

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Thursday, July 27, 2006**

A summer meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2006–2007 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 10:30 A.M. on Thursday, July 27, 2006. Present were Professors S. George, O’Hara, Parker, and Woglom, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder. Professor Hilborn participated by speakerphone. Professor Schneider, who was out of the country, was unable to attend.

President Marx began the meeting by thanking the members for convening during the summer, a period during which the Committee typically does not meet. The President requested the meeting to discuss issues surrounding the gift that was made by the Argosy Foundation to the College and announced on July 19. This donation will provide support for public service initiatives at Amherst, including expanded internships, which will be coordinated through the establishment of a new administrative Center for Community Engagement (CCE). Over the next seven years, partnerships will be built regionally and nationally with community organizations that are active in areas such as poverty, public education, human rights, the environment, and public health, depending on student and faculty interest.

The President informed the members that he felt that it was important at this time to provide some background to the new members of the Committee and to the Faculty as a whole (via these minutes) about how the donation unfolded, and to seek the Committee’s advice about decisions related to this initiative that should not wait until fall. He told the Committee that, during the last academic year—in discussions that were based upon the deliberations of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP), the Special Committee on the Amherst Education (SCAE) Working Group on Experiential Education, and the Faculty’s review of the Report of the CAP—he and Argosy Foundation founder John E. Abele ’59 explored ways of building on and expanding the foundation’s past support of public service initiatives at the College that were consistent with the then-emerging planning process.

President Marx noted that, through a partnership established with the Argosy Foundation in 2002, approximately thirty-five Amherst students a year now receive Abele Public Service Internships. These internships provide full support for Amherst students to work during the summer for nonprofit organizations that are dedicated to providing direct assistance to low-income and underserved populations. At present and in their entirety, Fellowships for Action enable roughly one hundred Amherst students each year to engage in public service internships, although the Abele internships are the only internships that guarantee full stipends and a travel allowance.

The President said that it was somewhat awkward to be having discussions with a donor while the Faculty was still considering the CAP’s recommendations, but, clearly, the Faculty was moving in the general direction of supporting increased opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning and public service in substantive and meaningful ways that also enriched, and were informed by, academic study.

To ensure as much consultation as possible and still respect the privacy of the prospective donor, the President discussed the possibility of the donation (and its implications) with the Committee of Six in the spring of 2005 and with the CAP last spring. Professor Parker said that he was surprised and troubled to learn that minutes that are not related to personnel matters are kept confidential. The President noted that, in public minutes last year and the year before, the need to keep some conversations confidential was discussed. For the most part, these are matters

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Thursday, July 27, 2006**

in which he seeks the Committee's guidance and opinions before making a decision. The President said that he was open to having a full discussion of this issue at a future meeting of the Committee this year and asked Assistant Dean Tobin to share with the members the minutes (September 5, 2005 and October 4, 2004, appended) of previous conversations about what is being kept confidential in Committee of Six minutes. Professor Woglom commented that, while he was concerned initially about keeping some non-personnel-related discussions confidential, over the past year, he came to recognize the necessity of doing so in rare cases and to respect the administration's desire to consult with the Committee on matters of a sensitive or unresolved nature.

Returning to the discussion of the Argosy gift, the President said that, last spring, both the Committee of Six and the CAP favored moving ahead with discussions with Mr. Abele. The President noted that the CAP Report includes the following language, which the committee drafted with knowledge of a potential Argosy Foundation gift and for the purpose of being as transparent as possible about the fact that conversations about funding in this area were under way: "We commend the College's current efforts to secure significant additional funding for the expansion and coordination of such efforts and hope that these partnerships can inspire peer institutions to do more of the same." (CAP Report, page 21)

The President noted that, for some time, he did not know just when Mr. Abele would make his final decision about a gift. When the donation was made this summer, President Marx was delighted with the generosity of the Argosy Foundation. At the same time, he realized that receiving the gift in July would make communication with the College community, and moving forward with the CCE, more difficult than during the academic year. He noted that the expectations of students, faculty members, and potential community partners have now been raised and that he has been receiving inquiries about the center. The President said that he feels that it would be advantageous to take the first steps toward finding a director for the CCE as soon as possible; delays in having someone in place to lead this effort would affect the College's ability to offer internships to students next summer, he pointed out.

