

**Committee of Six Minutes  
of Monday, February 5, 2007**

The twenty-fourth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2006-2007 was called to order by the President in his office at 3:00 P.M. on Monday, February 5, 2007. Present were Professors George, O'Hara, Parker, Schneider, Sinos, and Woglom, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

After a brief conversation about the Committee's upcoming agenda and procedures for setting the schedule and the topics of discussion, the Committee was joined at 3:15 P.M. by the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA). Present from the committee were Professors Courtright, Lembo (Chair), and C. McGeoch; Deans Parker, Fretwell, Case, and Lieber; and Octavia Foarta '09. It was agreed prior to the meeting that student members of the FCAFA would leave the meeting when currently enrolled students were being discussed as individuals, rather than as an aggregate. The Committee had requested a meeting with the FCAFA to discuss previously raised questions about this year's entering class and its least-prepared students and the FCAFA's response to the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) proposal to add students to next year's first-year class and the composition of the additional students.

The Dean thanked the members of the FCAFA for meeting with the Committee of Six. Professor Parker began the discussion by asking the FCAFA to describe its recent conversations with the Board. Professor Lembo noted that his committee had prepared a written proposal, and had presented it to the Student Life Committee of the Board, that the size of the incoming class be increased and that the increase be split between international students with academic reader ratings of one and two and financial need, and "intellectually vibrant" students with academic reader ratings of two. Professor Lembo said that his committee made this proposal in response to recommendations from the CAP to increase the size of the entering class and the proportion of non-U.S. students and to make admission for non-U.S. students need-blind. He said that it is his committee's hope that the proposal would enable the College to assess students' academic performance, including their "navigation of the curriculum" and educational outcomes, in relation to academic qualifications, and would enable Amherst to clarify the validity and usefulness of empirical indicators of performance beyond GPA.

Professor Lembo noted that, in response to the proposal, the Student Life Committee raised questions around support and resources. Some student members expressed some concern about the impact of increasing the size of the student body. Dean Fretwell noted that the students on the Student Life Committee are not members of the FCAFA and had not been informed by the committee's conversations that led to the proposal. Professor Courtright commented that the question of whether additional faculty FTEs should be in place before the student body was expanded was also discussed with the Student Life Committee of the Board.

Professor Woglom asked about the genesis of the FCAFA proposal. Professor Lembo responded that the committee had met with President Marx and Dean Call in mid-October to discuss possible ways of addressing the recommendations that were forwarded by the Committee of Six to the FCAFA for further deliberation. At that meeting, the Dean and the President reported that they had heard faculty concerns about the College not admitting all of the academic ones and twos desired (having not admitted all academic ones who applied for several years), and whether additional student spaces should be used to meet that concern in the next admissions cycle. Dean Call noted that the President and he had had similar meetings about implementation

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with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR). Professor Courtright commented that it is not the FCAFA's prerogative to change the size of the student body; it is the prerogative of the Trustees. It was the President, representing the Trustees, who rightly brought up this issue with the FCAFA, she said, and the committee deliberated on how to implement this change. Dean Parker had modeled for the committee different ways of implementing the CAP's recommendation to increase the size of the student body, Professor Courtright noted, and the FCAFA settled on its current proposal—with the knowledge and intention that its recommendations would move through the normal processes of faculty governance.

Professor O'Hara reiterated her concern that increasing the number of students at the highest end of the academic spectrum could exacerbate problems of bimodality in the classroom. She asked the FCAFA members if they had considered a schedule for implementing their proposal and whether adding students might be done gradually. Professor Courtright responded that there hasn't been time yet for the FCAFA to focus on a schedule or phasing plans; she noted that bimodality in the classroom might be more of an issue in some disciplines than others. Professor Courtright agreed that it would be important for the issues raised by Professor O'Hara to be considered. Dean Lieber asked if Professor O'Hara was suggesting that the College add more students of more modest abilities. Professor O'Hara responded that the CAP recommended that the socioeconomic diversity of the student body be increased, while raising the standards for admission across all categories of students that the College wishes to admit. She suggested that Amherst should be looking for students with "intellectual spark," who are capable of making the transition to Amherst and who would act as change agents on campus, noting that such student attributes should be assessed through measures beyond academic reader rating. Professor O'Hara contended that changes to the size and expertise of the Faculty should keep pace with any changes in the student body. Several Committee members noted that expanding the size of the class is a separable issue from the increase in the number of less well-prepared students. Dean Parker agreed, noting that the current proposal only seeks additional students with strong academic preparation (academic reader ratings of one or two). Professor Woglom expressed the view that the College should admit the most promising candidates regardless of academic reader rating.

