

Amended May 19, 2008

The twenty-eighth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2007-2008 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, May 5, 2008. Present were Professors Frank, S. George, Jagannathan, O'Hara, Servos, and Sinos, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

Under "Announcements from the President," President Marx began the meeting by noting, with sorrow, the passing of Douglas C. Wilson '62, longtime public affairs officer and editor at the College, who died May 5. The members and the Dean expressed their sadness at Mr. Wilson's loss.

The President informed the members that he plans to share with the Faculty at the May 6 Faculty Meeting that, as an experiment, the Labor Day Faculty Meeting will be held this fall in Johnson Chapel, soon after Convocation concludes. The meeting will be brief and will focus on approving new courses and, if time permits, introducing new faculty members. Several weeks later, another Faculty Meeting will be held (in Cole Assembly Room) with a full agenda. The members agreed that this plan should be implemented to free up the morning of Labor Day. It was decided that this year's Committee of Six will approve the agenda for the Labor Day Faculty Meeting, since the Labor Day-morning Committee of Six meeting would no longer be held.

Under "Announcements from the Dean," Dean Call informed the members that, in addition to appointing Professor Courtright Associate Dean of the Faculty, he has appointed Professor Cheney to the same position. Both of the new Associate Deans, who will have half-time appointments, will begin on July 1, 2008. Professor Basu will continue as Associate Dean, half-time, as well. Dean Basu will continue to lead the Teaching and Advising Program and to assist with the coordination of the Copeland Colloquium. She will also take on an oversight role for issues surrounding study abroad and academic credit and campus-wide facilities planning. Professor Cheney's responsibilities will revolve around planning for the renovation of the Merrill Science Center, athletics, and information technology. Professor Courtright will focus her work on the library planning process, the Arts, and the First-Year Seminar Program. The members turned briefly to a personnel matter.

The Dean distributed to the members two letters (appended) from colleagues. The first, a response on behalf of the Faculty Computing Committee to Professor Kaplan's question (raised in a letter appended to the Committee of Six minutes of January 29, 2007) about the potential loss of anonymity when faculty elections are conducted electronically, was written by Professor L. McGeoch, chair of the committee. The Committee was satisfied with the information provided by Professor McGeoch in his response. The second letter, which was written by Elizabeth Barker, Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum, outlines plans to regularize and expand the Mead's oversight bodies. These changes emerged from the museum's accreditation process, the Dean noted. Professor Servos expressed support for the changes, and the other members agreed that the plans seem well conceived. The Dean next discussed with the members a cooperation agreement between the University of Barcelona (Spain) and the College for the purpose of securing one teaching assistant a year from the University of Barcelona to teach at Amherst. Professor O'Hara asked if there are similar agreements with other foreign institutions that have been developed for this purpose. The Dean said that the College has

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longstanding arrangements to bring teaching assistants from France and Germany to Amherst each year.

Continuing with his announcements, the Dean shared with the members the following proposed changes (which are indicated in bold caps) to the *Faculty Handbook* (III, H., 1.):

Leave Policy, Fellowships, Research and Professional Support

1. Sabbatic Leaves and Leaves of Absence

Amherst College gives great weight to the continuing scholarly growth of faculty members **IN SUPPORT OF ITS MISSION TO EXPAND THE REALM OF KNOWLEDGE AND TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF INSTRUCTION IN THE LIBERAL ARTS.** Research, publication, and creative work are considered important indications of such growth. The College's sabbatic leave program is designed to provide time for research, study, writing, or other creative work contributing to the professional growth and effectiveness of the faculty member as a scholar and teacher. **THE COLLEGE RECOGNIZES THAT THE CONTINUED SCHOLARLY GROWTH OF OUR FACULTY PLAYS A VITAL PART IN THE EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS OF THE COLLEGE AND THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF ITS STUDENTS.**

The Dean noted that this language was developed to provide a fuller description of the already-defined purpose of sabbatic leaves at the College, in order to satisfy financial reporting requirements, as defined by the Financial Accounting Standards Board. Since the new language is descriptive of the philosophical underpinnings of current policy, it does not require a vote of the Faculty. The members agreed that the new language should be incorporated into the *Faculty Handbook*.

