THE PLACE OF ATHLETICS

AT AMHERST COLLEGE:

A QUESTION OF BALANCE

Report of The Special Committee
on the Place of Athletics at Amherst

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Chairman's Acknowledgments

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Service on this Committee has reminded me once again of the extraordinary wealth of talent and dedication on which Amherst draws every day. This report would not have been possible without the hard work, insight, patience, and good will of every member of this Committee. I thank Gretchen Bowe and Marlon Cush, for so ably articulating their own views and the views of their fellow students; Michele Deitch, for pushing us, through her questions and especially through a thoughtful preliminary draft, to grapple with the hard questions; Peter Gooding, for patiently explaining, documenting, and defending Amherst's athletic programs; Leah Hewitt and Gordie Levin, for keeping us focused always on the primacy of Amherst's educational mission and academic ambitions; Ben Lieber, for his wealth of knowledge, wisdom, and humor; Geoff Woglom, for always asking for evidence to support assertions, and answering his own challenge through his statistical analysis of the classes of 2003-2005; and Jide Zeitlin for his probing questions, incisive comments, and careful editing.

Given the diversity of views held by the members of this Committee, it is not surprising that we have disagreed -- and, even after nearly two years of thoughtful deliberation, continue to disagree -- about the inferences to be drawn from the evidence we have gathered. Not all members of the Committee agree fully with all of the statements made, or conclusions drawn, in this report. Nonetheless, I thank my colleagues on the Committee for proceeding throughout this lengthy process in a spirit of seeking consensus. This report represents the product of that search for consensus.

Colin S. Diver '65
April 30, 2002

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I. Introduction

In the fall of 2000, following consultation with the faculty and the Trustees, President Tom Gerety established the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst, and charged the committee with the task of weighing the extent to which Amherst's athletic programs are consistent with the overall purposes of the College. The charge described an ideal to which we believe most in the College community would subscribe: "our athletic teams and indeed all of our extracurricular activities should enhance the intellectual and social experience of our diverse student body." The President's charge contained many questions asking us to scrutinize the experiences of Amherst students and to assess the balance between academics and athletics at the College. A copy of the Committee's charge appears in Appendix A.

As we on the Committee understand it, the charge to the Committee recognizes that Amherst is, first and foremost, an educational institution, dedicated to developing the qualities of open inquiry, rigorous analysis, intellectual honesty, individual responsibility, and personal self-discipline in a small, mutually supportive, and diverse community. Every program that the College undertakes, including its athletic program, should be judged in light of its contribution to this overarching goal. In evaluating the place of athletics at Amherst, we use the term "balance" to communicate this sense of supportiveness and proportionality that must characterize the role of the athletic program within the College's educational mission.

As a general matter, we believe that Amherst has kept its athletic program in a proper balance with its educational mission. Throughout its long history, Amherst has stressed the importance of physical education and athletic competition. It has striven to enable academically gifted students to participate in high-quality athletic endeavors without sacrificing their academic interests or thwarting their intellectual ambitions. The College's environment values athletic participation for its contribution to academic performance, personal growth, social cohesion, and community spirit. Indeed, many observers around the country look at Amherst with a measure of admiration, saying that "Amherst has it all" and that "Amherst has it just about right."

Maintaining this balance nonetheless represents a great challenge for the College. Indeed this challenge has become steadily more daunting in recent years, as forces in the popular culture and the competitive environment have intensified the relative emphasis on athletic success in American higher education, even in the context of selective liberal arts colleges. Institutions such as Amherst constantly face choices -- in setting admissions policy and making individual admission decisions, expanding or contracting team rosters, adding or dropping varsity or club sports, scheduling practice sessions, playing seasons, and post-season play, and so forth -- that threaten to upset the balance between academic and athletic endeavors. Even small shifts in that balance can have a major impact on a college such as Amherst, given our high student selectivity, academic excellence, and relatively small enrollment.

In the report that follows, our committee has attempted, within the limitations of the time and information available to us, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the athletic program at Amherst and to assess its impact on the College's educational mission. We identify those respects in which the athletic program seems to us to be in proper balance with the educational mission, and those respects in which it is not. Finally, we have suggested initiatives that the College should undertake (including continued support of initiatives already underway) to assure that the athletic program, in the words of President Gerety's charge to the Committee, "enhances the intellectual and social experience of our diverse student body."

A. Sources of Information

In the report that follows, we discuss only a fraction of the information collected, analyzed, and considered by our committee over the course of the last year and a half. We have reviewed many published studies of the cost, benefits, and impact of athletic programs on institutions of higher education. As a general framework for identifying issues and research methodologies, the Committee found particularly useful the recent book by James Shulman and William Bowen, The Game of Life (Princeton University Press 2001). The Game of Life measures the impact of athletic programs on admissions, academic performance, gender equity, careers, and alumni support at 30 academically selective universities and colleges. The 30 institutions include eight Division IA private universities, four Division IA public universities, four Division IAA Ivy League universities, three Division III universities (including Tufts), four Division III women's colleges, and seven Division III coed liberal arts colleges (including Wesleyan and Williams, but not Amherst). Data were gathered from three cohorts: the entering classes of 1951, 1976, and 1989. Generally, the authors find that, over time at the institutions studied, athletics have become increasingly specialized and athletes have become increasingly distinct from their non-athlete classmates in a number of respects (for example, academic entry credentials, academic performance, fields of study, career paths, and post-graduate earnings).

Following publication of the book, the governing board of the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) commissioned the authors to prepare a follow-up report focusing on the impact of athletics on NESCAC schools. The results of this study are reported in an unpublished report entitled "The Academic-Athletic Divide" (2001). Focusing on the cohort of students matriculating in 1995, this study examines the impact of athletics on the NESCAC colleges (excluding Tufts University, because of its large enrollment). The study compares the NESCAC schools to samples of: (1) other co-ed liberal arts colleges (Carleton, Denison, Kenyon, Macalester, Oberlin, Pomona, and Swarthmore); (2) Ivy League universities (Columbia, Princeton, Pennsylvania, and Yale); and (3) women's colleges (Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Smith, and Wellesley). As a general matter, the report found that observations from the NESCAC schools mirrored those that the authors found in the larger sample, as reported in The Game of Life.

Information about Amherst comes from many sources. The Office of Institutional Research provided us with a database on over 4,000 students in the classes of 1993-2002.

The Office of Admission provided us with similar information on the classes of 2003-2005. These two admissions databases include demographic information, pre-Amherst academic credentials, admissions office ratings of academic and athletic ability, and grade point averages and majors of students while attending Amherst. Unfortunately one cannot readily compare findings derived from the two databases, because they use somewhat different definitions of terms such as "athlete," "highly-rated athlete," and "recruited athlete." Prior to 1999 (when the class of 2003 was admitted), athletic status was based solely on athletic rating by the Athletic Department (a "highly rated" athlete received an athletic rating of 1 or 2 from the coaching staff). Some students so described did not in fact participate in athletics; others ("walk-ons") did. Furthermore, not all students who were in fact known to be outstanding athletes at the time of application received high ratings, since the system tended to discourage coaches from assigning a high rating to students likely to be admitted for some other reason. The system used to rate applicants' academic potential also varies somewhat between the periods covered by the two databases.

We supplemented these two databases with information on housing patterns, disciplinary experience, post-graduation experience, athletic participation, and alumni giving and participation. The Dean of Students Office provided the housing and disciplinary data; the Career Center provided the post-graduation information; the Department of Athletics supplied the team rosters; and the Development Office provided information on alumni giving and participation. We also examined the rosters for the Amherst Student, the chorus, and the orchestra, so as to compile a cadre of "active" nonathletes with which to compare the characteristics and performance of athletes. (To be an "active" student, the student had to participate in the extracurricular activity for the entire school year.)

We also relied upon survey data gathered by Professor Buffy Aries of the Amherst College Psychology Department. Professor Aries conducted a four-year longitudinal study of the Class of 2000 at Amherst College, focusing on students' extracurricular activities, personal development, and social life. This database allowed us to compare the experiences of athletes (defined as members of athletic teams who devoted more than 10 hours a week to athletics) to "highly active non-athletes" (defined as those students who devoted more than 10 hours a week to an extra-curricular activity). The database also permitted us to compare men who played "high-profile sports" (football, basketball, and hockey) to other male athletes. Comparisons were made in five areas: academics; social experience/social skills; character; diversity; and morale.

Finally, we held hearings and conducted numerous interviews, at which we heard from a large number of Amherst students (both athletes and non-athletes), faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni, as well as athletic directors at peer schools. The impressionistic and anecdotal information they provided played a crucial role in our deliberations and some of their stories and points of view are included here.

The data and observations contained in this report repeatedly use the term "athlete" to describe a category of student. It is very important in reading this report to

recognize the ambiguities and vagaries in that term. As used in various databases, records, and conversations, the term has a variety of meanings, including: (1) a member of a varsity team roster; (2) a team member who actually plays in intercollegiate contests; (3) a student who (as an applicant) was highly rated for athletic ability by the coaching staff; and (4) a student who was admitted primarily for athletic ability. We have tried, especially in presentations of quantitative data, to clarify which of these definitions we are using. But we recognize that it is not always possible to specify a precise definition or to have confidence that the definition accurately describes the underlying data. We further recognize that this imprecision makes it extremely difficult to compare data across time or across institutions.

In analyzing and presenting data, we sometimes compare "athletes" (however that term is defined) to non-athletes, and sometimes to non-athletic "actives." In many instances we break the category of athletes down by gender, and in some instances we further break men's teams down into the categories of high-profile sports and non-high-profile sports. In so doing, we employ the same definition of high-profile sports (namely, football, basketball, and hockey) as is used in The Game of Life and "The Academic-Athletic Divide," so as to facilitate comparisons between Amherst and the schools surveyed in those works. Finally, on some occasions, we report data or discuss observations specifically applicable to the football team. This, too, echoes the practice of the previously cited works. With a roster more than twice as large as the next-largest team (and three times the average team's roster), the football team is the only team whose size allows for independent statistical analysis. It is, furthermore, the most expensive team sport and, to most observers of collegiate sports in general and Amherst athletics in particular, the most visible and salient sport. As we have repeatedly found in our investigation, football is frequently a lightning rod for both praise and criticism of intercollegiate athletics in America today.

B. Criteria for Evaluating the Place of Athletics at Amherst College

As stated above, we believe that the primary goal of the athletic program (as all extra-curricular programs) is to support and enhance the educational mission of the College. Athletic participation can, in theory, have an impact, either favorable or unfavorable, on four variables that critically affect the ability of Amherst to achieve its ambitious educational goals: (1) the quality and success of the academic program; (2) personal growth and social interaction among its students; (3) the diversity of the student body; and (4) the level of college spirit and support. The potential impact of an athletic program on these variables can be stated as pairs of contrasting propositions.

1. Academic Program

Amherst's educational philosophy relies heavily on student initiative. Its open curriculum presupposes a student body that is academically motivated, self-confident, and capable of self-direction. Its highly interactive style of classroom discussion requires not only a critical mass of discussion "catalysts," but also full participation by intellectually engaged and intellectually fearless discussants.

Athletic programs could have a favorable effect on the quality of Amherst's academic program by, for example, helping to attract academically gifted and ambitious applicants to the College (applicants who are themselves athletes or who are attracted to a college with a competitive athletic program). On the other hand, athletic programs could detract from the academic program if they required that, as a price for competitive success, the College devote scarce admissions slots to students with significantly lower levels of academic aptitude or interest than it would otherwise admit. Likewise, athletics could reinforce academics by enabling athletic participants to develop analytical or intellectual skills and traits such as tactical and strategic thinking, problem-solving, or attentive listening. Conversely, athletics could impede the academic performance of student-athletes by imposing excessive demands of time and physical energy or by fostering a social culture that devalues intellectual pursuits.

2. Personal Growth and Social Interaction

As a small, residential liberal arts college, Amherst is committed to fostering the personal growth and development of its students outside the classroom and the laboratory, and to fostering an inclusive, cooperative, and mutually supporting social life that can support both academic and personal growth.

Athletic programs may support these goals by helping participants develop positive personal traits, such as discipline, focus, teamwork, courage, determination, sportsmanship, and integrity, and by enhancing social skills, such as openness, leadership, trust, collaboration and teamwork. Conversely, athletics could conceivably undermine those goals, by instilling an unhealthy degree of competitiveness, anti-intellectualism, social insularity, or a social culture that fosters addictive, destructive, or antisocial activities, or a culture that leads to ostracism and stereotyping of athletes by non-athlete students, faculty or staff.

3. Equity and Diversity

As a matter of both moral imperative and educational philosophy, Amherst is deeply committed to the principles of equity and diversity in everything it does, including both its curricular and its extracurricular programs. It is therefore important that its athletic programs be judged in part by the extent to which they: (1) promote the principles of equality and fairness of treatment of individuals, according to their personal merits, abilities, and efforts; (2) increase constructive and mutually beneficial interactions among individuals of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and (3) afford greater opportunities to members of groups that have been historically denied such opportunities.

4. College Spirit and Support

Amherst takes justifiable pride in the sense of community that it engenders among those who study, teach, and work at the College. That sense of community, extending

over time and distance to embrace all whom the College has touched, is important both as a basis for spiritual and emotional fulfillment, as well as a source of ongoing volunteer and financial support for the College's educational program.

Athletic programs can enhance the general spirit and morale of the College by providing a focal point around which members of the community can gather, and by instilling a sense of cohesion and enthusiasm for the College's program among students, faculty, and staff. Conversely, athletic programs could diminish morale or cohesion to the extent that the teams are unsuccessful on the playing field or that the athletic programs become a source of controversy and division. Likewise, athletic programs may support the school's academic mission by attracting greater alumni and parental financial support. However, athletic programs may detract from the academic mission to the extent that they divert an excessive share of the limited financial and other resources of the College that could be more effectively devoted directly to academic pursuits.

* * * * *

We wish to emphasize two points about the foregoing statement of evaluative criteria. First, a similar set of criteria could be applied to all extracurricular programs at Amherst College. We do not intend to imply that athletics bears some special burden of justification. Second, by describing the role of athletics in an instrumental fashion, we do not mean to slight the intrinsic values of athletic participation. Athletic participation is for most people a source of pleasure and satisfaction (deriving from the challenge and excitement of competition, the sense of mastery and progress, and the physical conditioning and exertion). Surely it is appropriate for an undergraduate college to afford to its students (and, for that matter, faculty and staff) resources for such experiences. The choice of resources to offer and the level of investment in such resources must, however, be shaped primarily by the institution's overall goals, and must always be subject to the constraint that the attainment of those goals not be undermined or impeded. For that reason, in the body of this report we rely on the four variables listed above as the primary criteria for evaluating Amherst's athletic program. To provide the foundation for this assessment, we first offer a detailed description of the athletic programs offered by the College.

II. Athletic Programs at Amherst College: Scope, Quality, and Competitive Environment

By any plausible measure, Amherst has an excellent athletic program of which it should be proud. The College offers to its students a wide range of opportunities to play on varsity, club, and intramural teams, a highly competitive playing environment, and the support of an excellent coaching staff and excellent athletic facilities. Its varsity program is widely regarded as one of the more successful in the NCAA's Division III. It is consistently rated as one of the three or four most successful programs in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), which is often described as

Division III's most competitive conference. Athletic Directors from rival schools are uniform in their praise and admiration of the Amherst program. The Athletic Director at Williams, for example, praises the "broad based strength" of Amherst's program, which is "reflected in Amherst's success both within NESCAC and nationally." Middlebury's Athletic Director describes Amherst's athletic program as "one of the most highly respected in Division III in the entire country." Echoing sentiments expressed by others, Wesleyan's Athletic Director describes as "remarkable" the ability of Amherst to "field teams that are among the most competitive in the conference" in spite of its relatively small student body. Summing up, the Tufts Athletic Director described Amherst's program as "a model for other colleges to follow when looking to achieve excellence both athletically and academically."

