

Committee on Priorities and Resources
Meeting Minutes – November 8, 2022

In Attendance: Professor John Rager; Professor Frederick Griffiths; Professor Jonathan Obert; Assistant Registrar Syd Cooney; Chief Human Resources Officer, Kate Harrington, *ex officio*; Interim Director of Financial Planning, Ashley Travis, *ex officio*; Assistant Director of Family Giving, Emily Ziomek; Mollie Hartenstein '23; Yvette Kiptoo, '23; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Professor Nusrat Chowdhury, chair; Interim Chief Financial Officer Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*

Guest: Matt McGann, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

The meeting came to order at 8:45 am.

Proceedings:

Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Matt McGann joined CPR to discuss the potential ramifications of the pair of admission Supreme Court cases, the potential impact on the Amherst College community, and the implications for the College's priorities and resources.

1. Matt began with an update on Admissions. For Fall 2022, applications were up to almost 15,000, the admissions rate was around 7%, and the enrolled class is 467 students. The yield rate was 43%. Early decision makes up over 40% of admitted class.
AC removed standardized test score requirement during the pandemic, as a pilot. Tests were a barrier to applicants, especially prospective international students.
2. Matt attended the Supreme Court session to hear two cases argued, against Harvard and UNC Chapel Hill admissions policies, brought by the same plaintiffs. Because of changes to the makeup of the court, some expect that 40-plus years of precedent will be overturned, and that race/ethnicity will no longer be considered in the admissions process. Amherst, along with a number of other schools, filed amicus briefs with the Supreme Court.
3. Amherst has increased diversity significantly since the late 80's. The college is living its mission and is a leader in enrolling a diverse class.
4. A "race neutral" admissions process exists currently in California, Michigan, and Washington. UC Berkeley has been "race neutral" since the late 90's. They have invested in outreach, opened recruiting offices in less advantaged communities, and eliminated test scores. Despite these efforts, there was a significant drop in enrollment of underrepresented groups, and it remains unchanged.
5. At Amherst, recruitment and outreach are leading to greater applications from underrepresented groups. The yield, however, is impacted by competitive yield efforts of other schools. Simulations of a "race neutral" - but otherwise similar - admissions process show a significant decline in enrolled diversity.
6. The extent of court decision is unknown until it is announced, expected in June. Additional admissions cases are making their way through the court system and may progress to the Supreme Court in future years, with additional effects on colleges.

Adjourned 9:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
S Hegarty