The members next reviewed seventeen course proposals and voted to forward them to the Faculty. The Committee noted that a large number of faculty members seem to prefer twice-a-week time slots for their courses, while recognizing that this structure does not work well for languages and the sciences, in most cases. As a result, Amherst's course schedule can make it challenging for students to take courses across disciplines. President Marx reiterated his desire for the Committee to examine the problem of course-bunching and scheduling. He noted that he has asked his colleagues to gather data to inform such a discussion. The Dean noted that he is interested in considering ways to develop additional twice-a-week slots as a way of lessening the problem of bunching. Professor Sinos noted that the twice-a-week schedule can be challenging in terms of workload for faculty and students. Professor Frank said that such a schedule is particularly desirable for faculty members who commute long distances.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor George asked the President for his views about the Massachusetts House of Representatives' recent discussion, which occurred during debate over the state's budget for the 2009 fiscal year, about imposing a 2.5 percent tax

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on assets exceeding \$1 billion in any college's endowment. The President first noted that this idea did not win approval; in the end, the House of Representatives decided to ask the Massachusetts Department of Revenue to study the proposal. However, it is clear from the efforts at the federal level of Senators Grassley and Baucus (who led recent efforts to direct 136 colleges with endowments over \$500 million, including Amherst, to report on how they were spending those funds) the President said, that this is a moment of increased public scrutiny about how educational institutions—particularly those with significant resources—spend those resources.

Dean Call reported that, at the invitation of the College Council, he had joined their meeting on May 1 to discuss the Council's recommendation regarding the College calendar for 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012. The Dean said that the College Council is considering whether to make a new proposal for Fall 2009, in light of concerns that the proposed schedule in Fall 2009 includes examinations through December 23. Whatever the decision, it is essential that a calendar for 2009-2010 be approved at the Commencement Faculty Meeting.

The Committee returned to a discussion of committee assignments and re-structuring. Professors Sinos and Frank argued that the faculty Housing Committee plays an important role in representing the Faculty and should be retained, rather than having its responsibilities incorporated into the charge of the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR). Professor O'Hara pointed out that other benefits are frequently considered by the CPR and that it might be useful to consider housing questions in the context of other faculty benefits. Dean Call reiterated his view that the interests of the Faculty would be best served if housing issues fell under the purview of the CPR. Professor George suggested that individuals who live in College housing elect a representative, who could communicate the special interests of this constituency to the CPR. Professor Frank said that it is particularly important to have a Housing Committee right now, when the College does not have an administrator to oversee the Housing Office. It was agreed that the Housing Committee should remain intact for 2008-2009, and that its members should be asked to make a recommendation about the future of the committee. President Marx reiterated the College's commitment to faculty housing and noted that, until a new housing director is hired, housing will be overseen by Jim Brassord, Director of Facilities and Associate Treasurer for Campus Services, to whom the future housing director will report.

In the context of the conversation about the possible re-structuring of committees, President Marx conveyed to the members the need to designate a committee to consider proxy voting and shareholder responsibilities. Committees that might be considered include the Committee on Honorary Degrees or the CPR. The members felt that the CPR would be the best body to consult on such issues. The President thanked the Committee for their advice.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call  
Dean of the Faculty

AMHERST COLLEGE  
Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

The Committee of Six  
c/o Dean Greg Call  
Dean of Faculty  
Amherst College

May 1, 2008

To the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Faculty Computing Committee about an issue that was referred to us by last year's Committee of Six. Please accept my apology for the length of time it has taken us to respond.

Professor Scott Kaplan wrote to the Committee of Six to express his concern about the potential loss of anonymity when faculty elections are held electronically. (A copy of his letter is attached.) He noted that a future administration could pressure members of the IT department to modify its software to permit the votes for the Committee of Six of individual faculty members to be secretly recorded and reported. He argued that even a remote possibility that this could occur might affect the way that untenured faculty members vote.

The current electronic system offers some obvious advantages over our previous paper ballot system. Participation in C6 elections is up (partly because faculty members away on leave can easily vote), the time required for multi-round elections has been reduced, and less paper is used.

While there is no absolute guarantee of anonymity, the system does offer a significant level of security. The task of authenticating voters is totally separate from the task of counting votes, and the two tasks are carried out on different computers. There are only three staff members in IT whose administrator privileges might permit them to access logs and modify software in a way that could allow them to break the anonymity.