Maintaining a broadly successful athletic program is important to the self-image of Amherst in the eyes of many alumni, students, faculty, and staff. In interviews with representatives of each constituency, the Committee heard repeatedly about Amherst's widespread and longstanding reputation for maintaining a healthy balance between excellence in the classroom and the playing field. The relative evenness of this balance was often cited as a primary basis for differentiating Amherst from Williams, on the one hand, and Swarthmore, on the other.

Likewise the Committee heard widespread praise for the intelligence, discipline, and sportsmanship of Amherst's teams. Rival athletic directors attribute these qualities not only to the academic gifts of Amherst's student-athletes, but also to the educational gifts of its coaching staff.

Before describing in greater detail the athletic programs offered by Amherst, it is important to place Amherst within the competitive environment of intercollegiate athletics.

A. Amherst's Competitive Environment

1. NCAA Division III

Amherst is a member of Division III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The NCAA is a self-governing association of American colleges and universities with intercollegiate athletic programs. The number of institutional members now stands at 1,041. Nearly a century old, the Association emerged after World War II as the dominant policy-making and regulatory body in American collegiate sports. Over the years it has evolved a complex governance structure and body of rules, covering such matters as the rules of play, recruitment of athletes, financial aid policies, financial support policies, playing and practice seasons, and post-season championships.
The Association is divided into three divisions, one of which (Division I, representing large universities), is further divided into three subdivisions. Most of the national athletic "powerhouses" and would-be powerhouses are in Division I-A. The Ivy League universities comprise Division I-AA. Division III consists of some 373 colleges, which include the eleven members of NESCAC (discussed below).

The NCAA's constitution embraces numerous worthy "principles," including the principles of "sound academic standards" and "amateurism." Its bylaws contain elaborate regulations designed to enforce these principles. For example, to be eligible to participate in varsity sports, a student must: (1) be enrolled in a full-time program of academic study; (2) have been admitted "in accordance with the regular, published entrance requirements of that institution"; (3) be in "good academic standing"; and (4) maintain "satisfactory progress toward a baccalaureate or equivalent degree." The bylaws seek to enforce the amateurism principle by forbidding students from receiving any form of "pay" or remuneration for their services as athletes, from using an "agent," or from becoming involved with a professional athletic team. In addition, the bylaws specify detailed restrictions on the practices in which member institutions may engage during recruitment of student-athletes.

Worthy as these regulations may be, they are riddled with ambiguities and exceptions that can seriously impair their effectiveness in actual operation, especially in Division I, where collegiate athletics has become a hugely expensive and, in some cases, hugely profitable business. Recent studies and media reports chronicle the scandalously low academic entry credentials, academic performance, rate of academic progress, and graduation rates of recruited athletes at highly-ranked Division I-A universities. The consistent finding of these studies is that, at many of these schools, the athletic program (or at least the "high profile" portion of the program), has become a largely self-contained enterprise only loosely connected to the institution's academic program.

The members of NCAA's Division III have, for the most part, avoided the worst manifestations of this "professionalization" of intercollegiate athletics, in large part because of the member schools' small size (making investment in big-time sports programs relatively more difficult), stronger academic cultures, and more restrictive recruiting and financial aid practices.

Overall, it must be said, that Amherst's membership in the NCAA is as uneasy as it is inevitable. The culture, ethos, and written policies of the Association permit, and indeed even encourage, a degree of specialization and "professionalization" of collegiate sports that runs counter to the participatory ideal and academic supremacy that have traditionally characterized athletics at Amherst. That said, Amherst has no practical choice but to remain a member. Intercollegiate athletics is a domain, much like professional athletics, in which participating members must be governed by some set of uniform rules. In the world of intercollegiate athletic rule making (and rule enforcing), the NCAA is a monopolist. Fortunately for schools such as Amherst, the NCAA has been hospitable to the creation of separate Divisions with at least somewhat differing sets of rules and practices. Furthermore, the NCAA has accommodated the creation of playing conferences which may promulgate and enforce their own rules, so long as those rules are not in conflict with (that is, less restrictive than) those of the NCAA.

2. NESCAC

Amherst is one of 11 institutions, including 9 coeducational liberal arts colleges (Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Colby, Connecticut, Hamilton, Middlebury, Trinity, and Williams), and two coeducational universities (Tufts and Wesleyan), that comprise the New England Small College Athletic Conference, a conference within Division III of the NCAA. NESCAC was founded in 1971 to provide some regularity of competition and consistency of standards for a group of then-10 relatively like-minded and geographically proximate liberal arts colleges. Since 1971, the Conference's membership has grown to 11 with the subtraction of Union College and the addition of Connecticut and Hamilton Colleges.

The NESCAC Manual declares that the Conference is based on the following "Basic Principles":

> A. The program in intercollegiate athletics is to be kept in harmony with the educational purposes of the institution.
> B. To maximize opportunities for students to participate in more than one intercollegiate sport, and to keep a proper perspective on the role of athletics, limits are placed on the number of contests, as well as on starting and terminal dates for practice and competition.
> C. Competing players are to be representative of the student body.
> D. The academic authority of each college is to control intercollegiate athletic policy.
> E. Developing programs will be allowed some latitude within the spirit of the NESCAC agreement.

The Manual goes on to proclaim that its members are "committed first and foremost to academic excellence and believe that athletic excellence supports our educational mission."

Amherst has always been a leader in NESCAC, academically and athletically. Williams College is the conference's perennial athletic powerhouse. In addition to Amherst and Williams, other particularly strong athletic programs include those at Middlebury and Trinity Colleges. Maintaining a position of athletic leadership in NESCAC is a challenge for Amherst, given its academic selectivity and relatively small size. As measured by acceptance rate (percentage of applicants admitted) and average SAT scores of matriculants, Amherst is perennially the most selective college in NESCAC. At the same time, Amherst is the third smallest member school as measured by student enrollment. The median NESCAC member's enrollment is roughly 200 students larger than Amherst's. Based on the average NESCAC athletic participation rate of 38%, this would translate into roughly 75 additional varsity athletes.

NESCAC is considered one of the strongest athletic conferences in Division III. Its top teams have traditionally been invited to the NCAA championships and typically perform well. NESCAC achieves this distinction despite being comprised of highly

selective schools, and having playing seasons that are the shortest or among the shortest of any collegiate conference.

Last year the Presidents of the NESCAC schools (sitting as the Conference's governing committee) engaged William Bowen of the Mellon Foundation and his colleagues to perform a follow-up study of the impact of athletics on the NESCAC schools. The study uses some of the measures employed in The Game of Life to examine the impact of athletics on member schools. Based on the study's findings, NESCAC formed committees to develop proposals for redressing what many presidents believe to be an imbalance between athletic and academic priorities. During the past two or three years, new presidents have assumed office (or soon will assume office) in a large majority of NESCAC schools. Thus, the Conference appears to be ripe for a serious and searching reconsideration of the assumptions on which its rules and practices have been built.

3. NESCAC as a Playing Conference

Since its founding, NESCAC schools have competed against other NESCAC schools in most sports. In football, member teams played only against other member schools (although not all of them, since the football season is limited to eight contests). In most sports, however, member schools retained discretion to decide which of the NESCAC schools to include on its schedule. In a policy statement adopted in 1998, the Presidents of the NESCAC schools announced the intention of becoming a "playing conference" -- meaning that every member school would schedule at least one contest against every other member school each year in virtually every sport played by the conference. (In addition, of course, in most sports member colleges would also play against many non-NESCAC opponents.) The pressure for this development came primarily from the schools on the geographical periphery of NESCAC, who were having difficulty attracting opponents from distant locations. The decision to become a playing conference was also justified as facilitating the establishment of a post-season NESCAC tournament whose winner would automatically receive a bid to NCAA Division III tournaments.

We heard conflicting testimony concerning the impact of this development on Amherst's athletic program. On the one hand, the expectation that each member school will play each other member in virtually every sport provides greater predictability in scheduling. It also undoubtedly helps to strengthen interschool rivalries (already intense in the case of Amherst and Williams, but much less so in Amherst's relationship to other member schools).

On the other hand, the playing conference arrangement undeniably constrains the freedom of Amherst to optimize its schedules geographically or by level of competition. Having to travel to contests with, say, Hamilton or the Maine schools every other year in every sport imposes significant costs on Amherst's athletic program that it might not otherwise choose to bear. In an ideal world, the College would be free, in each sport, to decide from time to time whether scheduling such opponents was in its best interests.

Most observers doubt, however, that Amherst can roll back the clock to a time when it had more control over its schedule. It would be politically difficult to secure the necessary agreement of a majority of member schools to relax the playing conference rules.

Furthermore, there is serious doubt whether Amherst could leave the conference, either by joining another conference or "going it alone" as an independent. There is no other conference that Amherst could join that would offer anything like the geographical proximity and similarity in academic selectivity offered by NESCAC. The rules of most other extant conferences are, moreover, even less hospitable to maintaining the primacy of the academic endeavor. Becoming an independent is a somewhat more plausible option for Amherst, given its academic and athletic prestige and its central location in the Northeast. Still, it appears to us that the risks of such a strategy (the unpredictability and instability of the competitive environment) outweigh the expected benefits.

One strategy suggested by one or two commentators is to seek to expand NESCAC by adding additional schools or perhaps even by merger with another conference. The value of such a strategy to Amherst is uncertain. It depends on whether the expansion of the conference would be accompanied by some loosening of the expectation that every school play every other school in all sports. Unless this happens, expanding the conference is likely only to make matters worse.

A related proposal, floated earlier by a group of schools led by Haverford and more recently by the president of Carleton College, would be to join with other relatively selective liberal arts schools to lobby for the establishment of a new Division (IV) or subdivision (III-A) of the NCAA. Creation of such a division would not necessarily increase Amherst's scheduling freedom. It might have this effect, if the new Division became the primary locus of NESCAC members' competitive environment. If that happened, the NESCAC schools that lobbied hard for the requirement of playing conference status might be willing to relax that requirement, on the theory that they could be assured of regular competition against enough members of the new Division. Whether this would occur is very difficult to predict.

We do, however, feel somewhat more confidence in predicting that a liberal arts division would decelerate the "arms race" in which Amherst has of late been caught. At the present time, Amherst (like all NESCAC teams) competes against many schools in Division III (and for that matter Division I) that, given their larger size and lower academic selectivity, are willing and able to invest much more in athletics (both financially and in terms of academic sacrifices). These non-NESCAC teams are permitted by NCAA rules and by the rules of their conferences to play longer seasons and recruit more aggressively. Remaining competitive with these teams, while remaining true to the ideals of Amherst College is especially difficult.

We have heard two arguments to the effect that creating a liberal arts division will have little effect on Amherst's competitive environment. First, Amherst's primary rival, Williams College, is already the perennial powerhouse of Division III. To the extent that

Amherst feels compelled to calibrate its athletic programs by the prospect of defeating Williams, so it is argued, creation of a new liberal arts division would have little effect on the College's competitive level. Second, the athletic arms race that we describe reflects broader societal and cultural forces that even a division comprised solely of liberal arts schools would have difficulty resisting. We recognize the force of both arguments, but nonetheless believe that substituting, in the athletic schedule, more academically comparable liberal arts schools for non-comparable universities is bound to dampen at least somewhat the overall level of competitive pressure felt by NESCAC collectively (including perhaps even Williams) and by Amherst individually. Furthermore, we believe that defining Amherst's athletic program solely by reference to the competitive level of Williams (or, for that matter, any single competitor) is a mistake that must be strenuously resisted.

4. Post-Season Competition

Prior to 1994, NESCAC teams were precluded from participating in post-season tournaments. In 1993 NESCAC's governing board reversed this policy and began to list post-season tournaments that were "sanctioned" for participation by members of the Conference. For the most part these tournaments are the NCAA Division III championships (or the counterpart event sponsored by the national association of a particular sport). (Permission to participate in ECAC tournaments is being phased out, effective in the 2000-2001 year.) Under the 1993 rule, NESCAC member schools were permitted to accept at-large invitations from the NCAA (or other tournament sponsoring organization).

In 1998 NESCAC decided to develop its own post-season tournament in most sports, other than football, which would be designed to crown a conference champion. Pursuant to this decision, the Conference developed procedures for a conference championship round at the end of the season in each of 13 sports, and launched its first tournaments in 2000. In most team sports, the championship round consists of the top seven NESCAC teams (based on the results of the regular-season round robin), engaged in a single elimination tournament. Some tournaments consist of four teams in a double-elimination format. The adoption of the tournament has meant that a team may play as many as three tournament contests in addition to the regular season.

The 1998 policy statement further declared that only the NESCAC conference champion would be permitted to attend the appropriate national championship post-season competition (typically, the NCAA Division III championship round). In the wake of criticism of this policy, the NESCAC governing board voted in September 2001 to permit member teams to accept at-large bids from the NCAA (or equivalent organization). This decision was made effective only for the current academic year. Many NESCAC presidents felt that such a policy should not be adopted on a permanent basis without adopting compensating changes in NESCAC rules that would reduce the overall time demands of athletic participation. A NESCAC committee is currently considering such rules changes.

The Committee heard criticism of the newly established NESCAC tournament system. One criticism claimed that the tournament lengthened the season. If by "season," one means the calendar interval between start of practice and end of tournament, this does not seem to be the case. The NESCAC tournament typically replaces the last week or weekend of the regular season. Also, for many teams, it replaces contests previously played in the ECAC tournament. A more telling criticism, however, is that the tournament increases the intensity of the playing schedule, by compressing a larger number of contests into the same period. In particular, it can create a very intense competitive period at the end of the regular season. To the extent that the tournament has had this effect, it may have marginally increased the difficulty of team members to keep up with their course work during the playing season, or at least during the period of the tournament. (Team captains and the Athletic Director dispute this point.) To minimize the direct conflicts between tournament games and class schedules, the NESCAC governing board in September 2001 voted to eliminate midweek tournament games for all sports.

NESCAC's tournament rules have also been criticized for barring acceptance of at-large invitations to the NCAA national championships. Most athletes who have participated in NCAA tournaments claim that the experience was the highlight of their athletic career (if not, indeed, of their collegiate career). In addition to its value to the participants, participation at the national level can bring favorable attention to a college and can be a source of great pride among its alumni and other supporters. Responding to this criticism, the NESCAC presidents recently voted to relax the ban on acceptance of at-large invitations (effective for the current year, but likely to be made permanent). As a practical matter, however, it appears that this rule change will have little impact on a college like Amherst, since the NCAA extends only a small number of at-large invitations to NESCAC members.