President Marx suggested that a search committee be formed and that an ad for the position of director be placed as soon as possible. (The Dean then distributed to the Committee a draft of an ad that had been prepared.) In this way, a pool of applicants could be emerging when the search committee begins its work in the fall. Taking these steps should not preclude conversations about the CCE with the Committee of Six and the Faculty as a whole this fall, the President noted. Professor O'Hara said that she supports forming a search committee for the center director as soon as possible. Professors Woglom and Hilborn also said that they supported the immediate formation of the committee. Given that all members of the Committee of Six will not be present until late this summer, Professors Parker and George at first favored waiting until fall to establish the search committee, but, after some conversation, agreed with the other members that a search committee should be formed now.

After the President concluded his remarks, Professor Parker offered his congratulations, commenting on what a wonderful gift that the College has received and on how difficult the process of coordinating this donation with the CAP process must have been. He also expressed concern that the Faculty has not had the opportunity to express its collective thanks because of the timing of the gift, and said that, in his view, many colleagues had not anticipated the scale

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Thursday, July 27, 2006**

and speed of developments. He noted that the CAP Report made no mention of a new Center for Civic Engagement but only urged “that more staff and financial support be provided to support both public-service efforts and faculty interested in pursuing community-based learning and that consideration be given to bringing all such support under a single administrative structure.” The Faculty has yet to discuss, let alone endorse, what the proposed center would look like, how it would be staffed, to whom it report, etc., Professor Parker said. President Marx said that he had worked to ensure that all of the funding possibilities discussed with Mr. Abele were consistent with the CAP Report and with faculty conversations about experiential learning and public service initiatives—expanding on existing models and programs on a larger scale. Professor Parker replied that the Faculty had endorsed ideas and principles, noting that there is a difference between theorizing and being able to accomplish something. He added that, during the Faculty’s CAP discussions, there was little sense that experiential learning was a top priority among the recommendations under consideration.

President Marx acknowledged that the gift following so quickly on the heels of broad discussions by the Faculty about a large number of issues might seem to imply a single priority, but instead it simply reflected the coincidence of the College’s and a donor’s interests. The President noted that the Faculty was consulted on the principles that will guide this or other initiatives, and that moving forward now is consistent with the concept of the CAP Report as a blueprint that would be implemented. Just how these initiatives will be implemented is now in the hands of the Faculty, administration, and Trustees, in various combinations, he said, and will depend on the resources that can be made available.

Professor George commented that, while it is true that the initiatives that will be supported by the Argosy gift are consistent with recommendations discussed and supported by the Faculty, the scale of the proposed plans seems larger than what were presented. He noted that he had reviewed online the three flagship programs cited as models in the report of the Experiential Learning Working Group, and that all had fewer staff positions, in relation to the number of students served, than the six professional staff plus three clerical staff planned at the center envisioned by Amherst. President Marx said that Mr. Abele wanted to create the best program possible, in accordance with the Faculty’s stated interest in establishing substantive opportunities for experiential learning and service. The President said that the most substantial driver of the program’s budget is the funding needed to support the greatest number of Amherst students seeking summer internships, which could be as high as three hundred a year (including the one hundred students who have previously been funded through the Gerety/Abele fellowships).

Center for Community Engagement staffing, both on- and off-campus, will be another significant expense, as it is anticipated that staff will be needed both at the CCE and to work at some partnering organizations to help these entities develop and coordinate programs that engage Amherst students effectively. He noted that at least two existing positions at the College will be incorporated into the center. It is anticipated that a staff member will also be hired to assist interested faculty members with integrating experiential learning into their classes. The President said that he is particularly intrigued by plans for establishing an incentive program through which Amherst students will engage in regular service in the local community and in turn receive paid January or summer public service internships.

