

Committee on Priorities and Resources  
Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2019

In attendance: Professor Javier Corrales, chair; Professor Andrew Dole; Professor Monica Ringer; Library Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Susan Bradley; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*; Assistant Director of Athletics Kelly Mannix; Chief Human Resources Officer Maria-Judith Rodriguez, *ex officio*; Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kevin Weinman, *ex officio*; Benjamin Gilsdorf '21; Brooke Harrington '22, *ex officio*; Sydney Ireland '23; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Professor Jill Miller; Director of Financial Planning Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*;

Guest: Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Matt McGann

The meeting came to order at 8:35 am.

### Proceedings

Matt returned to update CPR on enrollment projections and challenges for Admission and Financial Aid

Follow up from the presentation at the [April 16, 2019 CPR](#) meeting:

1. Matt shared updates to enrollment of the class of 2023 (current first year). More analysis was used and the admitted class is closer to target than recent years. The target is 473 first year students, representative of AC's leading role in socioeconomic diversity.
2. Additional analysis of the yield will inform the projections for the class of 2024.

Review and updates on the six challenges shared at the [October 30, 2018 CPR](#) meeting:

1. *The current affirmative action case against Harvard may impact the mission of diversity.* A decision at the federal district court level was just announced in favor of Harvard, with an appeal to the appeals court already beginning. The district court ruling has some guidance on changes to training and documentation for our admission process at Amherst
2. *A competitive marketplace, especially with research universities.* There is concern around the appeal of a Liberal Arts education. There is more of the story to tell and an initiative is underway to make Amherst's advantages clear. Financial aid packages are competitive. In the current trend, Amherst is losing students to large, urban, prestigious R1 schools such as Yale, Harvard, Duke, and Northwestern.
3. *Adapting the departmental workforce: Additional IT and analysis resources, and, in the future, an additional financial aid officer.* This remains the highest need.
4. *Experiments around recruitment – communicating via print/digital, and enhanced visitor programs.* There is focused marketing around students Amherst wants to attract.
5. *Envisioning a new building and space, and refresh current space as an interim.* The current Admission Center is still a concern (location, hill, etc.) and does not create an optimal experience for visitors. Matt is working with Jim Brassord on options to improve the current space.

6. *Preserve the leadership position of Amherst's financial aid program, and work with the Finance staff on best practices of forecasting and budgeting.* Remains a priority.

CPR approved the meeting minutes from September 10.

Adjourned 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
S Hegarty