B. Scope and Quality of Amherst's Athletic Programs

Amherst offers its students a broad range of opportunities to participate in athletic activities. These opportunities take three primary forms: varsity athletics, club sports, and intramural sports. The intercollegiate varsity athletic program consists of those sports teams for which the College provides, at its expense, the full range of support, including professional coaching, provision of uniforms, equipment, and facilities, arrangement and scheduling of intercollegiate competition, and provision of travel to away games. The club sports program consists of teams that engage in intraschool and, in many cases, intercollegiate competition, but are organized and run by students. To be recognized by the College, a club must have a coach or advisor approved by the Athletic Department and must meet other requirements. Clubs are funded in part by the College's Student Finance Committee, in part by the Athletic Department, and in part by the participants themselves. The intramural sports program consists of athletic contests between teams of students organized by the students, based on leagues and schedules structured with the help of the Athletic Department. In addition to varsity, club, and intramural athletics, many students participate in informal and casual athletic activities, using the College's athletic facilities.

1. Varsity Sports

a. Number and Variety of Teams

Measured by the number and variety of teams, Amherst has a rich intercollegiate athletic program. Amherst currently fields 27 intercollegiate varsity teams, including 13 men's teams and 14 women's teams. There are no co-educational teams, nor are there any junior varsity teams. The sports included in the varsity program, and the number of students participating in each sport during the period 1991-2001, are listed in Appendix B. The number of teams grew, of course, after the College began admitting women, but has remained relatively stable for the past two decades (see Appendix C). In 1979-1980, for example, Amherst fielded 28 teams. A decade later, with the addition of volleyball, there were 29 teams. In 1999-2000, following the adding of two sports (women's hockey and softball) and the dropping of four sports (men's and women's crew, skiing, and wrestling – all, except wrestling, retained as club sports), the number of teams had dropped back to 27.

For all its breadth and diversity, Amherst's varsity athletic program is slightly smaller than that of its NESCAC peers, at least as measured by the number of teams fielded. According to the 2001-2002 NESCAC survey (see Appendix D), Amherst has the fewest teams of any NESCAC school. The other ten teams in the conference have between 28 and 32 varsity sports. The conference as a whole averages 29.4 sports. What is more, eight of the NESCAC schools, unlike Amherst, have junior varsity teams (the average number of JV teams for all NESCAC schools is 4.8). Williams, for example, fields 31 varsity teams and 16 junior varsity teams, for a total of 47. Middlebury and Trinity, two other schools heavily invested in their athletic programs, have 30 and 5 (total 35), and 29 and 10 (total 39), respectively.

This apparent disparity in scale of varsity program between Amherst and its competitors is, however, somewhat misleading for at least two reasons. First, Amherst may have more club sports than other NESCAC schools. For example, Amherst's 18 club sports more than doubles Williams's 8. Second, because Amherst has one of the lowest enrollments in NESCAC, it is not surprising that it has somewhat fewer teams. If one measures the size of the program by the number of varsity teams per student, for example, one could conclude that Amherst actually has one of the largest varsity programs in NESCAC.

As compared to members of other Division III conferences, NESCAC schools have particularly rich athletic programs. In their study of athletics at NESCAC schools, Bowen at al. report that NESCAC colleges tend to have more teams than do members of comparable conferences. This fact is said to reflect both a stronger tradition of widespread athletic participation and a greater popularity of certain sports (e.g., squash, hockey, crew, skiing) in the Northeastern United States. Outside of NESCAC, coeducational Division III schools of high or relatively high academic standing seem to have roughly a third fewer varsity teams. For example:

Swarthmore	19
Haverford	21
Kenyon	22
Oberlin	21
Pomona	19
Claremont-Scripps	19.

b. Number of Participants in Varsity Sports

The number of participants in varsity athletics has remained roughly constant over the past two decades. In 1979-1980, the number was 595. That number increased to 614 a decade later, then dropped back to 597 in 1999-2000. As used in the foregoing sentences, the term "participants" measures the sum total of all varsity sport rosters. Since some students play two or three varsity sports, the participant count overstates the number of individual students involved in the varsity athletic program. In academic year 1999-2000, when there were 597 participants, the number of individual students engaged in varsity athletics was 452. That number represented 27% of the total student body. In most years, roughly 80% of participants play one sport; roughly 20% play two; and a handful (1% - 2%) play three.

Levels of athletic participation are notably high in NESCAC schools. The measure of participation used in the Bowen et al. NESCAC study is the percentage of students (by sex) that participated in at least one varsity team during their entire college career. For the class matriculating in the fall of 1995, the average NESCAC school had participation rates of 45% for men and 33% for women. By contrast, the sample of other liberal arts colleges had average participation rates of 28% and 23%, respectively. The sample of Ivy League schools had still lower participation rates, reflecting the larger undergraduate enrollments of universities in the sample.

Changes in the numbers of athletic participants over time at Amherst reflect both changes in the composition of the teams fielded and changes in the size of squads. For most teams, squad sizes have remained relatively constant over time (see Appendix B). But, for a few sports (notably football, men's indoor track, and women's cross-country, indoor track, and outdoor track) squad sizes increased significantly during the 1990s. The termination of junior varsity football led to a deliberate increase in the size of the varsity football squad (in order to provide a cushion in the event of injuries). In other sports, increases in roster size seem to reflect an expansion of the level of interest in the sport and not a conscious attempt by the coach to field a larger team, or to recruit a larger number of highly rated athletes for those teams.

Most, but not all, of the students who play varsity sports in any given academic year, are "recruited athletes" in the sense that athletic ability played at least some role in their admission to the College. According to data supplied to the Committee by Admission Dean Tom Parker, the numbers of matriculants in the three most recent classes who had been highly rated by the Athletic Department (that is, who had received an athletic rating of 1 or 2) were as follows:

Class	A Band	B & C Bands	Total
2003	31	89	120
2004	35	75	110
2005	64	75	139

The column marked "A Band" refers to highly rated athletes who, as applicants, were ranked by the Admissions Office as highly admissible for reasons other than athletic ability (namely, such factors as academic ability – that is, an academic rating of 1 or 2 -- affirmative action, and legacy status). The B Band signifies applicants who received academic ratings of 3 or 4; the C Band signifies applicants who received academic ratings of 5 or 6. The number appearing in the "B & C Bands" column is often referred to, in the vernacular, as the number of athletic "slots" or "tips." The total number of slots given to the Athletic Department is then allocated among the various teams by a process of annual negotiation among the Dean of Admissions and the Athletic Department. In recent years, football has received approximately 20 slots, about five teams receive between 4 and 7 slots each, and the rest receive between zero and three slots each.

The table above shows the result of two admissions policy decisions adopted in 1999. First, the total number of athletic slots was reduced from approximately 90 to 75 (including a maximum of 20 in the C Band). (By agreement among the Presidents of the Little Three Colleges, the total number of athletic slots will be further reduced to 66, beginning with the class of 2006. This includes a commitment to reduce the number of slots awarded to football to 14.) Second, highly-rated athletes who were considered admissible for non-athletic reasons were not counted toward a coach's slot allocation. This policy had two purposes: (1) to encourage coaches to identify accurately all applicants whom they considered highly-ranked athletes, regardless of their potential admissibility on other grounds; and (2) to encourage coaches to recruit academically gifted and minority athletes. The latter policy has begun to bear fruit, at least with regard to the goal of attracting academically gifted athletes. The large increase in the number of A-band highly rated athletes in the class of 2005 is attributable primarily to an increase in the number of academic 1s and 2s among the highly-rated athlete category. There is also a slight increase in the number of minority athletes.

With the two reductions adopted in 1999 and 2002, the total number of admissions slots allocated to the varsity athletic program will have shrunk from about 21% of the student body to about 16% of the student body. Whether this latter number is too high is a matter of contested opinion. Some faculty feel that allocating 16% of admission slots to applicants with academic ratings of 3 to 6 sacrifices too much academic ability in a college that admits only about half of all applicants with academic ratings of 2. Other critics argue that the uniform Little Three quota disadvantages Amherst because of its smaller size than Wesleyan and Williams (where 66 slots represent only 10% and 13% of entering classes, respectively). Critics also point with some concern to the total number of highly-rated athletes, which has most recently risen

to 139, or 33% of the entering class. Using athletic ability, even in part, to admit up to a third of the class, they argue, undermines the academic primacy of the College's culture.

Other observers, by contrast, argue that 16% is only a small fraction of the class and that the academic ability of that 16% is still very impressive by almost any measure. These observers also point out that Amherst's relative commitment to athletic ability in its admissions policy appears to be consistent with the practices of many of Amherst's peers. The Athletic Director at Bates, for example, said that their number of athletic slots (75) is roughly 18% of the entering class of 425. Bowdoin recently announced a reduction in the number of athletic slots from 99 (roughly 25% of its entering class) to 75 (roughly 19%). Before dropping football, Swarthmore allocated a number of slots equal to 16.7% of its entering class. Even Harvard, with its much larger enrollment, allocates about 17% of its entering class to recruited athletes. (In making these comparisons, we are acutely aware that the definition of "athletic slot" varies widely from institution to institution. In the absence of an enforceable agreement among schools to adopt uniform definitions – now in existence among the Little Three Schools and under discussion at NESCAC – comparisons like these can be viewed only as suggestive.)

Although recruited athletes dominate the varsity athletic program, a small number of "walk-ons" still participate in varsity sports. For example, of the 145 freshmen who were listed on the roster of at least one varsity team in academic year 2000, 34 (23%) were walk-ons (that is, not highly rated athletes). In the following academic year, of the 131 freshmen who played on a varsity team, 28 (21%) were walk-ons. These figures, however, surely overstate the actual impact of walk-ons. Testimony of coaches and players suggests that walk-ons are concentrated in a handful of sports and, in most sports, almost never play in actual contests. Furthermore (presumably in large part for that very reason), a high percentage of freshman walk-ons do not return to their squads in their sophomore years. (For example, in the class of 2003, 41% of the walk-ons who participated in a varsity sport in their freshman year did not participate in their sophomore year. The corresponding "freshman-sophomore erosion rate" for highly-rated athletes in that class was only 19%.)

c. Number of Contests

In 1999-2000, Amherst varsity teams played a total of 329 regularly scheduled contests. This is down from 337 in 1989-1990, and up from 290 in 1979-1980 (see Appendix C). Clearly the change in numbers of sports has been primarily responsible for the variation in numbers of scheduled contests over time. If one holds the composition of varsity teams constant, the number of contests has increased only slightly. For the 24 sports fielded continuously during the last two decades, the number of contests increased from 267 in 1979-1980 to 280 in 1999-2000. Ten of those teams played more contests in 1999-2000, nine played fewer, and five played the same number as in 1979-1980.

In addition to scheduled regular-season games, Amherst athletes compete in post-season competitions. In AY 2000-2001, the first full year of the new NESCAC tournament system, 11 Amherst teams competed in the tournament. The increased

number of contests (between one and three contests per participating team) occasioned by adoption of the NESCAC tournament system is partially offset by its replacement of the ECAC tournaments.

In addition to the NESCAC tournament, Amherst teams are eligible for invitations to the NCAA (or equivalent) tournaments, based on winning the NESCAC championship or on receipt of an at-large invitation. It is difficult to estimate the precise impact of these tournaments on the numbers of contests played. During the past five years, a total of 22 Amherst teams went to the NCAAs. This is an average of 4.4 teams per year. With the relaxation of the at-large ban, one can expect this number to increase, but probably not significantly.

d. Success on the Field

By the measure of success on the field (rink, court, etc.), Amherst teams perform extremely well. The Committee compiled won-lost records for the years 1991-2000 for 19 teams (see Appendix E). (This list omitted cross-country, track, and golf, for which data were not readily available.) Altogether, this tabulation contains won-lost records for a total of 181 seasons played by these 19 teams during this ten-year period. (Two of the teams started play during the decade.) Of those 181 team-seasons, 146 teams had a winning record, only 29 had a losing record, and four had an equal number of wins and losses. For the entire period, only three of the teams (including one that started in 1996), had winning percentages below .500. The median team winning percentage, over the ten-year period, was 68%. The overall won-lost record of the 19 teams during this period was 2093-1093-53, or a collective winning percentage (ignoring ties) of 66%.

This is clearly a very impressive achievement by almost any standard. Perhaps the only standard by which it falls short is the winning record of Williams's teams, which during the same period was over 80%.

Another indicator of the quality of the Amherst teams is the fact that College teams qualified for all of the eleven tournaments in the first year of the NESCAC tournament, and that Amherst teams have been invited to the NCAA tournament on 22 occasions in the past five years. Another measure of overall performance is the Sears Cup (which measures how well a school's team performs in the NCAA championship rounds). In Division III, Williams almost always comes in first in the Sears Cup competition. Amherst is almost always in the top 25, and has in recent years been as high as 5th and 6th.

In testimony to the Committee, a group of team captains emphasized the importance of "high quality competition." Won-lost records are important, of course, but what provides greatest satisfaction and motivation is the ability to play at a competitive level and to have a reasonable prospect of defeating most opponents (including arch-rival Williams). Although the Amherst football team went 13 straight years without defeating Williams until the fall 2000 season, many of the recent games had been competitive. By contrast, the football team's 1992 season is often cited as the paradigm of a disastrous

experience, not only because the team lost all of its games, but because of the lopsided scores of most of the games.

Tom Parker, the captains, and many others made the obvious point that academically gifted athletes, in short supply to begin with (especially in some sports), care deeply about the quality of the competition at a school that is seeking to recruit them. A reputation for futility on the playing field, most clearly signaled by chronic losing seasons, can produce a downward spiral that becomes very difficult to overcome. Officials at Swarthmore College used precisely this argument to justify, at least in significant part, its recent decision to drop varsity football. For this reason, it is essential that, if Amherst is to remain active in sports for which academically talented athletes are particularly scarce, the College must maintain a strong, competitive program. The evidence reviewed by the Committee suggests that the College has satisfied this measure of quality in its athletic program.

2. Club Sports and Intramural Program

As of the 2001-2002 academic year, there are 18 recognized club sports. This total includes twelve clubs that engaged in intercollegiate contests, of which six are recognized as "varsity" club sports. So-called varsity club sports are those which receive some significant level of funding support from the Athletic Department, such as the funding or partial funding of a coach position or of equipment and other expenses.

The Athletic Department estimates that club sports currently attract approximately 385 participants. The ten club sports with intercollegiate contests listed 307 participants. The Committee was unable to estimate how many of these "participants" also play a varsity sport or play more than one club sport. If the ratio of individuals to participants is the same as for varsity sports, the number of nonduplicated individuals involved would be about 291 (about 17% of the student body).

The Committee did not attempt in any systematic way to evaluate the quality of the club sports program. We did, however, hear testimonials from students praising the club sports program's ethic of participation and the enthusiasm of student participants. We also, however, heard complaints about the funding of the club sports program. The fact that the program must be funded primarily from the participants' own pockets, it was said, unfairly discriminates against financial aid recipients and generally discourages more active participation by students.

In addition to the Club sports program, Amherst supports an intramural program, currently consisting of six sports (flag football and soccer in the fall, basketball and volleyball in the winter, and softball and indoor soccer in the spring). Each sport is co-ed and open to all students, staff, and faculty. Each team plays approximately two games per week, with a tournament at the end of the season to crown the champion for each sport. During calendar year 2001, the Athletic Department estimates that 300 players participated in the winter season, 250 in the spring season, and 235 in the fall season. If, once again, we assume a 75% nonduplication ratio, this total of 785 would represent 589

individual players, most of them students. Peter Gooding characterizes the intramural program as the "hidden gem" of Amherst's athletic programs since it embodies the spirit of participation and amateurism in its purest form.