Dean Parker noted that the College has already met the CAP goal for increasing socioeconomic diversity in the Class of 2010 and anticipates that it will be able to meet this goal for future classes. The FCAFA focused on what the composition of students should be if additional slots in the first-year class are made available. After reviewing different possibilities, the committee chose to propose increasing the number of excellent international students who have financial need and the number of "vibrant academic twos," who, usually because of one academic indicator (e.g., one test score, one grade), fall just short of being academic ones. On the basis of all other indicators—essays, letter of recommendation, etc.—these students would be among the most promising in the applicant pool. Dean Parker warned about the danger of over-precision when it comes to setting qualitative and numeric goals and discussed the need to "speak in ranges." Many aspects of the admission process are unpredictable, he noted. Professor Schneider suggested that the increase in next year's class be limited to ten students, rather than

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the maximum of a possible twenty, so that any repercussions that would be felt would be minimal.

Members of the Committee asked how the results of taking these students—for example vibrant academic twos over academic ones—would be assessed. Dean Parker said that he plans to interview first-year seminar instructors and to work with the Office of Institutional Research to develop other tools of assessment, in addition to examining the traditional quantitative indicators of academic performance. Professor Lembo noted that there has been a great deal of focus recently on students who are less well prepared; the committee agreed that the College should also seek to understand the experience of students at the higher end of academic reader ratings. Dean Parker said that the FCAFA plans to see if the vibrant twos stand out in the classroom and their level of academic achievement, and to assess these indicators over time. If the vibrant twos do not meet expectations, the FCAFA would re-examine admission policy and would re-adjust. Professor O'Hara said that she looks forward to learning more about how the vibrant academic twos navigate the curriculum.

Turning to questions about how the FCAFA proposal moved forward, the President brought up broader questions of process. He said that he recognizes that deliberations about parts of an overarching plan (the CAP Report) are moving forward through committees, but that, the implementation process thus far has not encouraged the consideration of the pieces of the report as they may relate to one another. In this case, the FCAFA discussed with the Board, for the most part, one recommendation (increasing the size of the entering class). It is clear that another recommendation (increasing FTEs) being considered by other committees (the CEP and CPR) should be thought about in coordination with the recommendation to increase the size of the student body. The Committee of Six, after considering the broader ramifications of the FCAFA's proposal, has suggested that any increase in the student body be phased in gradually so that the growth of the Faculty can be increased at least in proportion to the growth of the student body. The President noted that the targeted growth of the Faculty will be twice that of the student body. Professor Courtright reiterated that the FCAFA does not feel that it was within its purview to consider the size or pace of the increase, but only the composition of the body of students that make up the increase. Professor McGeoch noted again that the FCAFA also did not consider a schedule for the increase.

In this vein, Professor Lembo asked who, in fact, would make the decision about whether the size of the student body would be increased, at what pace, and in what numbers. The President noted that the Board has the final authority in terms of a budget decision. Dean Parker said that he would have to know by the last week of February whether the target size of next year's entering class is to be increased and by what amount. President Marx noted that it is important to recognize that any number that is set will only be a target. Dean Parker agreed, commenting that the target size of the class is dictated by bed space in freshman dorms and is set each year by the enrollment management committee, largely for the College's budgetary purposes. (The Enrollment Management Committee, which is composed of the Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, the Director of Admission, the Director of Financial Aid, the Registrar, the Dean of Students, and the Treasurer, convenes in the fall and spring each year to set numerical enrollment goals for the coming semester based on the availability of student beds. The group targets an average enrollment across the two semesters of 1,590 and assists in

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developing yield estimates. The offices represented by the members of the committee share figures for study abroad, Twelve College Exchange, off-campus student figures, etc., to assist in the committee's calculations.)