While it would be best to have a system offering a guarantee of absolute privacy, we are not aware of a way of doing this without complicating the election process or introducing some other significant problem. (Professor Kaplan proposed two alternative systems, but we do not agree that they are better.) Given the sensitive nature of so much of the data that we already entrust to the IT department, we do not believe that there is reason to be greatly concerned about the integrity of the voting process, and we do not think that the system should be changed at this time.

Yours truly,  
Lyle A. McGeoch  
Professor of Computer Science Chair,  
Faculty Computer Committee

Scott F. Kaplan  
Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science Amherst College  
Amherst, MA 01002-5000 [sfkaplanecs.amherst.edu](mailto:sfkaplanecs.amherst.edu)

December 21, 2006

Committee of Six  
Amherst College  
Amherst, MA 01002-5000

To the members of the Committee of Six:

I am troubled by our new, online method of voting for members of the Committee of Six. Specifically, I am concerned that voters are anonymous not because the voting method guarantees it, but rather because the Office of The Dean of The Faculty promises that it will not collect or examine our names. I find this potential loss of anonymity unacceptable, and I urge the Committee to examine this issue.

Please notice that I am not concerned with this Office of The Dean of The Faculty. I do not suspect its current members, nor any member of the administration or staff, of any wrongdoing in conducting these elections. However, the College's policies should not be specific to the people currently holding particular positions.

How important is anonymity in our voting? Observe our practice during Faculty Meetings, where a single person's request for a paper ballot must be honored without discussion, justification, or further approval from the body or chair. Whether that person's concern is founded in a real risk of being associated with a particular vote is irrelevant; we avoid the undue influence of perceived concerns associated with a "named" vote by offering an anonymous option at the slightest suggestion. This same respect for anonymity should apply to all faculty votes, ensuring that voters make unfettered choices.

I am particularly concerned about the participation of the untenured members of the faculty. They may reasonably feel more at risk in expressing their choices than other faculty and may alter their voting behavior because their identities could be associated with their votes. The tenure-track members of our faculty have perhaps the greatest interest in the selection of C6 members, for that committee is the one charged with reappointment and tenure evaluations. We should expect and encourage junior faculty to participate as fully as possible in governance, and I would not want the convenience of online voting to outweigh the importance of their participation.

I understand the desire for greater participation that online voting may yield. Thus, I do not expect an abandonment of online voting. However, online voting can be anonymous, and I would be happy, upon request, to describe specific, realistic mechanisms by which it can be achieved. Since anonymity is possible and, I believe, critical, I ask that the Committee of Six raise this topic with the administration. I consider this issue sufficiently important that the use of online voting should be suspended until issues of voter anonymity have been sufficiently remedied.

Sincerely,

Scott F. Kaplan  
Assoc. Professor of Computer Science

**From:** Elizabeth Barker  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 01, 2008 3:23 PM  
**To:** Gregory Call  
**Subject:** Mead proposal for the Committee, of Six

Dear Greg,

Will you please share the information below with the Committee of Six? It concerns the Mead Art Museum's acquisitions committee, which (although not technically a responsibility of the faculty, since it's ad hoc and reports to you) does involve substantial time commitments from several members of the faculty. Thank you.

The outline below is intentionally brief; I would be delighted to provide more details to anyone who might be curious to learn them. My direct extension is 2295.

Thank you again,  
Lizzie

### **Mead Art Museum Committee Changes**

In keeping with the Mead's new strategic plan, and with encouragement from our re-accreditation reviewers, the Mead will be regularizing and expanding its oversight bodies. The end result of this process will be to free several faculty members from the obligation of sitting on a committee that largely rubber-stamps proposed museum acquisitions and to allow an unlimited number of faculty to engage meaningfully in regular, optional discussions about curricular/collections/programmatic collaborations. Fuller details follow.