3. Coaching Staff

Quantitatively, Amherst's coaching staff appears to be small relative to its peers. According to the 2001-2002 NESCAC survey, Amherst has 15.5 full time coaches and administrators, and 25 part-time coaches. Amherst has the lowest number of full-time coaches among the NESCAC schools. The conference as a whole averages 20.9 full-time coaches. Williams has 25. Amherst's number of part-time coaches, by contrast was roughly equal to the conference average (24.6). (Williams reported 29.)

Qualitatively, however, Amherst appears to be blessed with an excellent group of coaches. Testimonials from team captains, faculty, the Athletic Director, and others on campus all supported this view. Likewise, athletic directors from competitor schools were uniform in their praise of Amherst's coaching staff. The picture that emerges from these comments is that of a group of coaches who are not only highly expert in the strategy, tactics, techniques, and rules of the sports they coach, but also gifted educators and mentors. The coaches set excellent examples of discipline, caring, and sportsmanship for their team members. According to team captains, moreover, the coaches always emphasize the primacy of academic work at Amherst and the necessity for student-athletes to keep athletics in proper perspective.

The Committee did, however, identify two issues relating to the coaching staff that appear to require attention. One is the implementation and interpretation of the contract system for coaches. The current contract system for coaches has been in place since 1983. That system provides that coaches will be initially appointed to a three-year term, and will be eligible for successive reappointments for second, third, and fourth terms of like duration (comprising, altogether, a twelve-year "probationary period"). In the twelfth year of service, the coach would be eligible for a "major evaluation." If the evaluation proves favorable, the coach would thereupon be appointed to a rolling four-year "senior" contract. Initial appointment and all reappointments, including the "major evaluation" in the twelfth year, would require approval of the Trustees upon recommendation of the President, following consultation with the Athletic Department, the Dean of Faculty, and the Committee of Six.

The contract system contemplates that a few members of the Athletic staff may be appointed to tenured faculty positions. In the words of the document adopted by the faculty in 1982: "Amherst has an institutional need to insure that there will continue to remain a significant core group of senior faculty on tenure in the Department of Physical Education and Athletics." Otherwise, however, the document makes it clear that (contract) coaches do not have "faculty status." But it does provide that coaches' salaries and benefits should be "in line with other members of the College Community, such as Faculty and Deans, who are at the same approximate stage in their career."

In testimony to the Committee, some coaches cited three areas of concern regarding implementation of the contract system. First, they are concerned that the College may not be committed to maintaining a "core group" of tenured athletic faculty. The term "core group" was originally understood (at least by the Athletic Department) to mean approximately fifty percent of senior coaches, but that interpretation was dropped in the 1988 description of the contract system. At present three members of the coaching staff have this status. This number is already perceived by some coaches as too low, a situation that would be compounded by retirement or departure of any of the three. Second, the coaches express some concern that the evaluation conducted in the twelfth year does not receive a level of scrutiny sufficiently similar to a tenure review of academic faculty to satisfy the requirement of a "major" review. Finally, the coaches feel that they should be treated more nearly like faculty (albeit not as faculty) for such purposes as employee benefits and participation in faculty governance. (They do not presently receive sabbatical leaves. They are now invited to faculty meetings, but do not have a vote, and are occasionally appointed to faculty committees.)

Echoing views we heard from many members of the faculty, Lisa Raskin, the Dean of the Faculty, believes that there are serious problems with according tenure to members of the coaching staff, primarily because of the difficulty of identifying standards for tenure that would allow for parity across the faculty. On the issue of whether coaches should be considered members of the faculty, the Dean also expressed concern. In keeping with AAUP recommendations, she believes that faculty status should be preserved for members of the academic faculty fully engaged in the instruction of students for academic credit. Certain perquisites, such as voting privileges on academic matters, voting in election of the Committee of Six, and research sabbaticals, should also be reserved for the faculty. However, she emphasized the importance of integrating the coaches more into the academic life of the College and is eager to consider ways of doing so.

A second issue relating to coaching staff concerns the allocation of coaching responsibilities. Amherst has long adhered to the principle that full-time coaches should coach two sports (or coach one sport and carry significant administrative responsibilities). Many colleges and universities, even some of Amherst's competitors, have moved, at least in some sports, to single-sport coaching. With the escalation of the athletics "arms race." even in NESCAC schools, there is some reason to fear that Amherst will find it difficult to resist this trend. In addition, there is reason to be concerned that the workloads of male and female coaches may not be in balance. At present, most of the women's team coaches are head-coaching two teams, whereas most of the men's team coaches are head-coaching one team and assistant-coaching the other. This fact alone does not necessarily indicate a disparity in workload, as the responsibilities and time demands of different teams surely differ. But the situation needs to be closely examined.

4. Facilities

The Committee did not systematically survey the athletic facilities of Amherst and its peers. It is our impression, based on direct observation (and in some cases use) of the

facilities, and comments of players, coaches, and Athletic Directors of other schools, that Amherst is blessed with excellent facilities.

III. The Academic Program

As we stated in the Introduction to this report, Amherst's educational philosophy puts a very high premium on student initiative and student responsibility. Faculty expect students to engage in a sustained process of intellectual exploration, examination, criticism, debate, and interchange -- learning not only from instruction by the faculty, but also importantly from their own efforts and the efforts of their fellow students. The success of such a process requires a student body with a very high – and, most faculty would argue, uniformly high -- level of academic aptitude, motivation, engagement, and commitment.

Over the years Amherst has been fortunate that its athletic programs have been able to coexist comfortably with this educational philosophy. By and large, the College has been able to attract a group of student-athletes who possess the qualities necessary both to realize and to contribute to the educational program. Time and energy demands of athletic participation have not conflicted unduly with the time and energy demands of academic success.

Nonetheless, in recent years many observers at Amherst (as at most academically selective institutions) have expressed increasing concern about the extent to which the athletic program can continue to coexist comfortably with the academic program. Many of these concerns were expressed most forcefully at Amherst in response to a perception that in the early 1990s the College's admissions standards had, without adequate public discussion, "lurched" in the direction of recruiting more athletes with relatively low academic credentials and motivation. In response, the Faculty Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (FCAFA) conducted a year-long study which resulted in a number of changes in admissions policies. The issuance of the Committee's report and adoption of some of its recommendations by the faculty coincided with the appointment of Tom Parker as Dean of Admissions. During his three years in office, Dean Parker has implemented a number of changes that have helped to reassure most members of the community that the perceived imbalance between athletics and academics in admissions is being redressed.

With that recent history in mind (and not wishing simply to repeat FCAFA's work), our Committee attempted to focus its attention primarily on the most recent evidence, in an attempt to ascertain whether the policy changes adopted since 1999 have had the intended effect. We conclude that they have generally had a positive impact, but that there remains cause for concern and room for further improvement.

A. Academic Qualifications

Following up on an analysis of the classes of 1993-2002 conducted by FCAFA, our Committee examined information on the entry credentials of the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005. Professor Geoffrey Woglom of the Economics Department (and a member of this Committee) submitted these data to various statistical analyses. The most recent data show that the academic credentials of highly rated athletes have risen in absolute terms, to such a point that most athletes would rank securely in the top decile of academic candidates in the nation. For example, in the class of 2005, the median verbal SAT score of freshmen highly-rated athletes playing in high-profile sports was 650 and the median math SAT was 685. The corresponding figures for freshman playing on men's non-high-profile-sport teams were 700 and 700; and the corresponding figures for female highly-rated athletes were 680 and 670. These scores would place above the median verbal and math SAT scores in several of the NESCAC schools. This is an encouraging development, attributable to policies put in place by Admissions Dean Tom Parker and his staff in 1999 and 2000.

The situation looks somewhat different, however, when the entry credentials of highly rated athletes are measured in relative terms – that is, relative to the entry credentials of non-athlete matriculants. In the most recent classes, the gap in SAT scores between athletes and non-athletes has persisted, and in some categories has widened. For example, in the class of 2005, the median verbal and math SAT score for athletes highly rated in the high-profile sports were 90 and 40 points, respectively, below the corresponding medians for nonathlete males (740 and 725, respectively). The corresponding figures for the class of 2004 were 80 and 40 points, respectively. The median SAT-score gaps for women, 20 points in both verbal and math SATs for the class of 2004, widened to 40 and 30 points, respectively, in the class of 2005.

Such gaps in entry credentials trouble many observers. We were told by some faculty members, for example, that the quality of teaching and learning suffers when the students in a class have a wide range of aptitudes. These faculty members believe that the quality of the teaching experience for faculty and the learning atmosphere for students would be enhanced if the College enrolled a class with more uniformly high academic aptitude. That said, we must emphasize that the observed gaps are relatively small in absolute magnitude, and that virtually every Amherst athlete would be eagerly sought after my most colleges in the country, including Amherst's academic peers. Further, we note that SAT scores are only one, albeit one of the most important, indicators of academic aptitude. Reflecting the variety of forms of "intelligence" required to excel at Amherst and in life, the Admissions Office quite properly uses many other indicators of academic potential in an effort to develop a multidimensional picture of applicants' abilities.

B. Academic Performance

A well-nigh universal finding of studies such as The Game of Life and "The Academic-Athletic Divide" is that the academic performance of athletes (measured

typically by cumulative GPA or rank-in-class) lags behind that of non-athletes. This effect is more pronounced for male athletes than for female athletes, and is most pronounced for male athletes playing for high-profile teams. Data compiled for the FCAFA report indicated that Amherst fit this pattern during the 1990s.

Data for the classes of 2003-2005, analyzed by Professor Woglom, suggests that this pattern continues. For male students in the class of 2003, for example, the median first year GPA for non-athletes was 11.38; for members of non-high-profile teams, 10.89; and for members of high-profile teams, 10.29. GPAs for the first semester of the second year followed these patterns almost exactly. For women in the class of 2003, the median first-year GPA of non-athletes was 11.44; for athletes, 11.00. The gap remained almost exactly the same in the first semester of the second year.

One obvious explanation for a differential in academic performance is the difference in entry credentials discussed in the previous section. But it appears that this difference explains only part of the performance differential. Even when one controls for differences in entry characteristics that are considered predictors of academic success (such as SAT scores, reader ratings, and the like), one observes a negative differential in the academic performance (measured by grade-point average) of athletes and non-athletes. This is the phenomenon labeled "academic underperformance" by the authors of The Game of Life (and other scholars). The term "underperformance" thus refers, not to a simple differential between all athletes and all non-athletes, but rather to a difference between athletes and otherwise identically situated non-athletes. By using carefully constructed multiple regression analyses, researchers attempt to isolate the effect on academic performance of a single variable – in this case, participation in varsity sports or status as a recruited athlete. Study after study has shown that, by this measure, collegiate athletes tend to underperform academically, and that the rate of underperformance tends to be higher among male athletes than among women athletes, and, among male athletes, highest for participants in high-profile sports and, more specifically, football.

Once again, Amherst is no exception to these general findings. A regression done by the Office of Institutional Research for the FCAFA report showed a statistically significant degree of academic underperformance among the athletes in the classes of 1993-2002. Professor Woglom performed a similar regression analysis, based on data for the classes of 2003-2004. This study is limited by the fact that for the class of 2003 we had only three semesters of academic performance, and for the class of 2004 only one semester. With this caveat, it appears that the general patterns observed for the classes of 1993-2002 persist. The Woglom regressions estimate that both athletic participation correlates with a statistically significant degree of academic underperformance, and that the magnitude of this underperformance is greater for men than women, much greater for recruited athletes than walk-ons, and considerably greater for high-profile male sports than non-high-profile male sports.

In absolute terms, the magnitude of the observed academic underperformance does not appear to be alarmingly large. Depending on the category of "athlete" studied, the observed underperformance was (on average) between roughly a quarter and a half of

a point in the Amherst grade-point-average formula. (As used in the previous sentence, the term "point" corresponds to a letter-grade differential -- the difference between, say, a B and a B+). Many defenders of the existing athletic program dismiss these differentials as unimportantly small. Almost all athletes, they argue, receive quite respectable grades (well within the B range, if not higher). Furthermore, they point out that the rate of academic failure or even academic probation among athletes is no larger than the corresponding rates for non-athletes (these rates are, in all cases, very low). Finally, they argue, grade-point average is not the only relevant indicator of academic achievement, and is not necessarily the most important measure of overall educational benefit or preparation for a successful career or productive life.

The Committee acknowledges the force of these assertions, but nonetheless believes that academic underperformance is a legitimate cause for concern. Course grades are surely not the only relevant measure of academic or educational success, but they are the most important single measure. The College itself uses GPA as the basis for awarding various honors and prizes (such as election to Phi Beta Kappa and graduation honors). In addition, graduate and professional schools generally rely very heavily on grades as an important admission criterion. Responding to the widespread epidemic of grade inflation, graduate and professional schools are focusing increasingly on relative academic performance (rank in class) rather than absolute GPA. Law schools, for example, have largely abandoned absolute GPA in favor of a rank-in-class measure, either supplied by the undergraduate institution or constructed by the Law School Admission Council (which administers the LSAT). The average degree of underperformance found in the Woglom study could make a significant difference in rank-in-class. For the class of 2003, for example, the measured underperformance had the effect of lowering the rank-in-class of the average high-profile team member by about 13 percentage points. For the member of the non-high-profile men's teams, the corresponding figure would be about 16 percentage points; and for female athletes, about 14 points.

C. Obstacles to Achievement of Academic Potential

The Committee believes that the College has an obligation to help every student it admits achieve his or her full academic potential. The student must, of course, take the initiative and sustain the effort, but the College should certainly avoid placing impediments in his or her path. If it is true (as we conclude that it is) that varsity athletes on average achieve lower grade-point averages than they would be predicted to achieve based on entering academic characteristics, the question naturally arises whether the athletic program is itself an impediment to realization of full academic potential. There are at least three plausible reasons why that might be true: (1) the time and energy demands of athletic participation; (2) an athletic "culture" that devalues academic effort and accomplishment; and (3) demoralization among athletes resulting from an anti-athletic stigmatization or stereotyping.

1. Time and Energy Demands

Participation on varsity teams unquestionably consumes large amounts of time and energy. The time demands are greatest, of course, during the playing season, with its expectations of regular daily practice sessions, scheduled contests, and travel time to away games. In addition, some athletes told the committee that they spend a lot of time "cooling down" or "hanging out" with teammates after games or practice sessions.

Some commentators suggest the problem is not so much the total amount of time required for athletic participation as the scheduling of that time. In too many cases, it is said, athletic participation conflicts with class time or laboratory time. Several science faculty specifically noted that athletes have difficulty fitting laboratory sessions into their schedules. Other faculty pointed out conflicts with classes occasioned by travel to away contests and post-season competition.

Quantifying this effect is difficult. Each year the Athletic Director submits and the Dean of the Faculty approves an athletic playing schedule that shows how many class conflicts can be expected. (The term "class conflict" signifies merely that an athletic contest or necessary travel to an athletic contest has been scheduled for a time when one or more classes are regularly scheduled. We do not have data on the number of students actually affected.) For each of the past two seasons (1999-2000 and 2000-2001), there were 50 class conflicts for scheduled regular-season contests in the 27 varsity sports. The maximum number of such conflicts per sport per year was four (three of these instances involving the golf team).

In addition to these scheduled conflicts, conflicts sometimes occur because of post-season competition. For the 1999-2000 season, there were 19 class conflicts in this category, and in 2000-2001 (fall and winter data available only), there were 17. Thus, it appears that post-season competition increases the number of class conflicts by about 40%, a not-insignificant impact. On the other hand, in no sport did the post-season increase the number of conflicts by more than two, and in no sport during the two years was the total number of class conflicts (regular season plus post-season) more than five (there were three such cases).

