

Committee on Priorities and Resources  
Final Report 2019-20

Approved by the whole committee on May 26, 2020

As with many committees this year, the work of the CPR could be divided between two periods: before and after the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020. Prior to the outbreak, the bulk of the CPR's work focused on traditional topics (e.g., salary report, review of College finances and expenditures, capital projects) and a new and exciting topic for the College, plans to build a new Student Center. After the outbreak, the CPR focused on reviewing the pandemic's impact on college resources.

**Salary Report.** In the fall, the CPR approved the 2018-19 Faculty Salary report started by last year's CPR under then-chair Prof. Tanya Leise. Two decisions were made this year. In the future, 1) the salary report will be drafted in the fall semester, and 2) the office of Institutional Research will assist the CPR more closely with the analysis. The meeting scheduled for April 2020 between the CPR and the Board to present the salary report and the other topics in this summary was cancelled due to disruptions caused by the Coronavirus.

**Admission and Financial Aid.** The CPR met with Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Matt McGann to review the 2023 class and efforts by the College (and other liberal arts colleges) to stay competitive in the research university marketplace. The CPR endorsed the College's mission to preserve the leadership position of Amherst's financial aid program. The CPR noted that, at some point, the College should consider moving the Admission and Financial Aid offices to a more functional, shared, and visitor-friendly location.

**Institutional Advancement.** The CPR met with Chief Advancement Officer Betsy Cannon Smith '84 and Senior Director of Advancement Administration and Planning Suzanne Newby-Estes to discuss the report to the Board, prepared by the Committee on Institutional Advancement. The CPR endorsed Advancement's goal of developing strategies to increase participation rates in gifts to the Annual Fund.

**Impact of Study Abroad on Enrollments.** The CPR met with Director of Institutional Research and Registrar Services Jesse Barba and Associate Dean and Director of Global Education Janna Behrens to discuss how study abroad patterns impact housing and classroom utilization across semesters. The CPR heard about various plans under consideration to ensure a more balanced distribution of study abroad participation between semesters, but did not vote on any of the options.

**Student Center, Classroom Space, and Office Space.** The CPR devoted several meetings to discuss plans for a new student center and other critical space needs on campus, such as faculty offices. Guests included President Bidy Martin, Chief of Campus Operations Jim Brassord, Director of Institutional Research and Registrar Services Jesse Barba, and Director of Dining Services Joe Flueckiger. The CPR endorsed moving forward with a new student center. The new center should prioritize multi-use spaces, with a strong focus on sustainable design and construction, and sufficient conference-scale restroom facilities to accommodate large numbers

of users all at once during brief event breaks. The CPR reiterated its desire to be involved at different stages of the planning process.

**Administration Staffing.** There were no new FTEs in administration staffing to consider this year.

**Capital Projects.** The CPR reviewed plans for Capital Projects, but did not vote to make any recommendations.

**Benefits.** The CPR held two meetings to discuss staff benefits. One meeting included a presentation of the Health & Welfare Plan Survey Results. The report suggests that Amherst benefits are more generous than or on par with those of our peers. One shortcoming at Amherst is that the medical plans include only two tiers (family and individual). The CPR endorsed efforts by the College to develop four tiers, which is the emerging standard among peer institutions.

**Coronavirus Impact.** The CPR spent most of its meetings in April to discuss informal reports by Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein and Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kevin Weinman on the pandemic's impact on resources and teaching. The CPR expressed support for efforts by the College to minimize the impact on employment and staffing, even if that meant freezing salaries. The CPR asked the Dean to justify the decision to fill certain positions in Athletics (e.g., head coach, Men's Lacrosse). The CPR was not invited to express a formal recommendation on any of the measures being taken by the College.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dwight W. Morrow 1895 Professor and Chair of Political Science  
Chair of the CPR, 2019-2020

2019-20 CPR Members

Professor Andrew Dole  
Professor Jill Miller  
Professor Monica Ringer  
Library Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Susan Bradley  
Assistant Director of Athletics Kelly Mannix  
Benjamin Gilsdorf '21 (fall semester)  
James Hulsizer '23 (spring semester)  
Sydney Ireland '23

*Ex officio:*

Director of Financial Planning Thomas Dwyer  
Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein  
Chief Human Resources Officer Maria-Judith Rodriguez  
Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kevin Weinman  
Brooke Harrington '22