Several members of both committees noted that the Board of Trustees, which has fiduciary responsibility for the College, would have to approve the additional \$400,000 in financial aid needed to add ten international students with financial need. The President agreed. Professor George asked, if the eventual target for increasing the size of the student body is eighty, would half of those students be international students and at what cost? The President responded that the cost for forty additional international students with financial need would be approximately \$1,600,000 annually, but noted that this year's first-year class already has a larger number of international students. He said that, in accordance with the recommendation of the CAP, the total increase could be at that level. Professor George said that he feels that many Faculty members may not realize the extent of the proposed commitment. He suggested that the Faculty would need time to discuss such specific recommendations, now that the general principles of the report have been endorsed. Professor Sinos agreed. The President said that the Board is being responsive to the Faculty's readiness to implement the recommendation to add funding for international students, and that the Trustees are willing to authorize the resources necessary before they begin fundraising for the other CAP priorities. The FCAFA has recommended a target for international students that is consistent with the CAP's recommendation and reserves the right to adjust according to the pool each year.

Professor Woglom said that the Faculty should discuss as soon as possible the linkage between the opportunity for additional FTEs and the proposal by the FCAFA. He suggested that the proposal (attached) be appended to the Committee of Six minutes, and the members of FCAFA agreed. Professor Courtright noted that it will be up to the President, the Dean, and the Committee of Six to develop a process for considering these and other CAP proposals. Professor George said that a multi-year plan should be in place to set the pace for the increase in the size of the student body. He asked why an increase in the size of the first-year class couldn't wait for a year. Dean Parker said that Amherst would be a better college for adding up to ten vibrant twos and ten international students with need. Some members wondered whether additional recruitment efforts would be needed in order to implement the plan to add the vibrant twos and international students being sought. Dean Parker said that the desired categories of students are already present in the College's applicant pool. International students who have been denied admission in the past purely for financial reasons are most likely either academic ones drawn from Eastern Europe, the Indian subcontinent, and Singapore or academic twos from Africa and Latin America.

Professor Woglom suggested that the Faculty, to take advantage of the current opportunity for additional FTEs, should endorse increasing the size of the first-year class by up to twenty students and should propose to the Trustees that they should allocate two FTEs over the current FTE cap. Based on faculty proposals, the CEP should then make a recommendation to the administration for FTEs that would support CAP priorities. Dean Call said that such a procedure could be viewed as an initial step, with a more substantial process of prioritization to follow for the remaining FTEs.

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Discussion turned to the FCAFA's progress on the Committee of Six's charge to the committee. Professor Lembo said that Marian Matheson, Director of Institutional Research, has been working on a second set of data that he will begin to review and analyze soon. He is also interested in conducting interviews with faculty and students to gain some qualitative data about how students are navigating the curriculum. He said that the FCAFA is also planning to work with the Offices of Admission and Institutional Research, with the goal of coordinating and systematizing the process of data-gathering and analysis.

The committees next reviewed the performance in the first semester of the ten students in the first-year class who had the lowest composite SAT scores (as determined after ACT scores had been converted to composite SAT scores). Dean Parker noted that, of that group two students have GPAs that are in the bottom twenty-five GPAs in the class; two students have GPAs that are in the bottom fifty GPAs in the class but not in the bottom twenty-five; and the remaining six students have GPAs that are above the bottom fifty. All agreed that these results are encouraging. Dean Parker also informed the members that the Pell recipients in this year's first-year class had both the strongest GPAs and the strongest academic reader ratings of any cohort of Pell recipients admitted by the College in the last four years. Professor Woglom said that Professor Rockwell, Dean of New Students, has reported to him that this year's entering class is doing well overall. Fewer students have gone before the Committee on Academic Standing than at any time in recent memory, only one student is on academic probation, no student has been dismissed, and only one student received a grade of F in the first semester.

Professor Courtright said that the FCAFA was considering looking at how students who had been subjects of concern in the first semester of their first year performed in their junior year, as a more accurate measure of how well they were doing here. Professor O'Hara noted that, because the scheduling of math and chemistry courses was changed this semester, a number of less well-prepared students did not take Chemistry 11 in the fall. They will take Chemistry 11 in the spring. She commented that, in a typical year, four or five students ultimately receive Cs, Ds, and Fs in Chemistry 11.