The team captains who met with the Committee disputed the belief, held by some faculty and non-athletic students, that athletes miss more classes and laboratories than non-athletes. Because of the visibility of the athletic program and some athletes, they contend, faculty are more likely to notice absences by athletes than by non-athletes. But, in fact, they claim, the stress laid by coaches on the primacy of academic work, coupled with the time-management skills inculcated by athletic participation, causes them to miss fewer classes and labs than their counterparts. Indeed, for these reasons, some team captains maintain that they manage their time better during the playing season than during the off-season.

Although varsity athletic participation demands a great deal of time, it must be recognized that the same is true of some non-athletic extracurricular activities. We are not

aware of any evidence that non-athletic actives underperform academically. (For example, in the Woglom regressions, there was no statistically significant evidence that students participating on the Student, chorus, or orchestra underperformed academically.) Also, we note that there is little solid evidence that, for athletes, academic performance varies significantly between semesters in which the playing season falls and the off-season (as one might expect if the "time demands" theory were correct).

Nonetheless, we do have evidence from the Aries study that athletes spend less time in academic pursuits than non-athlete actives. In both junior and senior years, actives reported spending more time studying than did athletes (the differences are statistically significant). The differences are most pronounced for athletes engaged in high-profile sports. As compared to other male athletes, high profile players reported in each of their four years that they spent less time in class and less time studying (the differences were statistically significant in three of the four years). The high-profile athletes also agreed to a greater extent than their non-high-profile counterparts with the statement that membership on their team made it more difficult to earn good grades in each of their four years (the differences were statistically significant two of those years).

2. Anti-Intellectual "Culture"

Many observers of collegiate athletics claim that an anti-academic or anti-intellectual culture develops among at least some high-school athletes, and that this culture carries over into college. Some of the evidence presented to the Committee supports the hypothesis that this phenomenon exists at Amherst College. For example, the Aries study found that athletes every year tended to view themselves as slightly less "academically focused" and less inclined to choose a major by "the intellectual challenge it presents" than their active peers. In both cases the differences were statistically significant in the junior year, and the findings are compatible with other hypotheses discussed in this section.

Another source of evidence regarding athletic culture is observations we heard from faculty and students. Echoing comments made by several faculty, one faculty member wrote to the Committee that the problem of low academic achievement among recruited athletes came to a head early in the 1990s and was first surfaced by student complaints that the "anti-intellectualism" of some student-athletes was "devaluing their Amherst degrees." This faculty member reported that he was "astonished" at the errors that some athletes were making in written assignments and at the general anti-intellectual attitudes that some exhibited. Another faculty member complained to the Committee in an open meeting that some recruited athletes believe that their sole purpose in coming to Amherst is to play on a particular varsity team and that they have "zero" attitude for or affinity for a liberal arts education. Several of the non-athlete student leaders with whom the Committee met supported this assertion of anti-intellectualism. To paraphrase one student leader: "It is demoralizing to the academic students that there are some athletes, especially on a few teams, who don't care about academic work."

Set against these comments are comments from several faculty and students strongly disputing the claim that athletes are anti-intellectual or that athletic participation is incompatible with academic success. One faculty member wrote:

> Over the past twenty or more years I have had many student athletes in my classes. . . . With a few exceptions, the vast majority have been responsible and enthusiastic, conscientious, and hard working. . . . Student-athletes, I have found, are disciplined and organize their time well.

Another reported that over a teaching career at Amherst spanning three decades, he has "noticed no major change in the impact of participation in athletic events on classroom attendance or performance." Likewise, the team captains strongly disputed that athletes as a group give a higher priority to athletics than to academic work.

3. Stigma and Demoralization

The third plausible explanation for academic underperformance is the discouragement and demoralization that athletes feel because of the way in which they believe themselves to be regarded by many faculty and students. We heard considerable testimony that a stigma does in fact attach to athlete status, or at least membership on certain teams. We heard from students, both team captains and non-athlete student leaders, that at least a few members of the faculty are widely known for their hostility to athletic participation or for their belief that certain athletes are academically inferior or unmotivated. The recent study of admissions leading to the FCAFA report and the constituting of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst were taken by many students, especially athletes, as a sign of widespread skepticism or underappreciation of athletics at the College. Several faculty echoed these sentiments, lamenting what they perceive as an anti-athletic attitude among some of their colleagues.

The Aries study provides further support for this phenomenon. As a general matter, actives tended to agree to a higher extent than do athletes with the statement that their (extracurricular) group is "well respected" (the differences were not, however, statistically significant). Athletes, by contrast, agreed to a higher extent than actives with the statement that membership in their group made it harder to be taken seriously by faculty. In both cases, the differences were statistically significant every year.

Whether this "stigma" actually affects academic performance is harder to measure, but it seems plausible to believe that, at the margin, it does. The hypothesis seems especially plausible in the case of the high-profile sports, which were often singled out by commentators who were critical of Amherst's athletic program. The Aries study tends to support the proposition that members of high-profile sports feel especially beleaguered in the Amherst academic community. One striking finding of the Aries study is the amount of time that high-profile athletes spent with each other socially. As compared to other male athletes, in each of their four years high-profile athletes spent a much larger (and statistically significant) percentage of their time with other members of their team, at parties, in the dining hall, and just "hanging out." (For example, sophomore

high-profile athletes spent 78% of their "hanging out" time with other members of their teams, whereas the corresponding percentage for sophomore males who played in non-high-profile sports was 36%.) This fact, by itself perfectly understandable, may possibly bear on the question of academic performance. To the extent that a sense of academic inferiority or lack of motivation exists among individual members of any particular team, the more time that team members spend together, the more these attributes might be magnified and strengthened.

IV. Personal Growth and Social Interaction

A. Personal Growth and Development

The group of team captains that met with the Committee extolled the influence of varsity athletic participation on their personal growth and development. They particularly emphasized the value of athletic participation in helping them to learn how to manage their schedules and budget their time. They also claimed that athletic participation improved their self-discipline, focus, ability to work collaboratively, and ability to formulate and implement strategic and tactical plans. More generally, they cited the pride and self-esteem that flowed from their experiences as members and leaders of athletic teams, especially, of course, if the team was competitively successful. One athlete told the Committee that reaching the final four of the NCAA Division III championship was the "top experience of my life," a sentiment echoed in almost exactly the same words by a recent alumnus (and academically outstanding student) in a conversation with the chairman of the Committee. In the same vein, one faculty member told the Committee that an alumnus (a clergyman who became an Episcopal Bishop) once told him: "Football was the most important class I ever took at Amherst." The alumnus went on to explain that football "taught him how to cope with both success and failure, gave him self-confidence, and developed his leadership skills."

In the course of our study, we also heard from several prominent alumni, including trustees of the College, who indicated that membership on an athletic team carries a value to them as prospective employers. These alumni, who represent fields as diverse as medicine and investment banking, emphasized the value of the personal characteristics developed in a successful collegiate athletic career. Of particular note were characteristics such as "good team players," "competitive," "ambitious," "motivated," and "leadership skills." According to these alumni, their experience with hiring recent college graduates over the years has convinced them that these characteristics, which they view as critical for success in their fields, are more likely to be found in athletes than in non-athletes.

That athletic participation can instill valuable traits seems plain. What is less clear, however, is whether those same traits cannot also be instilled by other forms of activity at the College. The Aries study suggests, for example, that intensive participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities can have the same effect on personal growth and

development. As a general matter, in answers to questions dealing with ambition, confidence, cooperativeness, leadership, and personal growth, actives and athletes reveal very similar self-perceptions, with relatively small, statistically insignificant differences. We do not have comparable data on "inactive" students, and so cannot say how important active extracurricular participation (as opposed to, say, academic work) is in fostering personal growth.

Likewise, the Aries study reveals little significant difference between high-profile athletes and other male athletes, although high-profile athletes were more likely than other male athletes to describe themselves as "good leaders" every year (the difference was statistically significant in all but the junior year), and as "ambitious" in their senior year (the difference was statistically significant).

The claimed beneficial impact of athletic participation on personal growth and development may be partially offset by the demoralization factor discussed above. According to one faculty member, the hostility toward athletic programs expressed by a "small, but very vocal, group of Amherst faculty" has "created a perception among many students that a group of faculty members is simply biased against athletes." Is it any wonder, this faculty member mused, that there is a "great divide" between athletes and non-athletes? "Groups that feel persecuted tend to become insular, do they not?"

This assertion was supported by comments we heard from students, both athletes and non-athletes. When asked to describe the benefits and costs of athletic participation, the team captains uniformly cited ostracism and hostility as the primary costs. They claimed that members of several teams, football in particular, are held in "negative view" by many faculty and students, and that a few faculty exhibit an "unsupportive" attitude toward athletics. Similarly, the non-athlete student leaders with whom we talked also reported that some faculty "ostracize" athletes, and acknowledged an atmosphere of hostility toward at least some athletic programs and some athletes.

B. Patterns of Social Interaction

Several of the non-athlete student leaders with whom the Committee met reported a widespread perception that athletes were "cliquish." One described at least some of the teams as "reincarnations of fraternities." These commentators reported that there is a "big difference" in this respect between male athletes and female athletes, and indeed among the various men's teams. Teams such as football, men's hockey, baseball, men's lacrosse, and men's swimming were mentioned as particularly insular social groups. These student leaders acknowledged that all student organizations and interest groups are prone to the phenomenon of isolation or insulation. But they claim that team-based clannishness is particularly troublesome for three reasons. The first is the "problem of numbers." "Athletes," one student said, are the "largest subgroup on campus." As a consequence, the athletic/non-athletic division becomes, in the words of one commentator, the "great social divide" at Amherst. (When asked about this, several members of the faculty concurred that the division between athletes and non-athletes is the "great divide" on campus.)

The second reason for concern, we were told, is the all-encompassing nature of participation on at least some teams. There is a widespread impression among the non-athletic students on campus, we were told, that recruited athletes view themselves as attending Amherst primarily to play a sport. (Some faculty echoed this assertion.) Other students, no matter how intense their extracurricular or academic involvements, tend to have a more catholic view of their interests, which are reflected in a more catholic range of activities.

A third reason to be troubled by the athletic-non-athletic "divide," we were told, is alcohol. In the words of one student leader:

> The social experience at Amherst is fueled by alcohol. You have to know upperclassmen to get alcohol. Athletes in freshman and sophomore years have connections to upperclassmen through their teams that other freshman and sophomores lack.

The Committee recognizes that this statement may exaggerate both the importance of alcohol in Amherst social life and the difficulties faced by non-athletes in obtaining alcohol. But the statement did receive affirmation from the other student leaders who were present at the time it was made.

When asked to rank the factors that cause groups of students at Amherst to bond together socially, the student leaders all placed membership on an athletic team at the top of their lists. Other factors cited included first-year dorm floor grouping, affinity groups (such as racial identity groups), certain particularly demanding or intense extracurricular activities (theater and a capella singing groups were mentioned), and some theme houses. According to the student leaders, the social cohesion engendered by athletic participation tends to form earlier, become stronger and more exclusive, and remain strong for a longer time, than the social cohesion engendered by these other factors.

The Aries study offers some support for these contentions. Athletes tend to spend more time with team members than actives spend with members of their groups. Athletes reported spending a significantly higher percentage of their time outside of meetings, practice, and events with members of their group (the differences are statistically significant in all but the junior year), and a higher percentage of their time attending parties with members of their group and eating with members of their group at the dining hall (differences were statistically significant every year).

Athletes also reported less involvement in other types of activities on campus than other active students. In each of their four years, athletes reported that being a member of their group made it significantly more difficult to attend cultural events than did other active students. In contrast, non-athletic active students were significantly more likely to report having joined more groups on campus than athletes. Athletes further reported greater involvement with alcohol than other active students. In each of their four years of residence, athletes described themselves as significantly more likely to drink heavily on the weekend than other active students.

Once again, many of these findings are magnified when it comes to members of high-profile teams, as compared to other male athletes. In each of their four years, high-profile athletes appear to form a more insular group than do members of other male sports teams. They spend more time hanging out with teammates outside of practice, report having a greater percentage of friends who are teammates, are less likely to join non-athletic extracurricular groups, report drinking more heavily, and describe themselves as less appreciative of diversity (the differences are all statistically significant for each class year).

Two different studies done in recent years -- one by an ad hoc committee of Trustees in 1996 and the other by the College Council in 2000--have pointed out the connection between the role of athletics on campus and the perpetuation of off-campus fraternities. Because these fraternities are generally secretive both about their membership and about their activities, much of the information about them in these reports is speculative. Nonetheless, both reports devoted considerable attention to one fraternity in particular -- Theta Delta Chi -- that is known to contain a large proportion of football and men's hockey players. The fact that two teams in particular have supplied the bulk of TD's members has been taken as a sign of an inclination among some members of these teams towards self-segregation and separation from the rest of the student body. In addition, as the football and hockey coaches point out, the existence of this fraternity is itself a divisive element within each team, separating members from non-members and interfering with the team's cohesiveness.

Athletic self-segregation is reflected somewhat in housing patterns. Male athletes tend to live with other male athletes of the same sport. For example of the 188 football players between 1996 and 2000, 56% lived in a room group consisting exclusively of football players. Of the 428 non-football male athletes, 27% lived in room groups consisting of athletes from the same sport. While this concentration of people with similar interest might seem natural, it is far different from the housing patterns among female athletes. During the same period there were 431 female athletes, and only 6% of these women lived in room groups consisting solely of athletes in the same sport.

These housing patterns lead to upper class dorms with high concentrations of athletes and other dorms with very low concentrations of student athletes. For example, during academic year 2000, the percentage of varsity athletes in seven of the 28 upper-class dorms exceeded 50%, and in five dorms was below 10% . The concentration of athletes in selected dorms is more prevalent among men than women athletes, but in two dorms, over 30% of the residents were female varsity athletes.

Virtually every year, at least one of the social dorms and one of the former fraternity houses gains a reputation on campus for containing disproportionate numbers of male athletes, principally football and hockey players. For many years, the social dorm of choice for sophomores and juniors on the football and men's hockey teams has been Crossett. Crossett has also generally ranked first among our dormitories in per capita dorm damage. To be fair to the residents, however, we must point out that much of this

damage may be caused by nonresidents. Because of its reputation as the most "social" of the social dorms, Crossett ends up sponsoring a disproportionate number of all-campus parties that result in damage.

Available evidence suggests that athletes -- particularly male athletes, and, within that group, especially, high-profile-team members -- are responsible for more than their per capita share of disciplinary violations. Relative to their numbers in the student body, male athletes commit a substantially disproportionate number of the adjudicated academic and nonacademic infractions. This finding must be understood, however, in context: the total number of adjudicated infractions, both academic and nonacademic, is relatively small in any given academic year (roughly 20-25). We note with some concern, however, that the number of academic infractions (both the total number and the number committed by recruited athletes) has increased in recent years.

