphrasing.
5. It is exceptionally rare for students to be permitted to change from one tutorial to another. Such changes are permitted only within the first two weeks of classes and only with the permission of the Director of Academic Advising and the new tutor.

Grading:

A student must complete the tutorial with a grade of C or higher to meet the tutorial graduation requirement. Any student earning a grade of D or F in the tutorial will be automatically placed on probation. Students earning a grade of D or F in the tutorial will be required to complete an appropriate course determined by the Associate Dean and the Director of Academic Advising in order to fulfill the tutorial requirement. This course must be completed with a grade of C or higher during his or her next semester at Grinnell. After the completion of this course and removal from probation, the student will be eligible for a "Plus-2" or independent study project (297, 397, 399).

Endorsed by the Grinnell College faculty April 19, 2003

Pomona College

First-year students all take a critical inquiry seminar, an interdisciplinary seminar limited to 15 students, based on the same principles as Amherst's FYS but with an emphasis on writing in the disciplines. All meet at the same time each week (a time reserved every day from 11-12 for public lectures and first-year seminars). Dara Regaignon, English department (and Amherst graduate), runs the program.

Faculty recruitment is managed through a formula that requires departments to contribute a particular number of seminars, based on the number of faculty in the department. All seminars are now taught by tenure-line faculty (a change from some years ago). Small departments might only provide courses every two years.

This is a relatively new undertaking. Previously, all students took a writing placement exam and then, based on the result, took a writing course. In 2004 Pomona abandoned the placement exam and writing course and hired Dara to oversee this program of seminars. She provides a 2 % day workshop a few days after graduation which nearly all faculty teaching in the program attend (\$1000 stipend for attending). The workshop focuses on teaching writing for at least one of the two days. New faculty are encouraged to teach in the program and are flown in for the workshop which then serves as an orientation for new faculty and an informal way to begin meeting colleagues outside their discipline. (Dara notes that the workshop's timing, right after the end of classes, seems to attract faculty, who are eager to think and talk about educational issues.) She offers another workshop in late January for people new to the program to work on course development and on writing course descriptions. Dara also offers 3-to-4 workshops in the fall semester to discuss particular issues and strategies. And she is also available during the year for one-on-one consultations.

The faculty teaching in the program rely on a set of course guidelines (core parameters -- 25 pages of graded writing, discussion-based class, etc.), to which they all agree at the beginning of the semester. They also agree to a set of goals for the courses (feedback for writing, revision opportunities, etc.). This is now the only writing-intensive course requirement, but Dara believes other courses are becoming more writing intensive as a result.

Smith College

Smith offers about 10 seminars each fall, which are open only to first-year students, all limited in size and some interdisciplinary. Class size varies from 14 to 20 students. The seminars for first-years focus on the development of writing, public speaking, critical thinking, class discussion, group work, library and quantitative skills. Most also satisfy the college's first-year writing-intensive requirement and some offer credit towards the major. At the moment they can serve about half the class. They hope, three years hence, to be able to offer enough for about 90% of the students - not enough to make it a requirement, however. Tom Riddell, dean of the first-year class, oversees the program, but solicitations for teaching come from the Provost and Dean of the Faculty. All courses at Smith are evaluated, including the seminars, and the results go to the Dean of the College, who shares the evaluations with the faculty member and the department of the faculty member. The evaluations are maintained in a file in the Dean of the Faculty's office.

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore has a first-year seminar program that is not required for all new students. (All but 29 students took one last year, and those who did not tended to be students who had not received their first choice of seminar). The seminars are limited to 12 students per class and focused on developing constructive participation and effective communication skills. Students are required to take three writing ("W") seminars.

Swarthmore has not had difficulty recruiting instructors. This may be in part because depart twents have been allowed to design the first-year seminar program for purposes that meet widely varying needs. Most humanities seminars are writing -intensive, about a third of the social science seminars are also, but none of the science seminars are. Many departments use the first-year seminar as an alternative entry into the department in order to allow participation without detracting from the department's ability to cover core courses and sequences. Unlike the humanities and social sciences, the science departments have developed small first year seminars to serve the needs of their most advanced students. They function at a much faster pace and more advanced level than the regular intro-level courses.

The provost office has been collecting, but not reviewing teaching evaluations for both the first year seminar program and the writing courses. Lisa Smulyan (faculty member) is chairing the committee that is evaluating both the seminar program and the writing program, both of which are undergoing a fouryear review (required by the enabling legislation). She plans to review the teaching evaluation materials, with the help of a social scientist who is currently analyzing the responses, in an attempt to learn whether the programs are meeting their intended goals.

Lisa noted that the programs were initially implemented in as flexible a way as possible, to encourage participation, and anticipates that they may wish to tighten their criteria, especially for "writing-intensive" courses, once they have clarified the program goals. She expects to have more information to share in June.

Trinity College

The First-Year Seminars are academically rigorous, designed to introduce new students to the critical analysis, writing skills, and workload that Trinity demands from all of its students. Discussion and debate are a standard part of the First-Year Seminar, as are exploring similar topics from various disciplines. As first-year students acclimate themselves to Trinity's academic demands, they also learn to navigate Trinity's academic resources. Through their seminar, students are introduced to the Computing, Mathematics, and Writing Centers, and the research opportunities available in and through the library.

Trinity has a writing-proficiency requirement. A faculty committee reviews all entering first-year students and may require some to take English 101, Writing, a college-level introduction to the art of expository writing. The program is administered by the Director and Acting Dean of the First Year Program.

Wesleyan University

Wesleyan offers a First Year Initiative - seminars with limited enrollment (-20 students). These seminars, which are not required of all students, are focused on writing, analyzing, discussing, and critical thinking. Williams College

Williams offers a First-Year Residential Seminar (FRS) in which students in a single entry of first-year housing agree to take one course in the fall semester jointly with the other entry members. The course is designed to confront students with important and provocative concepts and questions and to stimulate lively and productive discussions. This mixing of the social and academic lives of the FRS participants is intended to help students establish comfortable and meaningful relationships with both classmates and professors during their first year, and to give them the opportunity to integrate intellectual interests with the rest of their pursuits. If oversubscribed, FRS participants are randomly selected. Williams students must complete two "writing-intensive" ("WI") courses.