

April 30, 2012

Dear President Martin and Senior Staff,

The Committee on Priorities and Resources has had a chance to meet with the Employee Council, The Managers' Council, The Housing Committee, the Librarian, and the Directors of Athletics, Mead Art Museum, and Facilities during 2012-13. In addition in the Fall semester we met with a group of students who wished to discuss their concerns about the relocation of the Multicultural Resource Center and about their interest in urging the Board to divest from companies connected with the coal industry. It was not entirely clear what the role of the CPR might be in a divestiture decision, and we did not pursue further discussions. The following paragraphs summarize the CPR's deliberation and recommendations on the other budget requests that were brought to our attention.

- The Library has put in for a 4.7% increase from an FY 2013 budget of \$2,527,896 to \$2,646,408 (an increase of \$118,512) mainly to cover increased costs of materials in its below-line request for FY 2014. They have also sought modest increases in their professional travel budget, and for expenses connected with the new Amherst College Press. In addition, they have asked for an FTE to cover the position of Electronics Records Manager at a cost of \$68,000. We recommend these allocations with high priority.
- Facilities has asked for a below-line request of an increase of \$534,209 (or 3.6%) to cover expected increase in utilities (possibly), for deferred maintenance, and insurance. Their above-line requests for 4.3 FTEs at a cost of \$175,338 would be for two custodial positions, a small increase (0.3 FTE) for the Custodial Clerk, a Building Engineer for the Science Center project, a Sustainability Director who would oversee sustainability initiatives in addition to the campus farm. The actual utilities expense may vary depending on markets as well as the whims of Nature. Subject to these uncertainties, the CPR recommends these allocations with high priority.
- The Athletics Department has sought a below-line increase of \$153,191 (11.2%) to an FY total of \$1,517,258. The members of the CPR were skeptical and uncertain for a number of reasons about the proposed expansion of the LEADS program to the entire student body under the aegis of the Athletics department. We quote from our minutes of April 26, 2013: "Amherst Leads – There seems to be a lack of student support for the expansion of Amherst Leads. Students are wary about making the

Athletics department the home of leadership on campus, especially since so many students are involved in leadership activities through the Dean of Students office. The CPR is unclear about the goals of the program, which is concerning because it feels like a curricular intervention that should be vetted by faculty. Additionally the group was concerned about the size of the staff (4 FTE), which would make it larger than the Student Activities office. The current programming seems to feature inspirational speakers but the programming is not translatable into practical skills. The group was unsure if the Amherst Leads events are any different than other programming that is taking place on campus". Professor Jagannathan has communicated these concerns to Director Suzanne Coffey. As a result of the discussion in the committee we do not support going forward with budgetary requests connected with the LEADS program in FY 2014. The other below-line requests from the Athletics department have our support and we rate them as having a high priority.

- The CPR discussed the question of how we as a committee ought to think about requests for benefits from different groups on campus. In our decisions on benefits we aim for a balance between an approach that values only equity and one where the overall good of the community is the main concern. Where this balance might lie may vary from issue to issue, in ways that resist codification and require judgment. In 2012-13, with one important exception noted below, we did not receive requests concerning benefits. The exception is the extending of death benefits to staff who are not 'Trustee Appointees'. We strongly endorse the Employees' Council letter that asks that this singular benefit be extended to all employees without waiting for a more comprehensive review of all benefits to be completed.

Respectfully submitted by the voting members of the CPR 2012-13:

Carol Allman-Morton
Robert Benedetto
Roger Creel '13
Jonathan Devins
Christopher Friend '14
Kannan Jagannathan (Chair)
Pavel Machala
Karen Sanchez-Eppler

Correction: The CPR met with Elizabeth Barker in her role as Chair of the Managers' Council and not in her capacity as Director of the Mead Art Museum; the Museum budget did not require the attention of the CPR in 2012-13.