

FCAFA Proceedings – 4 March 2021

Via Zoom!

Present: David Hall (chair), Sonya Clark, Ilyssa Forman-Roberts '22, Maria Heim, Gail Holt (Dean of Financial Aid, *ex officio*), Michael Hood, Yvette Kiptoo '23, Karu Kozuma, Matt McGann (Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, *ex officio*), Aidan Park '22, Cate Zolkos (Dean of Admission, *ex officio*).

1. **Approval of Minutes 2/25**

- a. Minutes from 2/25 were approved pending number corrections.

2. **Urgent business and Updates**

- a. A representative of the committee will need to reach out to faculty to inquire about who will do early write outreach.
- b. Note: the Early Write candidates have been approved by CCAFA, and these decisions will be released on the afternoon of 3/5.

3. **2021-2022 Enrollments**

Next year's entering class will be larger than usual due to those who took a gap year.

- a. At the faculty meeting on Tuesday night, enrollment was mentioned. Matt shared further context with the committee.
 - i. Last year, Amherst aimed to enroll 473 first-year students (the standard configuration of beds on the first-year quad), and was well positioned to have that number before the pandemic hit. The number of deferred enrollments jumped, from the typical 10-15 students to more than 50 last year. Students wished for the full Amherst experience and were willing to wait. There are now around 40 from that group of deferred enrollment who are planning to enroll for the class of '25.
 - ii. Prospective students have been asking if the larger number of deferred enrollments will make it harder for this year's class to be admitted. 50 students represent a big portion of the class for small colleges such as Amherst. If we considered these 50 in our numbers, it would indeed make it harder for this year's class to be admitted.
 - iii. Admissions has been in conversation with Student Affairs and other departments to see what can be done. Because the current class is smaller than normal, Amherst anticipates the college could handle up to 530 in the upcoming first-year class. In 2018, 492 first-years enrolled, so there is precedent for the college's ability to manage a large class. Matt foresees that there will continue to be more students taking gap years, as well. While Amherst will need to be creative with housing and add more first-

year seminars, a larger first-year class won't contribute to a long-term increase in size for the college. What will contribute is the number of current students who took a leave of absence.

1. Traditionally, all new students are housed around the quad. Although there may not be enough room to do this with a larger class, Amherst will still try to cluster first-years together so they won't be alone on an upperclassmen floor. Discussion is ongoing on how to add to student experience next year.
- iv. A faculty member asked when admissions will know if students are taking a gap year.
 1. Students are admitted at the end of March. The admission response form includes a possibility to choose gap year, and students have to email Cate to explain their decision. Theoretically, we should know by May 1st, but we will be flexible if there are good reasons for students to choose a gap year later that date. These defers can't enroll at other schools in the meantime.
- v. A student shared that AAS is working on a mentorship program between sophomores and first-years for extra support.

4. Continue Discussion of Legacy Admission

- a. The discussion of legacy admission was continued from previous meetings. David shared a draft of a document with the committee.

Meeting Schedule 2021

February 18; February 25; **March 4**; March 11; March 26 (CCAFA); April 1; April 8; April 15; April 22; April 29; May 6; May 12 (CCAFA)

FCAFA Membership 2020-2021

Sonya Clark, Art and the History of Art; x5972

Ilyssa Forman-Roberts '22

David Hall, Physics and Astronomy (chair); x2072

Maria Heim, Religion; x8475

Gail Holt, Dean of Financial Aid; x2296

Michael Hood, Biology; x8538

Yvette Kiptoo '23

Karu Kozuma, Chief Student Affairs Officer; x2337

Matt McGann, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid; x2328

Obed Narcisse '21

Aidan Park '22

Cate Zolkos, Dean of Admission; x2328

Aly Levinson, Admission Counselor; x2328 (recorder-designate)

Faculty Handbook IV.S.1.d The Committee on Admission and Financial Aid consists of four members of the faculty appointed by the Committee of Six for three-year terms, four students serving two-year terms to be chosen as described below and, as members, ex officio, the dean of admission and financial aid (secretary of the committee), the dean of admission, the dean of financial aid, and the chief student affairs officer. One of the faculty members is appointed by the Committee of Six as chair, normally after a year of service. It is hoped that different areas of the curriculum will be represented by the faculty members on the committee. The president will meet with the committee either at its invitation or on his or her initiative.

A College Committee on Admission and Financial Aid will convene under the chairmanship of the dean of admission and financial aid at least four times in each academic year. It will consist of the dean of the faculty, ex officio, and eight voting members: the dean of admission and financial aid, the dean of admission, the dean of financial aid, the chief student affairs officer, and the four faculty members on the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid. At a meeting early in the fall of each year, the College Committee on Admission and Financial Aid will review the composition and diversity of the first-year class, paying attention to such issues as the distribution of students by curricular and extracurricular strengths. The committee will reconvene in advance of the release of notifications of admission to early decision candidates (normally in December) and prior to the release of notifications of admission to regular round candidates (normally in March) to consider such information as it deems necessary to insure that the college's stated policies are being implemented. At the end of each of these meetings the committee will vote on the admission actions recommended by the dean of admission and financial aid. The committee will hold a final meeting at the end of the academic year to review the outcome of the completed admission process (voted by the faculty, December, 1999).

Two students shall be elected by the student body for a two-year term to the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid. Following the election, the dean of admission and financial aid in consultation with the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid will appoint two additional student members for two-year terms. The four student positions are to be filled in staggered order, with one appointed and one elected position to be filled annually.

Because of Amherst College's commitment to equal opportunity and the role of the admission process in meeting an important part of this commitment, the presence on the committee of students from different minority and racial groups is especially valuable. In general, student members of the committee can provide particular advice on policy discussions about recruitment.

The primary function of the committee is to enhance communication between the faculty and appropriate administrative offices and in so doing to aid the faculty in carrying out its responsibility to formulate standards and policy for admission and financial aid. To these ends, the committee should review on a regular basis, through observation and quantitative studies, how adequately policy and practice are meeting stated goals, should develop and maintain mechanisms for communicating faculty opinion on the quality of our students to the staff, and should report annually to the faculty on the committee's work. Members of the committee should be sufficiently engaged in the admission process to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively (voted by the faculty, September 1984).

THE AMHERST COLLEGE ADMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

~Voted by the Faculty in 1983

Amherst College looks, above all, for students of intellectual promise who have demonstrated qualities of mind and character that will enable them to take full advantage of our curriculum. We seek qualified applicants from different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds students whose several perspectives might contribute significantly to a process of mutual education within and beyond the curriculum.

We aim to select from among the many qualified applicants those possessing the intellectual talent, discipline and imagination that will allow them most fully to benefit from our curriculum and contribute to the life of the college and society. Grades, standardized test scores, essays, recommendations, independent work, the quality of the secondary school program, and achievements outside the classroom are among the factors used to evaluate this promise, but no one of these measures is considered determinative.