V. Equity and Diversity

A. Racial, Ethnic, and Socioeconomic Diversity

In recent times the varsity athletic program has contributed very little to the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the Amherst student body. For example, in the class that matriculated in 1999 (the class of 2003), only 12% of the athletes (here, defined as those who, as freshman, were on a varsity roster) were minorities, and only 6% were admitted under the "socioeconomic" category. The corresponding percentages among non-athletes were 38% minorities and 17% socioeconomic. Reforms undertaken in 1999 and 2000 have begun to have a modest effect on these numbers. The percentage of African-American athletes, for example, has increased (from 2% in the class of 2003 to 7% in the class of 2005). This progress is not reflected in other racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic categories. Overall, the percentage of minority athletes in the class of 2005 was 11% (as compared to a 39% minority percentage in the nonathlete part of the class); likewise the percentage of athletes in the socioeconomic-target category still lags behind the corresponding percentage of non-athletes (6% as compared to 21%). In fairness, it must be noted that the definition of athlete for the class of 2005 is different. In this class, and presumably henceforth, it refers to "highly-rated athlete" not "freshman varsity roster member." Also, it must be noted that, for about 15-16% of the athletes in the classes of 2003 and 2005, no racial group was designated. Allowing for these factors, however, the disparities appear to remain quite substantial.

B. Gender Equity

In everything it undertakes, Amherst aspires to achieve equality in the treatment of men and women. In the case of athletics, this background aspiration is embodied in law, thanks to Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments and regulations promulgated under its authority. Each year, Amherst submits detailed reports to the Department of Education that provide comparative data on men's and women's sports. In

enforcing Title IX, the Office of Civil Rights applies a "substantial proportionality" test that focuses primarily on the rates of athletic participation among the male and female students of a college.

Over the years, Amherst has taken steps and made commendable progress toward equality between men's and women's athletic participation rates. It has increased the number of women's varsity teams to the point that it now offers more women's teams (14) than men's. Expenditures, coaching resources, and rates of student participation have all moved in the direction of equality. Nonetheless, as at virtually every coeducational school, disparities remain. For example, in academic year 2000, the number of male varsity-team "participants" (roster members) represented 39.6% of the male enrollment in the College, while the corresponding percentage for female participants was 31.7%.

Using a somewhat different measure of "participation," the Bowen et al. study of NESCAC schools showed a 12 percentage-point gap in participation rates at the average NESCAC college (45% for men, 33% for women). Expressed as a ratio, the average NESCAC participation rate for women was thus 27% lower than that for men. (The corresponding figures for the samples of "other liberal arts colleges" and Ivy League universities were 29% and 24%, respectively.) Using the measure of participation for Amherst reported in the preceding paragraph, the female participation rate was 20% lower than the corresponding male participation rate. Thus the degree of gender imbalance at Amherst appears to compare favorably to that of comparable institutions.

The principal reason for the disparity (at Amherst and at virtually every comparable institution) is that there is no women's counterpart to football. In academic year 2000, football alone accounted for 79 of the 342 male participants (23%). No other team (male or female) had a roster larger than 34. So long as football is a male-only sport and operated on anything remotely like its current basis, full equalization of participation and resources would probably require that the number of female teams exceed the number of male teams by five to eight teams. As it is, there is a female counterpart for every male team other than baseball and football, and three sports for which there is only a female team (field hockey, volleyball, and softball).

VI. College Spirit and Support

A. College Spirit, Morale, and Identity

Sports can provide a means by which an institution of higher education can form a stronger sense of community and institutional identity. Intercollegiate athletic competition is, after all, the most visible arena in which an academic institution pits itself against its counterparts, with a (usually) decisive outcome as a lasting indicator of relative success. There are, of course, many other venues in which colleges compete against other colleges – in the "markets" for admission of students, hiring of faculty, prestigious student scholarships and prizes, faculty grants and honors, etc. But, aside

from the widely influential and perhaps equally maligned U.S. News ranking, none are quite so visible and seemingly definitive, as athletic scores. Also, none seem to have the same potential for intergenerational bonding. Success on the athletic field brings together (in some cases, physically, as on Homecoming weekend, and in other cases spiritually) current students with alumni from a broad cross-section of the institution's history. Related to this, of course, is the sheer entertainment value of athletics. In contemporary popular culture, athletic contests are spectacles with potentially huge audience appeal.

Athletics certainly seem to have some of these properties at Amherst. But their operation is fairly selective. Among the alumni and the student body, football is unquestionably the dominant sport. Home football games generally draw the largest crowds. Homecoming weekend is always scheduled when Amherst's football team is hosting a Little Three rival. Among alumni, football is perennially the sport in which there is the greatest level of interest. This is not to say that other teams are bereft of supporters. Sports such as rugby (a club sport), soccer, lacrosse, and basketball are reported to draw respectable crowds, especially in years in which Amherst fields particularly strong teams. But few teams seem able to inspire a level of interest comparable in intensity and consistency to that inspired by football.

The other, and of course overlapping, focal point is the Williams rivalry. This seemingly ineradicable fact of Amherst's history colors the entire athletic program. Success against other NESCAC (or nonconference) rivals never seems to provide as much satisfaction as success against Williams (or solace for defeat at the hands of the Ephmen or Ephwomen, as the case may be). Given the relatively greater emphasis that Williams has placed on athletic success (and its somewhat larger size), Amherst finds itself year after year at a disadvantage in this rivalry.

Most members of the faculty, and indeed most members of this Committee, lament and resist the tendency to define Amherst's athletic aspirations relative to this rivalry. Amherst is not Williams, no more than it is Swarthmore, Harvard, or Yale. It needs to define a role for athletics uniquely suited to its unique attributes and ambitions. That said, however, almost no one from whom the Committee heard could quite imagine Amherst going it alone. Few intercollegiate rivalries in the nation are as celebrated and salient as the Amherst-Williams rivalry. That rivalry is a kind of "reputational capital" that has been built up over the generations, one that confers considerable benefit to both schools. Therefore, in the Committee's view, it is imperative that Amherst should try to enlist the aid of Williams before taking actions that would significantly alter its athletic program. The climate of opinion created by recent criticism of collegiate athletics (symbolized by works such as The Game of Life) provides a rare opportunity for these two leaders in the development of liberal arts education to exhibit leadership, together, once again, in de-escalating the athletic arms race.

B. Alumni Support and Giving

It is often claimed that a strong athletic program is essential, or at least important, to develop and maintain a high level of support for an academic institution among its alumni. Evaluating the strength of this claim in Amherst's case proves to be difficult.

There is certainly some evidence to support the claim. For example, members of the Committee and persons with whom the Committee spoke report that alumni routinely evince a high level of interest in the success of at least some parts of the athletic program, including particularly the football team. One observer opined that the one annual fact about Amherst that the largest proportion of alumni are likely to know is whether it defeated Williams in football that year. Support for this impression comes from evidence that the portion of the College's website that receives the largest number of "hits" is the sports information section. The high level of interest in receiving up-to-the-minute scores and in-depth reportage on varsity teams induced the Office of Public Affairs to upgrade the position of sports information officer from a "green dean" position to a full-time professional position.

Likewise, Betsy Cannon-Smith, the College's Alumni Secretary, reports that alumni exhibit a very high level of interest in sports: especially the football team, and to a lesser extent soccer, rugby, field hockey, and other teams that are currently highly ranked. Football, she reports, is "the symbol" of athletics at Amherst. Because of the high level of interest, the Alumni Office tries to plan alumni-related weekend gatherings (Homecoming, Family Weekend, and Volunteer Planning Weekends) at times when high-profile athletic contests will occur on campus. Michael Kiefer, Chief Advancement Officer for the College, claimed that in his experience, most alumni want Amherst to be excellent at virtually everything it does, including athletics. One reason for this is, of course the general cultural fascination with sports, but another is the fact that most alumni think of Amherst as a school that balances first-class academics with a strong athletic program. Not surprisingly, Kiefer reports that the level of interest in and concern about athletics is greatest among the older alumni, at least partly because, in their day, "athletics were a bigger deal" and there was less perceived conflict between athletics and academics. (Indeed, studies such as The Game of Life support the view that there was less conflict in fact between athletics and academics.)

On the other hand, the Committee unearthed very little hard evidence that the level or magnitude of alumni financial support or voluntary involvement depends on the relative quality of the athletic program, at least as measured by won-lost records or results against arch-rival Williams. The Committee reviewed statistics, for the period 1922-2000, on: 1) the percent of alumni making donations to the College; 2) the won-lost record of the football team; and 3) whether Amherst defeated Williams in football. There is absolutely no evidence of any relationship between item (1) and either items (2) or (3). Indeed, alumni participation has remained in the low-60 percentile range since roughly 1983, despite rather dramatic swings in the fortunes of our football team and, recently, a 13-consecutive-year drought against Williams. (There was a brief dip in alumni participation in 1991-1993, a period that happened to coincide with the football team's

worst recent misfortunes. But Kiefer attributes that dip to a staffing transition and reorganization of the development program.)

Likewise, the Committee reviewed records for the dollar amount of alumni giving (both annual fund and restricted giving) over the period 1975-2000, and again saw no relationship to football performance. Indeed, during the recent 13-year drought against Williams, cash receipts by the College (both annual fund and restricted) increased dramatically (especially so during the five year Campaign just ended).

Similarly, we see no strong indication that former athletes are more likely than their non-athlete counterparts to assume positions of leadership as alumni or make large gifts to the College. As of October 2000, there were 18,680 living graduates in the College's database, of which 7,993 (43%) were coded as having played a team sport. Of 56 living alumni Trustees, 27 (48%) were coded as having played a team sport. Of the 283 alumni who had at that time made donations to the Campaign of at least $100,000, 115 (40%) were so coded. (This number includes 25 former footballers.) Of the top 13 givers in the history of the College (again, as of October 2000), 7 played a sport, 6 did not.

Impressionistic evidence supports these findings. Michael Kiefer reported to the Committee that most former athletes, like their classmates, are primarily concerned about Amherst's academic program and reputation. To the extent that they want to direct their gifts, most former athletes express interest in strengthening the academic program. He cited the endowment of the Ostendarp Professorship as an example of how even those alumni motivated by the desire to memorialize a legendary football coach chose to direct their gift to endowing a chair for a member of the academic faculty.

All that said, it remains probable that there is a relationship between alumni support and the quality of the athletic program, but that the range within which the athletic program has in fact fluctuated over recent years is not large enough to reveal such a relationship. To make the point by hyperbole, if Amherst developed a reputation as a kind of athletic "doormat" for the NESCAC, or if its football team went ten years without a victory, it seems quite plausible that alumni support would suffer. We have no way to test this theory directly, and most assuredly do not recommend that Amherst undertake a controlled experiment to test the hypothesis. We do note that several peer schools -- notably Swarthmore, but also arguably Columbia, Chicago, and others -- have maintained academic excellence and raised a great deal of money without having a reputation for particularly excellent athletic teams. But those schools are emphatically <u>not</u> Amherst. They have managed to develop and maintain a niche in the academic marketplace quite different from the one that Amherst occupies. In the minds of most observers, Amherst is a college that combines the very highest level of academic and teaching excellence with a high-quality athletic program. One often hears terms like "balance" or "well-rounded" in descriptions of Amherst. An identity or image is a precious asset for any organization, especially an academic institution. Colleges change their identities at their peril. For that reason, the Committee believes strongly that preservation of at least a relatively high-quality athletic program is presumptively necessary to maintaining the extraordinary level

of Amherst's alumni support -- a level of support that we regard as essential to maintaining Amherst's academic excellence.

VII. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Overall, the Committee finds that Amherst operates an excellent and very successful varsity athletic program that provides substantial benefits not only to those who participate directly, but also to the College as a whole. This success is all the more impressive in view of the constraints within which the College's athletic program operates, namely:

1. The extraordinarily high academic selectivity of Amherst College and the primacy given to academic pursuit and achievement at the College;
2. The small size of the Amherst student body relative to most of its peers;
3. The high costs, including high fixed costs, of operating a successful intercollegiate athletic program; and
4. The continually intensifying competitive pressures characteristic of the environment in which Amherst's intercollegiate program operates, including many of the individual colleges in its competitive environment, NESCAC, NCAA Division III, and the more general sports-oriented culture of our society.

The benefits produced by Amherst's athletic program do, of course, come at a cost -- as do the benefits produced by any program that the College operates. The question that must be asked from time to time about any program operated by the College is whether the costs bear a proper proportion to the benefits. In the case of the athletic program, the "costs" are comprised of two categories. The first includes the direct and indirect financial cost of maintaining a first-rate coaching staff, excellent equipment and facilities, providing transportation, health services to athletes, and the like. These costs seem to the Committee to be entirely in keeping with and in proper relationship to the benefits produced by the program.

The second category of potential cost entails the extent to which the athletic program causes conflicts with other priorities of the College, including most especially the high quality of its academic programs, as well as its attempts to foster personal growth and constructive social interaction among students, equity and diversity in all of its programs, and continuing high morale and levels of external support for the College. The investigation conducted by the Committee suggests that the athletic program does indeed entail some costs in these categories. The Committee notes with satisfaction the steps that have been taken in just the past few years to bring these costs under control, including reform of the admissions process and initiatives of the Little Three presidents and the NESCAC presidents to de-escalate the athletic arms race. All of these steps are encouraging, and many of them are beginning to bear fruit.

Nonetheless, the Committee concludes that further progress can and should be

made to bring the athletic program into proper balance with the College's academic and other priorities. Amherst still admits a large percentage of its student body based primarily on athletic prowess, under circumstances in which participation in athletics appears to erect obstacles to full achievement of academic potential. Athletes and non-athletes are often socially separated in the life of the campus; athletes tend to live together, eat together, hang out together, and party together; they claim to consume somewhat more alcohol than non-athletes, commit disciplinary infractions somewhat more frequently, and perhaps cause somewhat greater property damage. Despite commendable progress, gender imbalances remain in participation rates in, and resources allocated to, men's and women's teams. Varsity athletics still contributes very little to increasing the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the College. Although athletes take great personal satisfaction in their athletic pursuits (and deservedly so), they feel stigmatized by a culture that all too often devalues what they do. Almost all of the observed differences between athletes and non-athletes tend to be magnified for male, as compared to female, athletes, and, among men, especially for those who play a high-profile sport, particularly football.

In the Committee's view, the College should take steps to reduce these costs, and thereby bring its athletic program into a better balance with its academic programs and its overall educational mission. The recommendations that follow discuss areas in which we believe that such steps should be taken. In presenting these recommendations, we wish to emphasize two very important points. First, "recommendations" by their nature focus on areas needing improvement. Readers should keep in mind the negative pregnant in these recommendations. Most aspects of the athletic program -- those aspects that are <u>not</u> the focus of any recommendation -- seem to the Committee to be in good hands and in excellent condition. We do not wish the critical tone implicit or explicit in the recommendations that follow to be taken as a general criticism of the athletic program.

Second, the athletic program is a complex organism within an even more complex organism (the College), operating within a still more complex organism (NESCAC and the larger competitive environment). In such a setting, the danger of unintended consequences is very high. Any single change in the system can set in motion forces that are only dimly understood even by professionals in this field, to say nothing of most members of an ad hoc committee studying this matter for 18 months. For that reason, we have highlighted what we see as concerns, problems, or costs, and proposed that the resolution of those problems be left to the professionals.

A. Academic Program

The Committee expresses concern about two respects in which the College's athletic programs may conflict with the academic program. The first and most important concern is the apparent link between athletic participation and "academic underperformance," as established by the FCAFA and Woglom regressions. The second concern (based on more impressionistic evidence, much of which seems to relate primarily to the mid-1990s period), is the asserted dampening of the quality of classroom discussion that can result when a significant minority of students lack the time, energy, or

motivation to engage fully in classroom discourse. The Committee believes that, to the extent possible, all extracurricular programs supported by the College, including its athletic programs, should operate in such a way as not to place impediments on the achievement of each student's academic potential. Likewise, the Committee believes that the College should take steps to assure that the extracurricular programs it supports do not adversely affect the quality of classroom discussion and, thus, the general learning environment.