In summer 2008, the Mead proposes to dissolve its one existing advisory body, the acquisitions' committee, and to replace it with three consultative/advisory/advocacy groups:

1. A Museum Forum open to faculty, students, and the public in which museum staff and key museum constituents will share information and ideas about exhibitions, events, and services. Open to all (but required of none), these brainstorming sessions will begin in September 2008, and will be led by the incoming museum educator (i.e., the museum/curriculum coordinator) and myself. We anticipate holding monthly late afternoon (catered!) meetings during the academic year, but would welcome suggestions about potentially convenient times and formats. This group will provide a way for all parties to share information about forthcoming projects, and develop meaningful collaborations around points of contingency with sufficient lead time.
2. An Advisory Board comprised of trustees, major donors, alumni collectors, regional museum professionals, expert faculty, and senior administrators to oversee major acquisitions, de-accessions, and loans, and to review significant policy changes. Limited to 25 members, it will meet once a year on campus and once a year off-site. The draft charter (to be considered by the board at its May meeting) is attached. This group will ensure that experts in art collecting and museum governance continually scrutinize the museum's high-stakes, sometimes confidential decisions.
3. A Friends of the Mead Art Museum group comprised of supporters capable of making a modest donation (student memberships will begin at the \$5 level), and envisioned as a semi-autonomous, largely self-governing group, whose volunteer leadership (probably to be comprised, at least initially, of enthusiastic retired alumni eager to put their time and expertise to work for the college) would arrange events based upon the interests of the membership, possibly to include behind-the-scenes tours, special trips, etc. Funds raised by the group would be applied to special projects, such as improvements to the gallery's lighting systems and support for publications. This group, like the Friends of the Library, Music and Athletics, would provide a way for any museum supporters to assist its operations and participate in its activities.

## **DRAFT CHARTER**

### **Advisory Board of the Mead Art Museum**

**Article I. Establishment and Purposes.** In accordance with the bylaws of Amherst College, the President and Board of Trustees hereby charter the Advisory Board of the Mead Art Museum. The Advisory Board will function as an advisory and advocacy body and shall review acquisitions, deaccessions, and loans with particular attention to transactions involving objects valued at or above \$25,000; shall review and assist in drafting museum policies; and shall assist in various efforts to achieve the Museum's mission and to realize its vision.

### **Article II. Membership.**

**Section 1. Number.** The number of Advisors constituting the entire Advisory Board shall be not less than five (5) nor more than twenty-five (25), and shall be fixed by resolution of the Board. At any time, no fewer than two (2) Advisors shall be members of Amherst College's Board of Trustees. The Advisory Board, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members, may resolve to increase or decrease the number of Advisors, subject to the approval of the President of Amherst College, and provided that no decrease shall shorten the term of any incumbent Advisor. The names of these members will be published in the Annual Report of the Mead Art Museum, and posted on the websites of the Mead Art Museum and Amherst College.

**Section 2. Nomination and appointment of initial members.** In consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, Associate Dean of the Faculty, and Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum, the President of Amherst College shall select and appoint fifteen (15) Advisors to serve on the Advisory Board of the Mead Art Museum. Of this number, no fewer than two (2) Advisors shall be members of Amherst College's Board of Trustees

**Section 3. Election.** After the first year, Advisors shall be elected by the Advisory Board at the Annual Meeting of the Board. Each Advisor shall serve until his or her successor is elected and appointed, unless said Advisor's membership should theretofore be vacated.

**Section 4. Officers.** The Advisory Board shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Each such officer shall be elected from among the Advisory Board at the Annual Meeting of the Board for a term of three (3) years. Any vacancy in the above offices shall be filled by the Advisory Board as soon as practicable. At any meeting of the Advisory Board duly called, any Officer may, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Board, be removed from office for good cause shown, and another may be elected by the Board in the place of the Officer so removed, to serve until the next meeting of the Board. The Officers, together with the Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum, shall comprise the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board. The Executive Committee

shall have and may exercise between the meetings of the Advisory Board all the authority of the Board, and shall report all its actions to the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

**a. Chair.** The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Board and of the Executive Committee.

**b. Vice-Chair.** At the request of the Chair or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties and exercise the functions of the Chair.

**c. Secretary.** The Secretary shall be responsible for the keeping of Minutes of all meetings of the Advisory Board. He or she shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. The Secretary shall be responsible for the custody of the records of the Advisory Board, which shall be held at the Mead Art Museum.

**Section 5. Ex-Officio members.** The President of Amherst College, Dean of the Faculty, Associate Dean of the Faculty, Director of Development and Advancement, and Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum shall serve as ex-officio members of the Board.