President Marx asked if grade inflation makes it difficult to assess students' performance. Professor Woglom said that it is indisputable that this is the case, and he wonders if the grade of C has become the new D. Professor Sinos noted that not only is there a problem of grade inflation, but some faculty members have reported lowering the substantive content in their courses to meet student needs. Professor George wondered how many students change their minds about majoring in a particular area because they feel they can't get through the curriculum or because they have failed. It was also noted that students do change their minds about their majors for reasons other than failure. Dean Parker commented that there are plans in place to gather information on entering students' intended areas of study at the time that they arrive at the College, so more information relating to this issue will be available in future years. In the past, such data were based on students' views when they were in tenth grade, which is far less useful.

The Dean thanked the members of the FCAFA, and they left the meeting at 5:00. Professor Woglom next proposed that the Committee draft a resolution for possible distribution at the Faculty Meeting, with the goal of having the Faculty endorse the FCAFA's proposal to increase the size of the incoming class (filling these slots with excellent international students with financial need and vibrant students with academic reader ratings of two) and to increase the

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size of the Faculty at least in proportion to the increase in the size of the student body. He noted that time will be of the essence because of the need for the admission office to know the target size of the incoming class by the last week in February. Professor Schneider said that he feels strongly that the amount of change should be moderated. He reiterated his view that the first-year class should be increased by ten students, while noting that it seems important not to lose momentum with the Trustees. Professor O'Hara cautioned that, while moving forward is important, the devil is in the details.

The Committee agreed to develop a resolution before the February 6 Faculty Meeting. Noting that time would not permit such a resolution to be finalized before that meeting, the members agreed that the Dean should summarize the draft resolution. The Committee also agreed to finalize the resolution as soon as possible and to distribute it to the Faculty so that it could be considered at the Faculty Meeting of February 20. The Committee decided that the minutes (appended) of a meeting of the Committee of Six and the Committee on Educational Policy, which was convened by the President on January 25 to inform faculty of the discussion between the FCAFA and the Student Life Committee of the Board of Trustees, should be shared with the full Faculty—now that both committees have reviewed them for accuracy.

In the time remaining, the members reviewed the thesis and transcript of a student recommended by her department for a *summa cum laude* degree and having an overall grade point average in the top 25 percent of last year's graduating class. After a discussion of the thesis and the departmental statements, the members voted unanimously to forward it to the Faculty. The members next reviewed the College Council report (appended) for spring 2004-2006 and commented on the fine work done by the committee. Dean Call asked for proposals for colleagues who might serve on a Memorial Minute Committee for Calvin H. Plimpton '39, who served as president of Amherst from 1960 to 1971, who died on January 30. Dean Call thanked the members for their suggestions and said that he would inform the Faculty of the make-up of the committee once it has been finalized.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call  
Dean of the Faculty

**The FCAFA proposal for increasing the size of the entering class made to the Student Life Committee of the Board of Trustees, January 19, 2007**

The FCAFA proposes that the College enlarge the size of the incoming class by adding ten international academic "1's" and "2's" with financial need and ten "intellectually vibrant" academic "2's".

This proposal:

a) addresses recommendations found in Part II of the CAP Report. the "entering classes be increased by between 15 and 25 students" (#5 in the report); the "proportion of non-US students admitted be increased from about 6 to about 8 percent" (#3); and "admission for non-US students be made need-blind" (#4).

b) enables us to assess students' academic performance, including their "navigation of the curriculum" and educational outcomes in relation to academic qualifications, and, in doing so, to clarify the validity and usefulness of empirical indicators of performance beyond GPA as part of more broad-based and systematic assessments in the future. (Committee of Six charge, 10/5/06)

## Synopsis of the Meeting between the Committee of Six and the Committee on Educational Policy

President Marx convened a meeting of the Committee of Six and the Committee on Educational Policy on January 25, 2007, to inform faculty of a discussion that recently took place between the Faculty Committee of Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA) and the Student Life Committee of the Board of Trustees. Acting on one of the provisions of the Report of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP), the FCAFA proposed to the Trustees that the admission office be given the flexibility to add up to twenty students with academic reader ratings of one and two to next year's first-year class. In the last several years, not all such students had been admitted, the President said. Half of these additions would be international students whose financial need the College would meet in full.