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Thursday, July 27, 2006**

Professor Woglom noted that support for this initiative will be provided for only seven years, and he wondered what would happen at the conclusion of this period. President Marx replied that the new director and his or her staff, supported by an advisory committee of faculty members, students, staff, and community partners, will design the best program possible. The College will test the program for the next seven years, carefully monitoring and assessing it during this time. Depending on whether the program is successful, the administration, Faculty, and Trustees will decide whether finding the resources to continue this initiative should be a priority. He noted that many of the CAP recommendations carry large price tags, commenting that conversations among the administration, the Faculty, and the Board during the upcoming academic year and beyond will focus on setting priorities in terms of making commitments to providing the necessary resources.

Returning to the topic of the reaction of the Faculty to the announcement of the establishment of the CCE, Professor O'Hara said that she does not believe that the Faculty will be surprised, as discussions about experiential learning (and faculty interest in this area) have been ongoing over the past ten to fifteen years. Professor George reiterated that it was the scale of the initiative that might be a bit shocking. Professor O'Hara responded that she had visited centers for experiential learning at other institutions, and that the Experiential Working Group, of which she had been a member for some time, had proposed in its report to the Faculty that the Outreach Office be enhanced and expanded. She contends that, if a center was never discussed specifically by the Faculty on that committee, it was only because it was thought to be unimaginable. She said that having the resources to establish the CCE is "like a dream come true."

Professor O'Hara noted that it is not necessary or desirable for a faculty committee to vet every aspect of such a center. Of course, the Faculty should be involved in those aspects of the initiative that involve links to the curriculum and other matters within the Faculty's purview, she said. Professor Woglom agreed, commenting that the implementation of many CAP initiatives will be delayed if the Faculty is involved in every decision, rather than limiting its input to those issues that are within its domain. He said that the Faculty should trust the administration to implement and administer the public service initiative, with the understanding that the Faculty would be consulted when appropriate. The President asked Assistant Dean Tobin to provide the Committee with the minutes (February 20, 2006, appended) of the discussion by last year's Committee of Six of which bodies might be charged with considering each CAP recommendation. He believes that reviewing this preliminary assessment might be helpful, and said that the Committee could return to a discussion of this issue.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Parker said that he has long been a supporter of experiential learning and that his concern is only that the Faculty did not consider the establishment of a single administrative structure, and that colleagues were not provided with details about a potential center or asked to collaborate in its design. Professor Woglom responded that the Faculty did approve experiential learning as a priority. Professor George said that, during every step of the CAP process, the Faculty was told that, the priorities of the CAP report were just that—priorities and goals; if the priorities were approved, it would be with the understanding that specifics would be discussed later by the appropriate faculty committees. While acknowledging that the gift is magnificent, he said that he was concerned that moving

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Thursday, July 27, 2006**

forward with the CCE so quickly and without discussion—the first public action since the CAP Report was approved—might be perceived by the Faculty as a violation of promises made by the administration during the CAP process.

President Marx reiterated that some awkwardness has resulted as a result of the timing of the Argosy gift, but said that he has been mindful—throughout the process of negotiating the gift—of a double-bind that has emerged. There is both a need to get things moving and a need to have full consultation from the Amherst community to build the best program possible. He trusts that placing an ad for a director and establishing a search committee now will not preclude consultation with the Faculty or other constituencies and will move this initiative forward. The Committee reviewed the ad for the director of the CCE and, after making some editorial changes, agreed that it should be circulated as soon as possible.