**a. Director's reports.** The Director and Chief Curator shall provide the Advisory Board at each of its regular meetings with statements on the permanent collection, exhibition programs, publications, and physical plant of the Mead Art Museum.

**Section 6. Terms.** Each Advisor shall serve a term of three (3) years, except as provided elsewhere in this Charter.. For the purpose of staggering their terms of office, the Advisors shall be divided into two (2) classes, as nearly equal in numbers as may be, and the term of office of one class shall expire each year in regular rotation. In case the number of Advisors in any class becomes unequal to the other classes, the Advisory Board may elect one or more Advisor(s) to terms of one year.

**Section 7. Vacancies.** In case of any vacancy in the Advisory Board, a majority of the remaining Advisors may elect a successor to fill the unexpired term, and to serve until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified. In the event of increase in the number of Advisors, additional Advisors may be elected to terms of one or two years as may be necessary to maintain equality in numbers among the classes of Advisors. Additional Advisors so elected shall serve until their successors shall have been duly elected and qualified.

**Section 8. Absences.** If any Advisor shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Advisory Board without excuse accepted as satisfactory by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board, such Advisor shall be deemed to have resigned and the vacancy shall be filled.

**Section 9. Removal.** At any meeting of the Advisory Board duly called, any Advisor may, by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Board, be removed from office and another person may be elected by the Board to fill the unexpired term of the Advisor so removed.



**Article IV. Function.** The Advisory Board shall:

- a. Review all new acquisitions to, and proposed deaccessions from, the permanent collection;
- b. Approve or deny any object proposed for de/accession valued at \$25,000 or greater;
- c. Assist in developing a long-term strategy for developing the permanent collection;
- d. Review all outgoing loans insured at a value equal to or greater than \$25,000;
- e. Review all official museum policies and procedures;
- f. Assist in drafting certain governance documents as requested by the Director and Chief Curator of the Museum and Senior Administration of Amherst College;
- g. Assist in realizing the mission of and vision for the Mead Art Museum laid out in its January 2008 strategic plan;
- h. Stimulate membership in the Friends of the Mead Art Museum;
- i. Assist the Director and Chief Curator and Office of Advancement in soliciting and securing donations to the Museum of art and funds;
- j. Otherwise act to strengthen the quality of the Museum's permanent collection, publications, and programs;
- k. Adhere to the highest professional standards and strictest ethical guidelines observed by accredited art museums in all actions.

**Article V. Meetings.**

**Section 1. Frequency.** Two (2) meetings of the Advisory Board shall be held per year on such dates and at such times and places as may be fixed by the Advisory Board and named in the notice. One such meeting shall be the Annual Meeting. Special meetings of the Advisory Board may be held at any time, on call by the Chair of Board, or by the Secretary upon on the request in writing of any three (3) Advisors.

**Section 2. Notice.** Notice of the time and place of every meeting of the Advisory Board shall be mailed not less than ten (10) days before the meeting to each Advisor at his or her address as set forth in the records of the Board.

**Section 3. Agenda.** The agenda or order of business for each Regular, Special, and Annual meeting shall be developed by the Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum in consultation with the Chair.

**Section 4. Attendance.** Any one or more Advisors or the Executive Committee may participate in a meeting with the consent of all the members present in person by means of a conference telephone or similar communication equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** A majority of the entire Advisory Board shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board, and a majority in number of those present shall decide any question that may come before the meeting, except for matters requiring a two thirds vote as provided elsewhere in this Charter.

**Article VI. Action taken outside of meetings.** Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Advisory Board or the Executive Committee at a duly held meeting may be taken without a meeting if all Advisors or Executive Committee consent in writing to the adoption of a resolution authorizing the action. Such resolution and the written consents thereto by the Advisors or Executive Committee shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board. Such consents may be delivered in the form of e-mail messages.

**Article VII. Duration.** This charter shall be subject to review by the President and Board of Trustees of Amherst College in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, Associate Dean of the Faculty, and Director and Chief Curator of the Mead Art Museum one (1) year from its date of establishment, and each year thereafter. At any such time, the President and Board of Trustees reserve the right to:

- a. Amend this charter in accordance with the best interests of the Mead Art Museum and Amherst College;
- b. Terminate the Advisory Board of the Mead Art Museum.