The President informed the committee members that the Trustees had discussed the possibility of some enrollment growth at their meeting the prior weekend; they agreed that resources could be found for such an increase if the FCAFA and the admission office judged the applicant pool sufficiently strong to justify the increase. President Marx noted that the Board did not mandate that the size of the class should be increased or the precise number of students that might be added, but entrusted the FCAFA and the admission office with basing such expansion on educationally sound and responsible reasons. Professor George asked if plans to increase the student body by eighty students would be implicit in increasing the size of the entering class by twenty students. President Marx responded that an increase of eighty students could be the eventual target, but that an increase could be phased in over a period of seven or eight years. All agreed that it would be critical that any increase in enrollment be coordinated with at least proportional increases in the size of the Faculty.

Turning to the topic of less well-prepared students, the President noted that many faculty members have conveyed the need to develop curricular and co-curricular solutions to meet the needs of less well-prepared students, particularly in the areas of writing and quantitative skills. This pressing need has guided faculty planning and innovation for many years, he commented. In this vein, the President and the Dean described a recent meeting that they had with twenty-two faculty members and some senior administrators, mostly from the sciences. These colleagues expressed willingness to launch new courses that would meet the needs of their students, for instance new or additional "gateway courses" or science skill courses, as discussed by the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP). President Marx said that he agrees with faculty members who argue that there are pressing needs that would justify moving forward expeditiously on CAP initiatives to support students and to expand the Faculty and the curriculum. The College must also do its best to provide support, he noted, and additional resources to meet student needs should be found. The Dean described various steps in this direction already taken and expressed an openness to further proposals.

President Marx next discussed with the committee members the possibility of the Faculty requesting some small number of FTEs beyond the current cap, to be brought forward before the total request of eighteen FTEs has been approved, to meet current needs and proposals from the Faculty. Committee members commented on the necessity of having additional FTEs if needs are to be met and argued that there would also be a distinct need for additional faculty implicit in any increase in student enrollment. Professor Woglom said that, if the size of the College is not expanded, Amherst will continue to exclude some of the best students. He believes that, if the



Faculty is to teach 1.25 percent more students next fall, the Faculty should pursue the needed resources, including making a request this spring for FTEs to support quantitative initiatives. Professor O'Hara agreed that the College needs to invest in the needs of less well-prepared students as soon as possible. Professor Parker noted that meeting the needs of all Amherst students certainly seems to be a pressing situation. Professors Sinos and Sweeney argued that the addition of new faculty should not be dependent upon the CEP's privileging proposals intended to address the needs of less well-prepared students. President Marx responded that, if the CEP chose to focus on some CAP recommendations earlier, doing so would not disparage or curtail other college-wide priorities.

The committee members made clear that any proposals for new FTEs would, of course, follow the normal process of departmental requests and vetting by the CEP.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

AMHERST COLLEGE  
Department of English

MICHELE AINA BARALE, Professor

Dean Gregory S. Call  
Office of Dean of the Faculty  
Amherst College

23 August, 2006

**College Council  
Report for Spring 2004 - Spring 2006**

**Members:**

2004 - 2006: Professors J. Moore (Chair, Fall `04), Barale (Chair, Spring `05), Marshall, K. Sweeney; Deans Boykin-East, Hayes, Lieber (*ex officio*); President of the AAS; five students to be elected

The College Council discussed the following matters and made the following recommendations and decisions:

**Room Draw** will continue unchanged. The present process, labor intensive though it is for the Dean of Residential Life, seems to best address the variety of problems that need attention.

**Dorm Damage** has decreased over the past few years. While this might seem like an opportunity for wild elation, it is more likely no more than a stage in an inexplicable rhythm of student mayhem that wanes at present only to wax in the future. Fines, restitution through work, and even harsher penalties will continue to be imposed on offenders. A new schedule of **parking fines**, one that is more in keeping with the seriousness of the infractions has also been instituted. In particular, fines will be increased for parking in posted Fire Lanes, or outside marked lanes, or parking so as to impede the flow of traffic.