The Dean next informed the members that, in accordance with the recommendation of the CAP, he is adding a half-time Associate Dean, beginning in January, for a two-and-a-half-year term. The Committee wondered whether another full-time Associate Dean was needed. The Dean said that his plan was to try the part-time structure as an experiment and continue to assess the staffing needs of his office. Professors George and Woglom expressed concern that faculty members who become members of the administration remain included in the FTE count and that departments and students may suffer as a result. The Dean acknowledged their concern and noted that teaching replacements are discussed with the departments of colleagues who join the administration. The Dean and the President agreed to review this situation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call  
Dean of the Faculty

Excerpt from Committee of Six Minutes  
of Monday, October 4, 2004

In response to a question raised by Professor Stephen George with Assistant Dean Tobin about the nature of what is being kept confidential in the Committee of Six minutes, the Dean reviewed with the Committee categories of matters that have been kept confidential in the minutes this year, last year, and in years past and how the volume and style of the minutes have changed over time. He noted that, until last year, the Committee of Six meetings, typically, lasted for two hours. The Committee now, typically, meets for three hours, and the minutes are longer as a result. Dean Call said that the minutes of this year and last year are, perhaps, more detailed than they have been in the recent past. Professor Cheney noted that, in his experience, different recorders have had their own styles, and that the minutes have been both more detailed and less detailed than they are at present. The President said that he believes there should be a general principle of transparency when it comes to the minutes, although, naturally, personnel matters should remain confidential. He said that he will retain the option of keeping confidential minutes of conversations in which he seeks the Committee's guidance and opinions, as he weighs options and/or formulates decisions. The Dean asked the members if they felt that discussion surrounding the drafting of motions should be included in the public minutes, and most members agreed that doing so would inform the Faculty and be helpful to them. The members reaffirmed that they will read the draft minutes with an eye toward disclosing as much information as possible, and the President and Dean agreed to be responsive to the Committee's recommendations in this regard.

Excerpt from Committee of Six Minutes  
of Monday, September 5, 2005

The Dean next reviewed issues of Committee of Six confidentiality and attribution in the minutes, noting that the public minutes should be used as a guide in questions of whether matters discussed by the Committee can be shared with others. Professor Woglom noted that some members of the Faculty have expressed concern about what is being included in the confidential minutes. The Dean replied that all personnel matters are kept confidential. In addition, the President and the Dean said that minutes of discussions of certain sensitive or unresolved matters and plans in their formative stages, about which they are seeking the advice of the Committee of Six, are sometimes kept confidential. Often, discussions of these issues are made public once the matter is in a less tentative state. Professor Woglom asked if the Faculty might be given an example of this type of situation, as he thought it would prove helpful. The President agreed to do so. The members agreed that, for reasons of transparency, there should be direct quotation in the minutes although members could be referred to simply as "a member" if they so requested. Dean Call noted that at the Faculty Meeting of May 19, 2005, Professor Cheney made remarks that might have suggested that an apparent decrease in the number of attributions in the minutes was due to the style of the recorder. Professor Cheney has informed the Dean and last year's Committee of Six that it was not his intention that his statement be interpreted in this way, as the members of the Committee review all minutes, and the content is their responsibility.

Excerpt from Committee of Six Minutes  
of Monday, February 20, 2006

The members next reviewed the CAP report's twenty-two recommendations (listed below) and made the following preliminary assessment of which bodies should be charged with considering each CAP recommendation. It is the hope of most members of the Committee that the Faculty will endorse (with an accompanying sum and substance) the general goals of the report, before forwarding individual recommendations to appropriate committees for refinement.

**1. We recommend that talented students from less affluent backgrounds be more vigorously recruited and that the Trustees seek funds to meet the additional aid burden.**

FCAFA works out the details and reports back to the Faculty periodically on how the initiative is progressing.

Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR) may discuss financial implications.

Trustees.

**2. We recommend that the Trustees consider significant reductions in the loan burden of all our students, as has been done for our highest-need students, in particular to avoid the limit that loans may impose on future career aspirations.**

FCAFA works out the details and reports back to the Faculty periodically on how the initiative is progressing.

CPR may discuss financial implications.

Trustees.