1. Academic Credentials

Given the competitive environment (both academic and athletic) in which Amherst currently operates, the College must make tradeoffs between athletic ability, on the one hand, and academic aptitude and interest, on the other. The extent of the tradeoff has been documented with respect to aptitude measures such as SAT scores and academic reader ratings in both the FCAFA report and in the more recent data examined by this Committee. We recognize that the College properly looks in its admissions process for a wider range of attributes than are measured simply by SAT scores or even academic reader ratings. Nonetheless, we believe that gaps in academic aptitude (as most appropriately and sensitively measured) can have adverse educational consequences, not only for individual students at the lower end of the distribution, but also for the overall learning environment. With that in mind, we believe that the College should take steps to reduce such gaps where practicable and achievable at tolerable costs. In the case of its varsity athletic program, we believe that, only through collective action by the members of NESCAC, can such gaps be reduced without adversely effecting athletic competitiveness. Therefore, we make the following recommendations:

A. The College should support efforts by NESCAC to develop uniform standards and procedures for sharing of data, among Conference schools, on the academic entry credentials of their recruited athletes and other students. Efforts should be made by the NESCAC admissions officers to refine the definitions of "recruited athlete" and the measures of academic ability, so that the data are truly comparable. We believe that a full and open sharing of such data should dampen the tendencies by some schools to sacrifice academic standards to achieve advantages on the field.

B. The College should further encourage NESCAC to develop a system for placing limits on the extent to which member schools may, in recruiting athletes, deviate from norms otherwise applied by those schools for admission of non-athletes. We commend President Gerety for opening discussions with the presidents of Wesleyan and Williams to explore development of an "index" system within NESCAC (comparable in purpose to the Ivy Index, but avoiding its deficiencies). Such an index system would establish both administrable standards and enforceable procedures for limiting the permissible deviations between academic admissions standards applicable to athletes and to non-athletes at member schools.

2. Time and Energy Demands

The evidence that we have reviewed is consistent with the hypothesis that, at least for many athletes, participation in intercollegiate athletics imposes (both formally and informally) time and energy demands that interfere with academic priorities. Accordingly, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

A. The College should support efforts presently underway within NESCAC to assess whether further limitations should be imposed, for certain varsity sports, on the duration of the playing season, the maximum number of intercollegiate contests, and the length of pre-season practice and conditioning periods and post-season competition.

B. The College should seek, through agreement among NESCAC schools or unilateral scheduling decisions, to reduce the total number of "class conflicts" (occasions when scheduled athletic travel or competition occurs during a regularly scheduled class hour).

C. As a way of decreasing the intensity of the competitive pressures felt by Amherst athletes, the College should use its efforts within NESCAC and the NCAA to explore the feasibility and desirability of establishing a new division or subdivision of the NCAA composed exclusively of small, selective liberal arts schools who share Amherst's commitment to the primacy of academic pursuits.

3. Stigma and Demoralization

There is no question that, in recent years, many athletes have felt stigmatized or marginalized on account of their participation in athletics. Many students and some faculty attribute the creation of such an environment to remarks made by, or at least attributed to, some members of the faculty.

A. The Committee strongly urges all members of the faculty to examine closely the messages that they may be communicating (whether deliberate or unintended) regarding the academic abilities and potential of Amherst's athletes. Of course faculty should respond appropriately to the actual conduct and performance of individual students, including student-athletes. But they should guard carefully against sending a message that athletes as a group are less capable of academic performance or less motivated or less willing to make the effort necessary to achieve their academic potential.

B. More than that, faculty members should affirmatively reach out to provide academic support and assistance to such students (indeed, to any students whom they perceive to be struggling academically). Amherst faculty uniformly profess that helping struggling students is a central part of their responsibilities as instructors. Honoring that obligation in all cases, including the case of any athlete who is struggling, should go a long way to dissipating any environment of

perceived inhospitality, and may indeed go a ways to diminishing the extent of academic underperformance.

B. Scale and Intensity of Athletic Competition

The Committee concludes that the scale and composition of Amherst's varsity program is appropriate to the character and size of the College, the nature of Amherst's competitive environment, the level of resources available for support of athletics, and the level of demand among students for participation in particular sports. The Committee therefore does not recommend the dropping of any existing varsity sports or the conversion of any varsity sports to club status.

The Committee does, however, express some concern about the overall intensity of competition and the resulting strains that the athletic program imposes on the College's academic programs and social cohesion. By "intensity" we mean both the level of athletic proficiency required in order to be successful on the field and the amount of time, effort, and energy required to compete successfully. The increase in intensity is reflected by pressures to increase the numbers of recruited athletes and the size of the gap between the academic credentials of recruited athletes and those of other students. It is also reflected in increases in the number of contests played per team per year in some sports, and the increased focus on post-season competition (the NESCAC tournament and pressures to accept invitations to the NCAA tournaments).

The most sensible solution to the athletic arms race (like any arms race) is mutual disarmament. The Committee recognizes that the NESCAC presidents have recently undertaken to pursue just such an agenda, and applauds this effort. We believe that any reforms undertaken by the presidents should include the following elements:

1. Number of Recruited Athletes

At present, Amherst allocates 75 "slots" for recruited athletes. Pursuant to an agreement among the Presidents of the Little Three Colleges, this number will be reduced to 66, beginning with the class of 2006. This agreement includes an agreement to limit the number of slots devoted to football teams to 14.

Recognizing that such a reduction could adversely affect the quality of competitive play, the Committee urges the Little Three Presidents to pursue an agreement to achieve comparable reductions among all of the NESCAC schools, and to implement reporting mechanisms that can assure continuing compliance with such an agreement.

2. Post-season Competition

The Committee heard several criticisms of the current system of post-season competition, and considered several proposals for reform, such as eliminating the NESCAC tournament, forbidding acceptance of at-large NCAA bids, and forbidding

participation in any post-season play of any description. Some Committee members favored some of these options, but none garnered wide support on the Committee. Most of us recognized, moreover, that any one of these reforms, taken in isolation, might have the opposite effect from what is intended, namely to diminish the overall intensity of the level of competition.

The Committee was, however, able to agree on a general principle: namely, that Amherst must resist pressures to measure itself athletically against schools that do not share its values and its constraints (namely academic selectivity and small size). Increased emphasis on and participation in post-season play against non-NESCAC schools in NCAA Division III will inevitably have this effect. The pressure to excel against these teams will put pressure on Amherst to emulate other schools' practices with regard to the emphasis placed on athletics in recruitment, practice, conditioning, equipping, etc.

The Committee believes that the most promising way for Amherst to resist these pressures is to pursue actively the idea of creating a new NCAA division or subdivision consisting solely of liberal arts schools of roughly comparable size, mission, and values.

3. Playing conference

The Committee recognizes that constituting NESCAC as a playing conference has advantages as well as disadvantages. Without proposing an abandonment of NESCAC, the Committee urges the administration to pursue strategies that would give the College greater freedom in scheduling competition. One approach might be to invite additional schools to join NESCAC. Another might be to dissolve NESCAC in favor of a Northeast Regional division of a newly created NCAA liberal arts division. Whatever form the evolution takes, the object should be to enlarge the pool of peer schools with whom Amherst has a regular competitive (and cooperative) relationship.

4. Squad Sizes

In most sports, the size of rosters seems to be self-regulating and not a cause for particular concern. Football, however, is an exception. Even after the 1999 NESCAC ruling limiting the size of football squads, Amherst's football roster (75) represented some 9% of the male student body, and requires the allocation of some 20 admissions slots (again, about 9% of the male entering class). The recent decision of the Little Three Presidents to lower the number of football slots to 14 is a welcome move. But the absolute size of the football squad remains a concern on a campus with a relatively small male enrollment. The dominant size of the football team (relative to other teams and other campus organizations) probably contributes to some of the phenomena discussed in this report such as the extent of social exclusion and academic underperformance among members of high-profile-teams (a category numerically dominated by football).

We therefore recommend that the President work with NESCAC to seek further reductions in the permissible size of football squads. Although the Committee does not have a specific target in mind, we believe that a significant reduction ought to be possible. This recommendation is subject, of course, to the constraint that players' safety and health must be protected from undue pressures to "play hurt."

C. Social Life

The Committee recognizes that Amherst is an institution with a strongly libertarian culture, one in which students are given extensive freedom and choice, in both curricular matters and non-curricular matters. In such a culture, "regulation" of social life is almost an oxymoron, subject of course to limits on illegal or destructive conduct.

A primary instrument of socializing students at Amherst freshman dorm assignments. All entering freshmen are assigned to dormitories more or less randomly, in the hope that patterns of interaction will develop that cross the boundaries of groupings based on affinity or special interests. To increase the interaction among members of the entering class, all freshmen will be housed in dormitories located around the upper quadrangle.

1. The College's current policy of distributing students randomly in freshman housing is a crucial mechanism for promoting social interaction across the groupings into which students naturally tend to cluster (including varsity teams), and should therefore be preserved and enforced rigorously. The desirable features of this policy would be undermined if any freshman dormitory should come to be identified with any particular athletic team or even with varsity athletes in general.

2. In planning the renovation of upperclass housing, it is important that the College think of ways to make all of the dormitories attractive to students across interest-group barriers, or to attract students with multiple interests. At the margins, it may be possible in this way to provide greater residential integration of athletes and non-athletes.

3. The College must continue to explore ways to provide opportunities for social gatherings that are not centered on team membership, so that team members have other attractive venues in which to engage that will bring them into greater contact with non-athletes.

D. Equity and Diversity

Achieving the full promise of educational diversity implies that students of different backgrounds not only attend the College, but that they interact with one another regularly, not only in the classroom, but in social and extracurricular settings as well. Given the large relative scale of the varsity athletic program, it is especially important that athletic teams be representatively diverse. Despite some very recent improvements,

the College still has a long way to go to achieve this goal. The athletic program is much better balanced by gender, but here too work remains to be done.

1. The Committee commends the Dean of Admissions for steps that he has taken to diversify the athletic teams. Coaches should continue to be encouraged as strongly as possible to identify members of minority groups and socioeconomic target groups who have the capacity to play on their teams. As the number of "slots" is reduced, coaches must be reassured that highly-rated athletes who are members of such groups will not count against their slot allowance. This recommendation is predicated on the assumption that such a policy will not come at the cost of reducing the number of members of minority groups and socioeconomic target groups who are admitted for academic reasons, but will, rather, result in an overall increase in the numbers of students from such groups.

2. The College should continue its commendable recent progress toward achieving full gender equity in its athletic programs. Steps that should be considered to achieve that goal include reducing the size of the football squad (see above), expanding squad sizes of the women's varsity teams, adding additional women's varsity sports, or possibly limiting the squad sizes of some men's teams in addition to football. The College must also examine carefully the relative workloads of the coaches of men's and women's teams to assure that these workloads are, and remain, equivalent.

E. Club and Intramural Sports

Amherst is one of only three NESCAC colleges that does not support junior varsity teams. The Committee considered whether to recommend that the College reinstitute a system of junior varsity teams and decided not to so recommend. In view of the large size, cost, competitive pressures, and specialization of the varsity athletic program, the Committee felt that reinstitution of junior varsity athletics was neither necessary nor desirable. Rather, the College should continue to offer a full range of alternative programs built on the ethics of freedom of participation and student initiative. By and large, the current system seems to fill this need adequately.

The College should continue to encourage and support a broad range of club and intramural athletic programs. It should continue to offer top-quality athletic facilities in sufficient quantity to support such programs. It should make sure that each recognized club sport has sufficient financial or in-kind support from the College to minimize financial and logistical disincentives to participation.

F. The Athletic Department

Amherst is blessed with an outstanding Athletic Department. The structure, organization, staffing, management, and operation of the Department leave little to be desired. The Committee makes only a few observations about two aspects of the Department brought to our attention.

1. The Contract System

The Committee does not believe that the academic tenure system provides a model appropriate for the personnel system of the Athletic Department. It therefore recommends neither returning to the pre-contract era nor materially altering the existing contract system to move in that direction. Faculty status at the College should be reserved for those who are engaged in instruction for academic credit. That said, it is important for the College to take such steps as may be appropriate to promote the further integration of the coaching staff into the academic life of the College.

A. The official governing documents of the "Contract System" should be examined and, as appropriate, revised so as to remove ambiguities that lead to conflicting interpretations and to bring the wording of the document into conformance with current practices. In the process, the Administration of the College should clarify: (1) the nature of the "major review" that occurs at the time of promotion to senior coach (particularly the role played by the Dean of the Faculty and the Committee of Six in this review); (2) the principle governing the determination of employee benefits; and (3) the expectations regarding recommending senior coaches for appointment to the tenured faculty.

B. The Committee does not recommend any change in the current practice regarding the participation of contract coaches in faculty governance. The Committee does, however, recommend that contract coaches by appointed, where appropriate, to faculty standing committees or other ad hoc committees, on which their service would be valuable.

C. In order to serve the overall educational mission of the College, the athletic program must help to reinforce and strengthen athletes' academic performance and instill in them skills, attitudes, and abilities important to personal development and growth. Coaches must see themselves, and be seen by the institution, as having an important – albeit extracurricular -- educational role. Therefore, it is essential that coaches be attentive to, and reinforce, these dimensions of the experience of members of their teams. And it is essential that the system for selecting, rewarding, and reappointing coaches give significant weight to that aspect of a coach's performance. In addition, channels of communication between faculty and coaches must be kept open so that academic performance issues and scheduling conflicts can be identified early and addressed in an appropriate fashion.

2. Two-Sport Coaching

Amherst has long adhered to the principle that its full-time coaches should participate in the coaching of two sports. Many of Amherst's competitors have begun to shift toward one-sport coaching. The Committee believes that Amherst should resist this trend. A shift from two-sport coaching to one-sport coaching would reduce the number of

students with whom coaches have regular contact and further increase the competitive pressures produced by athletic specialization.

> The College should continue to require all full-time coaches to coach more than one sport, and should seek to assure that the workloads of the men's team coaches and women's team coaches are equal. Insofar as competitive pressures make it difficult to a maintain the two-sport norm, the College should work within NESCAC to look for ways (compatible with applicable law) to establish the norm as a governing principle of the conference.

G. Institutional Oversight

Preserving a proper balance between athletics and the educational mission of the College requires both continuous oversight and periodic stock-taking.

1. Continuous Oversight

There are numerous existing mechanisms for continuous oversight: the College Administration, working with the Director of Athletics and the Athletic Department; the President, in his capacity as member of the governing body of NESCAC; and various standing committees (insofar as their jurisdiction touches on matters relating to athletics), such as the Committee of Six, FCAFA, the CEP, the College Council, and others. We urge each of these administrators and committees, as they go about their regular business, to keep the issues raised in this report before them, and to measure their actions in part by the effect they will have on the athletic-academic balance. The effectiveness of such continuous oversight depends in large part on the quality of the data available. With that in mind, we recommend that the Office of Institutional Research gather and report, on an annual basis, information that can assist the governing bodies of the College to keep athletics in proper perspective. Likewise, we believe that the Standing Committee on Physical Education and Athletics, which presently has almost no active functions, could be revitalized and enlisted in the task of helping to implement this report.