The College Council reviewed **Theme Houses**. At present, approximately 10% of the students reside in Theme Houses. While it has been suggested that some students opt for theme housing for no other reason than to get better accommodations, the situation is too complicated to allow for any clear sense of that. What is consistently clear is that a number of student leaders live in Theme Houses; that there is considerable cross-campus attendance at Theme House events; and that the Houses all collaborate with one another. Moreover, there is a great deal less damage in theme housing. In short, Theme Houses are good places to live and bring positive things to the campus as a whole.

Nonetheless some problems did present themselves. As renovation of Porter begins, and the College Council began to discuss temporarily relocating the Russian and German Theme Houses to Garman, it became clear that not all real estate in the Valley is prime. The emphatic desire of

every single group we spoke with was to have a kitchen. Because of state fire laws enacted after the Seton Hall University fire a few years back, all dorm kitchens must now meet the standards of commercial kitchens in terms of ventilation; this is simply not possible to facilitate in most of the Theme Houses. Houses that had full kitchens now have or will have microwaves instead... and as was pointed out during a meeting with the members of the Russian House, and La Casa, Blinis do not thrive and Latino food does not prosper in a microwave environment. Thus our decision to permanently relocate La Casa to the third floor of Moore caused them, and us, some real grief. Despite the fact that La Casa members did not actually like living in Seligman, they were loathe to give up their proximity to Newport's kitchen. However, the College Council hoped that their new central campus location might give La Casa's dwindling membership a boost. And Moore provides them with the kitchen that they lost in Seligman.

The stigmatized status of Seligman was the second problem that revealed itself over the course of the Theme House discussion. Having moved La Casa, we now had a lovely piece of real estate. But - no one wants to live there. It doesn't matter that it has quite a few rooms, 15 parking slots, and a ball room, Seligman is the arctic, the margin, the gulag, the outmost fringe of hell. It is so far from campus that no one wants to attend events there; so far from campus that its residents might as well attend Williams. We have moved Health and Wellness into Seligman, allowing that group to all be in one space and offering Sophomores a chance to get singles, but we fear that H & W feel punished rather than rewarded for their substance-free and highly successful efforts. Residential Life Co-ordinators are going to work especially hard to help Health and Wellness make Seligman work for rather than against them.

The College Council fully understands that commercial kitchens cannot be built for each residence hall. However, it also feels that the College needs to make every effort to create a common kitchen space, whether in the basement of the Campus Center or in the Alumni House, that could be used by un-kitchened Theme House members as well as by other groups who might find use of a kitchen a meaningful part of an event they plan. As one Council member noted, making additional provisions for communal cooking and eating seems like it should be a no-brainer given the College's efforts to interrupt the sorts of self-segregation that computers encourage.

At the request of the Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee of the Board of Trustees, the College Council visited the **Social Dorms** in order to better assess and compare older and newer spaces.

*The Amherst College Residential Master Plan: Phase 1: Analysis and Synthesis* describes the present situation in this way:

The Social Dorms include a series of suite-style buildings constructed in two separate time periods. Located on the eastern edge of the main campus, Coolidge, Crossett, Davis, Pond [,] and Stone were built in 1963 and 1964; Jenkins and Taplin were built in 1978. Social Dorms contain 4,5, and 6-person suites with single or double bedrooms, large living rooms, and multi-fixtured bathrooms. Interval level changes create somewhat

confusing floor plans, but the space within each suite is quite generous. Students are generally satisfied with their suite, but complain about the difficulty in meeting and socializing with students from other suites. Common space for this neighborhood is not particularly desirable, located in basements and not within normal day-to-day circulation patterns.

