

FCAFA Proceedings – 1 October 2021

Via Zoom!

Present: Michael Hood (chair), Loretta Alarcon '24, Maria Heim, Gail Holt (Dean of Financial Aid, ex officio), Sage Innerarity '22, Yvette Kiptoo '23, Matt McGann (Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, ex officio), Aidan Park '22, Amy Wagaman, Cate Zolkos (Dean of Admission, ex officio).

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Updates on Admission Processes

- a. Cate Zolkos reported updates to the Common Application and data about the class of 2025.
- b. Changes to the common application
 - i. Citizenship option of Other (Non-US) was added, which includes students with DACA, undocumented, deferred enforced departure, etc.
 - ii. Removed religious affiliation question
 - iii. Added pronouns, and give option to choose whether or not preferred name should be used in communications
 - iv. Changed “sex” to “legal sex”
 - v. Replaced “gender identity” with “gender”
 1. However, the options offered are not correct, and should not include “female” or “male” as gender identity terms.
- c. Class of 2025 Data (compared to 2024) – holdovers distort the data, so neither class is representative of a typical class.
 - i. 13991 applications (10603)
 1. 8.7% admit rate (12%)
 2. 514 enrolled (434)
 3. Yield rate 42% (35%)
 4. 39% enrolled ED; 18 QB Matches, 57% RD (5% Early Writes, QB 49 students total, 0% from waitlist)
 - ii. Test optional data vs. the previous year, when tests were required
 1. Average ACT 34 (34 in year previous)
 2. Average SAT 1486 (1465 previous)
 3. 55% of enrolling students submitted tests – 64% of the class if you include holdovers (pre-test-optional)
 - iii. Gender balance
 1. 43% male (49% previous)
 2. 55% female (49% previous)
 3. Another gender identity 2% (2%)
 - iv. Race and ethnicity data
 1. Amherst collects IPEDS data, the federal methodology for race-related data. Amherst also has multicheck data that includes multiracial students as belonging to all of their identities.
 - v. 44 students deferred to Fall 2021, while 17 have deferred to Fall 2022. The norm is about 10-12 per year.
- d. Upcoming events
 - i. Admission deans continue to “travel” virtually to recruit students.
 - ii. The Access to Amherst program begins this weekend.

Commented [AL1]: Unsure how much of this data you would like to be present in the proceedings that are visible to the entire college.

Commented [AL2R1]:

- iii. The QuestBridge match process will begin shortly.
- iv. Early Decision and Regular Decision application reading are on the horizon.
- e. Committee members asked questions about the admission update.
 - i. A faculty member asked a clarifying question: if the Common App is no longer asking what countries students are coming from, will we ask?
 - 1. The Common App still includes this nationality question for most international students. The new response applies to students residing in the U.S. who have certain special statuses.
 - ii. A faculty member asked about future student enrollment, given the large size of first-year class. At a faculty meeting, faculty discussed concerns around course enrollments and facilities of the college. The large class of 2025 will be offset by the smaller sophomore year class, but in 2024-25, when the large class are seniors, there will no longer be a smaller class to balance the college's overall numbers. Will this affect the target numbers for admission in the coming years?
 - 1. Matt anticipates that this semester will be the largest enrollment semester for the college, and it will start to come back down, then back up in 2025 when they are seniors. The college's overall enrollment is impacted more by the number of returning students who took a semester or a year off, and fewer students studying away, than the change in the first-year class. The college typically anticipates a certain number of juniors will study away when planning for facilities, rooms, and class enrollment. Additionally, the college has a larger group of "E" students, about 80, this fall.
 - 2. Admissions will continue to plan to enroll 470 first years each year. Changing this number would have effects long-term as well. The college will explore other options, such as attempting to increase the number of students studying away.

3. Updates on Financial Aid

- a. Matt spoke about financial aid, acknowledging that the pandemic has had severe financial impact on students and families. Support from the federal government allowed for direct funding to students (HEERF), and Amherst's Office of Financial Aid distributed those funds to the neediest students. The college provided funds for students in need who weren't eligible. The third round is out now, with about 1 million out of a total 2 million already distributed to students.
- b. The committee discussed upcoming changes to financial aid at Amherst.

4. Update on FCAFA/CCAFA meeting schedules

- a. The meeting for October 15 was cancelled. October 22nd will be a CCAFA meeting.

Meeting Schedule Fall 2021

September 24; **October 1**; ~~October 15~~; October 29; November 12; December 3

FCAFA Membership 2021-2022

Liz Agosto, Dean of Students and Interim Chief Student Affairs Officer

Lorett Alarcon '24

Sonya Clark, Art and the History of Art; x5972

Maria Heim, Religion; x8475

Gail Holt, Dean of Financial Aid; x2296

Michael Hood, Biology (chair); x8538

Sage Innerarity '22

Yvette Kiptoo '23

Karu Kozuma, Chief Student Affairs Officer; x2337

Matt McGann, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid; x2328

Aidan Park '22

Amy Wagaman, Mathematics and Statistics

Cate Zolkos, Dean of Admission; x2328

Remaining members to be announced

Aly Levinson, Assistant Dean of Admission; 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 re-convene 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.