> A. Working with the Administration, the Office of Institutional Research should identify measurable indicators of the quality of the athletic program and the impacts that the athletic program is having on the academic program, social life, and student diversity. Those indicators should address such topics as: (1) the number of participants (total, and by gender and ethnic category) in varsity and sub-varsity sports; (2) the won-lost record of teams; the coaching resources and expenditures by team; (3) the relative academic performance of athletes (by gender and team) and non-athletes; the extent of academic over- or under-performance of athletes; (4) numbers of class and laboratory conflicts and numbers of athletes thereby affected; (5) patterns of housing concentration by athletes (by gender and team); (6) rates of academic or disciplinary infractions; alumni support and giving by former athletic participation; and (if feasible) (6) key indicators of time demands, personal growth and development, self-esteem, and social segregation of the sort generated by the Aries survey. The OIR should

annually gather, analyze, and interpret the data necessary to specify these indicators, and report the results to the President and the Dean of the Faculty.

B. The Athletic Director should work with the Standing Committee on Physical Education and Athletics to help assure on an ongoing basis that the College's athletic programs make a positive contribution to the health, personal development, and academic performance of participants, and to constructive patterns of social interaction among Amherst's diverse student body.

2. Periodic Stock-Taking

In addition, we believe that the issue of academic-athletic balance requires periodic stock-taking of the sort represented by the work of this Committee. Given the size, breadth, and prominence of the athletic program, the task of assessing its impact upon the College's mission cannot be fully performed by any one committee or administrator, given limitations of jurisdiction and the press of quotidian business. Therefore we recommend that an ad hoc committee be constituted in three to five years, and charged to review progress on the recommendations contained in this report and make further recommendations.

Within a period of three to five years from publication of this report, the President should appoint an ad hoc committee, constituted in a manner similar to this Committee, to review the place of athletics at Amherst. Relying on the annual OIR reports described in the preceding recommendation, as well as additional relevant information, the committee should assess the extent to which the recommendations contained in this report have been implemented and make such further recommendations as it deems appropriate. Thereafter, as appropriate, the President should convene similar committees at similar intervals.

APPENDIX A

Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst

The Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst will weigh over the next academic year the extent to which our athletic programs are consistent with the overall purposes of the College. The ideal at Amherst is that our athletic teams and indeed all of our extracurricular activities should enhance the intellectual and social experience of our diverse student body. How well do they perform this complex function?

To answer this question the committee should scrutinize the experience of all students, but especially those participating in varsity and club athletics at the College. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such participation for our students? Do they vary according to the backgrounds and interests of students at Amherst today? Does participation in either varsity or club athletics foster intellectual and social life at the College? Does participation foster our diversity? Do the athletes at Amherst thrive as much as the non-athletes?

Do the varsity teams play a different role from the club teams or from other extracurricular activities such as the student radio or newspaper? How much time do the various forms of athletic practice and preparation require of undergraduate participants? Has the time commitment expanded significantly over the last 20 or 30 years? Has it taken away from the time devoted to study and classroom attendance? As a small college, Amherst has an active roster of varsity and club sports: Is the number of such teams appropriate for a college of Amherst's size and ambition? Would a smaller number ease the tensions between academic promise and extracurricular talent in admissions? Has Amherst done enough in striving for equity between the sexes in the club and varsity sports we now offer?

The role of coaches at the College has evolved over the last decades, often in response to forces in our larger culture and in our athletic conference. To what extent and in what ways has this evolution affected the place of sports in undergraduate life? To what extent has it affected the relationships between the coaches and their colleagues on the Faculty and in the administration? Are there reforms that might improve the relationship between coaching and the many other roles on campus that contribute to teaching and learning?

Amherst's athletic conference, the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), brings together eleven colleges and universities in the northeast. Its rules provide for competition under the more general rubric of Division III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Is NESCAC or the NCAA itself a desirable and helpful venue for our varsity competitions, particularly with our historic rivals such as Williams or Wesleyan?

The committee will report to the Board and the Faculty with suggestions of policy and principle to guide the College over the next decade.

Update with '01

APPENDIX B

Amherst College Sports Rosters
1991 - 2000
(For the Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst)

Year	Football	Men's Soccer	Women's Soccer	Field Hockey	Men's Cross Country	Women's Cross Country	Volleyball	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Men's Hockey	Women's Hockey	Men's Squash	Women's Squash	Men's Swimming	Women's Swimming	Men's Indoor Track	Women's Indoor Track	Baseball	Men's Lacrosse	Women's Lacrosse	Softball	Men's Outdoor Track	Women's Outdoor Track	Men's Tennis	Women's Tennis	Men's Golf	Women's Golf
'00	F	F	F	F	18	25	F	16	13	24	18	19	13	22	22	33	28	30	35	25	14	34	30	13	F	11	7
'99	82	28	23	24	23	21	14	17	16	26	18	14	15	26	28	33	24	37	37	28	13	28	22	15	13	8	8
'98	83	32	26	24	22	21	14	16	13	25	15	14	17	25	26	26	24	32	31	23	18	27	19	20	15	7	7
'97	80	29	29	23	16	18	13	18	16	25	17	14	19	23	28	27	28	28	30	23	16	27	20	20	9	8	10
'96	85	22	22	21	15	12	13	18	17	27	17	16	18	25	17	18	11	30	40	24	16	27	13	18	10	8	6
'95	87	24	21	24	10	11	16	16	14	29	[redacted]	16	15	18	19	18	17	33	32	24	17	19	18	15	12	9	4
'94	86	25	25	21	15	11	15	15	12	28	[redacted]	17	12	19	17	13	19	26	31	26	[redacted]	24	16	15	9	8	5
'93	69	22	27	22	17	10	14	13	9	23	[redacted]	18	16	19	17	16	7	27	22	28	[redacted]	28	14	12	9	8	6
'92	62	26	23	16	18	14	13	14	11	31	[redacted]	18	13	20	17	24	15	26	23	27	[redacted]	26	15	15	12	8	6
'91	63	29	21	20	13	7	15	15	15	24	[redacted]	17	13	24	19	25	10	29	27	22	[redacted]	31	13	14	13	9	6

❖ F-fall sport

APPENDIX B, CONT'D

Update of Amherst College Sports Rosters 1991-2000 (2001 added)

Year	Football	Men's Soccer	Women's Soccer	Field Hockey	Men's Cross Country	Women's Cross Country	Volleyball	Men's Basketball	Men's Hockey	Women's Hockey	Men's Squash	Women's Squash	Men's Swimming	Women's Swimming	Men's Indoor Track	Women's Indoor Track	Baseball	Men's Lacrosse	Women's Lacrosse	Softball	Men's Outdoor Track	Women's Outdoor Track	Men's Tennis	Women's Tennis	Men's Golf	Women's Golf
01	85	29	23	24	19	21	13	18	12	24	14	13	19	24	34	23	31	33	24	13	28	23	10	11	10	5
00	83	28	23	24			15																	10		

APPENDIX C

COMPARISON OF SCHEDULES and SQUAD SIZES

Sport	1969	1970	1979	1980	1989	1990	1999	2000
	# Contests	Roster #	#Contests	Roster #	#Contests	Roster #	#Contests	Roster #
Baseball	15	22	18	27	18	20	16	27
Basketball-M	20	13	23	12	23	26	23	16
Basketball-W			18	15	21	15	23	13
Crew-M&W	6	19	7	48	10	75		-
Cross Ctry-M&W	7	8	8	32	7	20	7	38
Field Hockey		-	12	31	13	20	14	24
Football	8	47	8	58	8	70	8	79
Golf-M	11	11	11	11	13	8	10	11
Golf-W		-	7	7	11	7	8	5
Hockey-M	16	17	21	24	22	25	23	24
Hockey-W		-		-		-	24	18
Lacrosse-M	8	24	10	31	11	28	10	34
Lacrosse-W		-	9	31	13	29	11	25
Skiing	9	12	6	21	6	13		-
Soccer-M	8	31	12	29	14	26	14	28
Soccer-W		-	10	27	14	24	14	22
Softball		-		-		-	11	14
Squash-M	13	14	12	11	13	22	12	15
Squash-W			10	18	14	19	13	13
Swimming-M	12	25	10	14	11	22	9	22
Swimming-W			10	12	11	21	10	22
Tennis-M-	10	6	10	19	12	16	13	11
Tennis-W			9	18	13	14	14	11
Track-M-indoor	11	24	10	33	10	25	7	28
Track-W-indoor		-	9	11	9	6	7	25
Track-M-outdoor	8	31	11	33	9	27	8	30
Track-W-outdoor		-	9	5	8	7	6	28
Volleyball		-		-	13	15	14	14
Wrestling	7	14	10	17	10	14		-
TOTAL	169	318	290	595	337	614	329	597

APPENDIX D

NESCAC SURVEY
2001-02

PROGRAMS	Varsity Sports				JV Teams			Total #
	Total #	Men	Women	Co-ed	Total	Men	Women	of Teams
Amherst	27	13	14	0	0	0	0	27
Bates	30	15	15	0	4	2	2	34
Bowdoin	29	13	14	2	3	2	1	32
Colby	32	15	16	1	3	2	1	35
Conn	28	12	15	1	0	0	0	28
Hamilton	28	14	14	0	5	4	1	33
Middlebury	30	15	15	0	5	2	3	35
Trinity	29	15	14	0	10	5	5	39
Tufts	30	14	15	1	7	4	3	37
Wesleyan	29	15	14	0	0	0	0	29
Williams	31	16	15	0	16	8	8	47
Average	29.4	14.3	14.6	0.5	4.8	2.6	2.2	34.2

ADMINISTRATORS AND COACHES

	Full Time Administrators and Coaches			Trainers		Full-time Football Coaches	
	Total	Men	Women	FT	PT		
Amherst	15.5	10.5	5	3	2	3.5	
Bates	25	16	9	3	0	5	
Bowdoin	18	10	8	3	1	3	+3 interns
Colby	19	11	8	4	0	4	
Conn	24	13	11	2	0	n/a	
Hamilton	18	11	7	3	0.5	4	
Middlebury	22	15	7	3	1	4	
Trinity	20	12	8	3	1	4	
Tufts	22	15	7	3	2	4	
Wesleyan	21	13	8	3	0.5	3	
Williams	25	20	5	3	2	5	
Average	20.9	13.3	7.5	3.0	0.9	4.0	

Part-time Coaches (Intercollegiate Sports only)

	Total	Head Coaches (per sport)	
Amherst	25	1	
Bates	25	0	
Bowdoin	19	4	
Colby	24	3	(1 interim)
Conn	6	3	
Hamilton	31	1	
Middlebury	18	1	
Trinity	50	12	
Tufts	25	4	
Wesleyan	19	0	
Williams	29	2	
Average	24.6	2.8	

APPENDIX E

Amherst College Sports Records
1991 - 2000
(For the Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst)

Year	Football	Men's Soccer	Women's Soccer	Field Hockey	Volleyball	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Men's Hockey	Women's Hockey	Men's Squash	Women's Squash	Men's Swimming	Women's Swimming	Baseball	Men's Lacrosse	Women's Lacrosse	Softball	Men's Tennis	Women's Tennis
'00	W-7 L-1	W-8 L-7 T-2	W-11 L-5 T-2	W-14 L-3	W-27 L-4	W-19 L-6	W-15 L-9	W-15 L-6 T-3	W-9 L-14 T-1	W-7 L-9	W-8 L-11	W-7 L-2	W-8 L-2	W-19 L-10	W-5 L-7	W-11 L-1	W-22 L-8 T-1	W-6 L-4	W-6 L-1
'99	W-5 L-3	W-11 L-4 T-1	W-11 L-2 T-3	W-15 L-3	W-26 L-7	W-16 L-9	W-12 L-11	W-19 L-5	W-8 L-15	W-11 L-7	W-10 L-8	W-8 L-1	W-9 L-1	W-25 L-10	W-5 L-7	W-14 L-3	W-23 L-9	W-8 L-3	W-5 L-3
'98	W-5 L-3	W-14 L-2	W-9 L-3 T-3	W-11 L-5	W-28 L-6	W-20 L-5	W-15 L-9	W-10 L-12 T-1	W-10 L-12 T-1	W-10 L-5	W-9 L-6	W-8 L-2	W-10 L-1	W-21 L-9	W-9 L-7	W-12 L-3	W-31 L-8	W-12 L-5	W-7 L-0
'97	W-7 L-1	W-13 L-5 T-1	W-14 L-3	W-10 L-5	W-15 L-13	W-21 L-5	W-15 L-9	W-15 L-9 T-1	W-5 L-15 T-1	W-14 L-4	W-12 L-10	W-8 L-1	W-7 L-3	W-26 L-6	W-9 L-4	W-12 L-4	W-21 L-5	W-12 L-4	W-9 L-0
'96	W-7 L-1	W-6 L-7 T-1	W-12 L-2 T-3	W-12 L-3	W-21 L-15 T-1	W-21 L-6	W-18 L-7	W-17 L-9	W-7 L-16	W-17 L-1	W-12 L-10	W-10 L-0	W-8 L-2	W-20 L-11	W-10 L-5	W-9 L-5	W-15 L-13 T-1	W-13 L-2	W-9 L-0
'95	W-5 L-2 T-1	W-9 L-4 T-3	W-14 L-2	W-9 L-6 T-1	W-31 L-11	W-18 L-9	W-9 L-13	W-6 L-15 T-1	[redacted]	W-18 L-6	W-19 L-5	W-10 L-1	W-10 L-1	W-21 L-11	W-10 L-7	W-9 L-6	W-11 L-9	W-12 L-3	W-8 L-0

APPENDIX E, CONT'D

'94	W-5 L-3	W-6 L-6 T-2	W-11 L-3 T-2	W-2 L-10 T-2	W-20 L-12	W-22 L-5	W-7 L-16	W-6 L-14 T-2		W-13 L-5	W-16 L-10	W-9 L-0	W-7 L-2	W-15 L-10	W-4 L-9	W-5 L-6		W-8 L-2	W-10 L-1
'93	W-3 L-5	W-9 L-2 T-3	W-10 L-5	W-9 L-4 T-1	W-24 L-8	W-15 L-8	W-6 L-17	W-12 L-9 T-2		W-13 L-4	W-18 L-6	W-7 L-2	W-8 L-2	W-16 L-9	W-3 L-7	W-5 L-6		W-9 L-1	W-10 L-1
'92	W-0 L-8	W-1 L-11 T-2	W-11 L-3 T-1	W-6 L-8	W-21 L-16	W-17 L-8	W-9 L-14	W-12 L-2 T-2		W-16 L-3	W-14 L-4	W-6 L-4	W-7 L-3	W-10 L-9 T-2	W-2 L-8	W-4 L-7		W-8 L-0	W-9 L-2
'91	W-4 L-4	W-6 L-6 T-3	W-11 L-4	W-7 L-5 T-2	W-22 L-9	W-9 L-14	W-7 L-16	W-13 L-12 T-1		W-10 L-8	W-10 L-10	W-7 L-3	W-8 L-2	W-23 L-8	W-3 L-8	W-7 L-5		W-9 L-1	W-7 L-2

- Sports not represented with scores

  Men's Cross Country, Women's Cross Country, Men's Indoor Track, Women's Indoor Track, Men's Outdoor Track, Women's Outdoor Track, Men's Golf, Women's Golf