After Council members toured Davis, Crossett, and Pond, we all agreed that the space did not seem to lend itself to renovation. For example, while students who have locomotion problems would not be housed in these dorms since elevators cannot be installed, it would seem that we would also have to house students whose parents had locomotion problems elsewhere as well, since everything is one half floor up or down, and at least one of us became ill-tempered at her inability to negotiate the stairs. A number of rooms were dark - in fact, dismal is not too strong a word - and slightly scary to walk through since cords for computer and television hook-ups - not to mention hair driers -- ran overhead and laundry lay underfoot. Some of us wondered how well and how quickly students could exit this sort of situation. In addition, a number of rooms could access the communal bathroom only by passing through another student's bedroom; this seemed like a real privacy and security problem, though it certainly would demand that everyone remain on good terms with the person whose room allowed bathroom entry. Given these conditions, Council members wondered why some of these residents didn't opt to live in Seligman.

Spring of 2006 entertained the tri-annual coordination of the **Five College Calendar** for academic years 2006 - 07 through 2008 - 09. We learned that there is considerable desire among student to increase the length of the reading period before final exams at the end of both the fall and spring semesters. We asked Mr. Mager to suggest how we might accomplish this increase during the next three-year cycle, and he was able to do so, increasing the reading period in the fall semester from three to four days. However, various constraints that determine the beginning and end of the semester precluded his making a comparable change for the spring; the reading period in May will have to remain a meager two days. One Council member noted that for those many (though certainly this is not all) students who avoid Friday classes with the same fervor as those who abstain from classes before 10 a.m., the reading period is, in fact, three days.

During the spring and fall semesters of 2006, the College Council carried out the tri-annual review of the College's policy on **fraternities**. We met with a variety of students - resident counselors, fraternity members, residents of social dorms, student leaders in general. Feelings and opinions about membership in off campus fraternities were complicated, contradictory, and passionate; for some students, interactions with them constituted the very best of times or the worst. In the end, after a great deal of difficult discussion, we decided to reaffirm our support of the Trustees' original resolution, which forbids the use of any campus facilities by fraternities or sororities and denies College recognition of or affiliation with them, but which does not prohibit student membership in organizations that operate strictly and exclusively off campus. We believe that the principle of association that recognizes students' freedom of choice to affiliate themselves with whomever they wish when they are outside the purview of the College should

continue to govern our policy in this area.

We did learn, however, that there remain a number of misconceptions about and misunderstandings of the nature of the policy within the student body. As a result, we drafted and voted some additional explanatory language, to be included in the Student Handbook in the section devoted to fraternity policy and to be disseminated to students in other ways by the Dean of Students Office. This new language is intended to clarify and make explicit some of the specific behaviors which we understand the Trustees' resolution to prohibit. That new language is attached at the end of this report.

Finally, members of the College Council took part in the selection of the new Dean of Residential Life, Torin Moore, replacing Dean Charri Boykin-East who will now be an Associate Dean of Students. We welcome Dean Moore and look forward to working with him on the College Council. And we are pleased to learn that Dean Boykin-East will continue to attend Council meetings for the next year.

Respectably submitted,  
Michele Aina Barale

Appendix: College Council Statement on the fraternity policy

(The following statement was voted by the College Council as a supplement to and explanation of the Trustees' resolution on fraternities. It does not have the status of legislation passed either by the Board of Trustees or by the full faculty of Amherst College.)

The Board of Trustees voted to abolish fraternities at Amherst College in 1984. In so doing, the Board took the position that it would not attempt to limit students' ability to associate freely with whomever they wish off campus, but would ensure that no college facilities could ever be used by fraternities or sororities. As a result, Amherst students are not prohibited from joining fraternal organizations whose activities take place entirely off the Amherst College campus. Such organizations which do conduct activities on campus, however, are in violation of the Trustees' resolution, and any student who participates in those activities is subject to disciplinary action. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Any activity that is required as part of the process of pledging or initiating new members.
2. Meetings whose purpose is to recruit new members.
3. Meetings of members to conduct fraternity business or to socialize with each other.
4. Social events such as parties organized and/or funded by the membership of the organization, whether those events are restricted to the members themselves or are open to the entire campus.
5. Use of College facilities such as bulletin boards or the internal campus mail system to promote or advertise events sponsored by the organization.

Students who violate any of these restrictions imposed by the Trustees' resolution will be subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions available to the College. The restrictions apply to the public and private areas of the dormitories of Amherst College, as well as to all other buildings and facilities, including the grounds, athletic fields, and other property of the College.