**3. We recommend that the proportion of non-US students admitted be increased from about 6 to about 8 percent.**

FCAFA works out the details and reports back to the Faculty periodically on how the initiative is progressing.

CPR may discuss financial implications.

Trustees.

**4. We recommend that admission for non-US students be made need-blind.**

FCAFA works out the details and reports back to the Faculty periodically on how the initiative is progressing.

CPR may discuss financial implications.

Trustees.

**5. We recommend that entering classes be increased by between 15 and 25 students.**

FCAFA works out the details and reports back to the Faculty periodically on how the initiative is progressing.

CPR may discuss financial implications.

Trustees.

**6. We recommend that 5 new FTEs be devoted to new interdisciplinary ventures and the support of other forms of cross-departmental collaboration.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP, with vote by the Faculty on any new programs or majors proposed.

**7. We recommend that 2.5 new FTEs be devoted to global comprehension, their distribution to be made by the CEP among departments that are willing to commit themselves to teaching courses with this focus.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP, in consultation with the Special Committee on the Amherst Education (SCAE) Working Group on Global Comprehension.

**8. We recommend that 4 new FTEs be reserved to meet existing departmental needs.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP, in consultation with the Working Committee on the Arts.

**9. We recommend that 2 FTEs be reserved to allow accelerated hiring to take advantage of targeted “opportunity” hires that invigorate or enrich the racial, cultural, gender, and/or intellectual diversity of the faculty.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP.

**10. We recommend that all assistant professors be assured of a year of sabbatical leave at full salary after reappointment.**

CPR.

Administration.

Trustees.

**11. We recommend that the existing program of Senior Sabbatical Fellowships be expanded to cover as much as two semesters of leave after six years and that the College make every effort to secure sufficient funds to support all qualified applicants.**

CPR.

Administration.

Trustees.

**12. We recommend that the College create a staff position to assist faculty in applying for grants to support their research and creative work.**

CPR.

Administration.



**13. We recommend that funding for the Amherst Academic Interns program and the Dean of the Faculty's resources to support student research across the disciplines be enhanced.**

CPR.

Administration.

Trustees.

Discuss possible partnerships with relevant departments.

**14. We recommend significantly expanding opportunities for community service and for summer and January internships.**

Administration.

College Council.

Trustees.

**15. We recommend that a visiting appointment be made to allow a faculty member to serve half-time as coordinator of community-based learning.**

Administration.

CEP.

**16. We recommend that the College provide need-based support to encourage students to enroll in intensive summer language programs in the USA and abroad.**

CPR.

Administration.

**17. We recommend that 2 new FTEs be reserved to support the development and teaching of "intensive writing" courses, their distribution to be made by the CEP among departments willing to commit themselves to teaching additional courses for this purpose.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP.

**18. We recommend that all students be required to take at least one course designated as Writing Attentive, with pedagogical support to be provided for faculty engaged in such writing instruction.**

Fleshed out by CEP, in consultation with the SCAE Working Group on Writing.

Faculty vote.

**19. We recommend that 2.5 new FTEs be reserved for improving students' quantitative literacy, their distribution to be made by the CEP among departments that are willing to commit themselves to teaching "intensive" sections or new courses for these purposes.**

Academic departments initiate FTE requests.

CEP, in consultation with the SCAE Quantitative Working Group.

**20. We recommend that the Faculty adopt a policy that requires the soliciting of teaching evaluations from all students in all classes.**

Fleshed out by Committee of Six.

Faculty vote.

**21. We recommend that the administration devote more resources and staff time to supporting programs in pedagogy, including programs to help teachers at all ranks.**

Committee of Six.

Administration.

Discussion by the Faculty.

**22. We recommend that a faculty innovation fund be created to support pedagogical projects of faculty at all ranks and that eligibility for Senior Sabbatical Fellowships be expanded to include proposals for contributions to pedagogy in the broadest sense.**

Administration.

Trustees.